Dear member of the Illinois Congressional Delegation,

As members of the Illinois Business Immigration Coalition (IBIC) Steering Committee and leaders of the Illinois business, civic and education communities, we write to urge you to support passage of common sense immigration reform. The introduction of a bill in the Senate is a good first step; we hope to see similar action from the House in the near future.

We hope to have the opportunity to discuss this critical issue in person with you during a visit to your district in the near future.

IBIC is a bipartisan, statewide and growing initiative calling for common sense immigration reform that supports Illinois’ economic recovery, provides Illinois companies with the high- and low-skilled talent they need, and promotes the integration of immigrants into our economy as consumers, workers, entrepreneurs and citizens.

We are uniting across diverse sectors of the Illinois economy – including technology, hospitality, manufacturing, agriculture, education, healthcare, engineering, energy, finance, and real estate - in conjunction with immigrant advocates to say with one voice that our nation and our state desperately need modernized immigration solutions that empower Illinois’ economic competitiveness.

There are other components to common sense reform. Our members in higher education have seen firsthand the huge potential that undocumented and international students have to contribute to the economy if we would only let them - we must provide opportunities for immigrants and foreign students to enter the U.S. and our workforce legally, attracting and keeping the best, the brightest, and the hard working. We must promote stability within our immigrant workforce and our immigrant consumer base. We need a streamlined process to legal employment, ensuring we do not face the same challenges in the future. We support “a mechanism that responds to the needs of business in a market-driven way, while also fully protecting the wages and working conditions of U.S. and immigrant workers,” in accordance with the joint principles of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO regarding temporary workers. And finally, we must establish a path to citizenship for the undocumented currently living in Illinois and the United States, to leverage their talent and to facilitate their integration as consumers, workers and entrepreneurs. At its heart, common sense reform simply means a solution based on facts, not misconceptions; solutions, not politics; people, businesses and communities, not agendas and rhetoric.

The numbers speak for themselves. According to a study released by the Immigration Policy Center and
Center for American Progress, common sense immigration reform would increase U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by at least 0.84 percent. This would translate into at least a $1.5 trillion cumulative increase in GDP over 10 years, which includes approximately $1.2 trillion in consumption and $256 billion in investment. The higher earning power of newly legalized workers would mean increased tax revenues of $4.5 billion to $5.4 billion in the first three years. Higher personal income would also generate increased consumer spending—enough to support 750,000 to 900,000 jobs in the United States. Experience shows that legalized workers open bank accounts, buy homes and start businesses, further stimulating the U.S. economy.

The American Action Forum, a conservative think tank, has stated that, “In the absence of immigration, the population and overall economy will decline as a result of low U.S. birth rates. A benchmark immigration reform would raise the pace of economic growth by nearly a percentage point over the near term, raise GDP per capita by over $1,500 and reduce the cumulative federal deficit by over $2.5 trillion.”

We are proud that our coalition is a bipartisan one. After all, as our Co-Chair John Rowe is fond of saying, “Since when is it conservative to tell people they cannot work and pay taxes?”

In addition to the names that appear below, we are actively recruiting 1,000 Illinois small-business owners and 300 leading CEOs from throughout the state to help deliver our pro-growth message to your colleagues.

The time is now for common sense immigration reform. As our representative in our nation’s capital, please do what is right for our economy, our businesses and our communities – support common sense immigration reform. We ask for your attention, support and vote to assure the nation’s outdated immigration laws are reformed.

Please ask your scheduling office to allot time for representatives of the IBIC Steering Committee to meet with you.

Sincerely,

John Rowe
Co-Chair, IBIC
Chairman Emeritus, Exelon Corporation
Samuel C. Scott III  
Co-Chair, IBIC  
Former President, Chairman and CEO, Corn Products International, Inc.  
Chairman, Chicago Sister Cities International Program

Dave Bender  
Co-Chair, IBIC  
Executive Director  
American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois

Raul Raymundo  
Co-Chair, IBIC  
CEO, The Resurrection Project

John L. Anderson  
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Martin Cabrera Jr.  
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Donna M. Carroll  
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Martin R. Castro  
President  
Castro Synergies, LLC

Alan Channing  
President and CEO  
Sinai Health System

Father Brendan Curran  
Catholic Businesses for Immigration Reform
Omar Duque  
President & CEO  
Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Robert Easter  
President  
University of Illinois

Hon. Jim Edgar  
Former Governor  
State of Illinois

Marc J. Gordon  
President & CEO  
Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association

Sarah Habansky  
Vice President  
Illinois Technology Association
Mark Harris
President & CEO
Illinois Science & Technology Coalition

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider
President
DePaul University

Josh Hoyt
Chief Strategy Executive
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Christopher G. Kennedy
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University of Illinois

Billy Lawless
Owner
The Gage and Henri

Kenneth Lehman
Managing Partner
KKP Group, LLC
Elizabeth Lively
Vice President
Government and External Affairs
Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council (MCHC)

Patrick M. Magoon
President and CEO
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago

Clare Muñana
President
Ancora Associates, Inc.

Ellen Rudnick
Clinical Professor of Entrepreneurship
Executive Director, Michael P. Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship
The University of Chicago Booth School of Business

Jesse Ruiz
Partner
Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
Mark Segal  
President and CEO  
The Habitat Company  
Chair, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee

Sam Toia  
President  
Illinois Restaurant Association

William A. Von Hoene, Jr.  
Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer  
Exelon Corporation

Douglas L. Whitley  
President and CEO  
Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Maryjane A. Wurth  
President & CEO  
Illinois Hospital Association