

VAHCC Statement on President Obama's Executive Actions on Immigration

Immigration 2014-11-21 19:38:26

Richmond, Virginia: The Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce applauds President Obama's recent executive actions to assist the many immigrants in our midst who already pay taxes and contribute to our economy, yet live under constant threat of deportation. An ideal scenario would have been for the US House of Representatives to pass a comprehensive plan similar to that already passed by the US Senate, but congressional gridlock has rendered this impossible. The United States is a nation of immigrants, and our current broken system is impeding economic growth and must be fixed.

"Speaking on behalf of the business community that the Virginia Hispanic Chamber represents, it is good news that millions of undocumented workers can now apply for a three-year work permit. We hope that this will provide enough time for Congress to properly act and present the President with a viable, bipartisan plan for comprehensive immigration reform," says Michel Zajur, VAHCC President and CEO.

"Additionally, the President's Executive Order focuses on parents of U.S. Citizens. The VAHCC believes that U.S. Citizens, regardless of age, are entitled to be raised in an intact family. The President's Order helps to accomplish that goal."

In addition to sending staff and resources to secure the US Border, the President's Order eliminated the age cap on recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA, or Dream Act) Status, and established a program, to be set up by US Citizenship and Immigration Services, for parents of US Citizens who have been in the US for at least five years. Concerning business visas, the President's Order expands portability provisions for those with I-485 Visas, expands options for foreign entrepreneurs, and lengthens by 17 months the time students in STEM fields can remain in the US, among other provisions.

About the VAHCC

The VAHCC serves as the bridge linking the Hispanic business community within the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 2003, the VAHCC Foundation was established as an effort to further provide education, information and resources to the community. The VAHCC aims to promote and enhance business opportunities by providing linkage with special emphasis on the Hispanic community. www.vahcc.com

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WHERE :

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