

# January 2008 U.S. Immigration Alert!

A Monthly Newsletter from National Immigrant Solidarity Network

January, 2008 Issue, Volume 26

No Immigrant Bashing! Support Immigrant Rights!



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## Immigrant Rights Movements for 2008 - Latest Information, and What You Can Do

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## Call to Immigrant Rights Actions 2008!

### May Day 2008 National Mobilization of Immigrant Rights!

Join the e-mail list: <https://lists.riseup.net/www/info/mayday2008>

or send e-mail: [mayday2008-subscribe@lists.riseup.net](mailto:mayday2008-subscribe@lists.riseup.net)

### 40 Days and 40 Nights: March of the Faithful for a Compassionate and Fair Immigration System

May 1, 2008 – June 15, 2008 A 1,200 mile pilgrimage of faith for immigrant rights from St. Paul MN to Washington D.C. [for more information, call Irineo at 612-232-6329]

### Immigrant Rights Contingent to Protest Against Republican National Convention St. Paul, MN September 1- 4, 2008

For More Information, Call: (202)595-8990

## 2008 Analysis: Immigrant Congressional Legislation, Presidential Race

### National Immigration Forum (January 14, 2008)

The second session of the 110th Congress begins this week, when the House convenes. The Senate will be back next week. This is going to be an ugly year for immigrants, as Republican presidential candidates compete with each other to show that they are tougher on immigrants than the next guy, and Congressional candidates try to make immigration a wedge issue. But before we get into that, let's review where we left off.

### Congress Wraps Government Operating Funds into Giant Omnibus Package

At the end of last session, Congress and the President were deadlocked over appropriating money for various government agencies for the fiscal year that began October 1, 2007. Democrats were unable to advance their priorities past the President who, since the Democrats have assumed command of Congress, has discovered his authority to veto legislation. When political stalemate prevents appropriations bills from being completed individually, Congress will sometimes combine a number of spending bills into one giant "omnibus" spending bill. Such was the case in December, when Congress folded 11 spending bills that it had not completed into the 2008 omnibus spending bill. The omnibus bill was signed into law on December 26.

For the most part, the immigration enforcement measures favored by immigration restrictionists were kept off the final bill. One exception was an amendment related to public housing. This amendment restricts eligibility for homeownership

assistance funds to U.S. citizens or to immigrants who are lawfully present and authorized to work. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the restriction may go beyond barring undocumented immigrants, but may also prevent legal immigrants who are elderly or have disabilities (and therefore do not have work authorization) from receiving this assistance.

Efforts to obtain relief for businesses that rely on certain temporary workers were also thwarted, including a provision to continue exempting returning H-2B workers (seasonal, non-agriculture laborers) from the annual cap. An increase in visas for the H-1B program was also set aside. With various factions pushing for changes to the immigration laws—whether to open them up for businesses, tighten labor standards for workers, protect the undocumented, or increase restrictions on immigrants—the final outcome was that almost everyone went home empty-handed.

There was a provision in the Defense Department Authorization bill (signed in December) that would authorize admission of up to 5,000 Iraqis per year as “special immigrants.” This provision applies to persons who believe they are in danger as a result of aiding the U.S. They do not necessarily have to have fled Iraq; they may be processed inside that country. The provision also streamlines the process for admission of other Iraqi refugees and provides for better coordination of efforts to resolve the growing refugee crisis generated by the war.

### **The Presidential Race**

While the Congress was away, Americans were hearing more about Iowa than we thought possible. On the Republican side, candidates have been touting their tough-on-immigration plans. Early in December, it looked like the only candidate who wasn't repudiating an earlier compassionate view towards undocumented immigrants was Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee...but then he became a front runner. In early December, he released his immigration plan that, among other things, would give undocumented immigrants a 120-day window to register with the government and leave the country; promote measures such as the CLEAR Act to have state and local police enforce immigration laws; and would eliminate the diversity visa lottery program and the family immigration category reserved for brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens. His program was lifted—verbatim, in some cases—from a paper written by the restrictionist Center for Immigration Studies.

For that he got the endorsement of the Minuteman border vigilante group.

Congressman Tom Tancredo (R-CO), meanwhile, discovered that the populist anti-immigrant wave he rode in to the Presidential race wouldn't lift his surfboard off the sand. In Iowa, where immigration was a hot topic in candidate forums, he polled a consistent two percent. On December 20th Tancredo announced that he was dropping out of the race and endorsing former Massachusetts Governor Mitt “get out of the country when you finish mowing my lawn” Romney. As Dana Milbank of the Washington Post amusingly noted, Tancredo made his announcement in a hotel where, just steps away, there was a “South of the Border” lunch special being served. Tancredo dropped out in advance of the Iowa caucuses and endorsed Romney in part because Mike Huckabee, who Tancredo said had an “abysmal” record of “inviting” undocumented immigrants, was surging in the polls.

After getting Tancredo's blessings, Romney promptly lost to Huckabee in Iowa. He then went on to New Hampshire and...lost again. To John McCain. The guy who co-sponsored the comprehensive reform bill that all the candidates are now distancing themselves from. Ouch! However, as Romney is fond of telling us, he did win in Wyoming, picking up eight of the 1,191 delegates he will need to win the nomination.

The results of these early returns are repeating a pattern we have seen in the Congressional elections in 2006 and local elections in 2007. A candidate's focus on immigration enforcement may please a segment of the electorate, but that is not necessarily good enough to actually win an election where voters with a variety of concerns come out to the polls. For an analysis of the elections of November 2007.

### **Shuler Bill Gains Sponsors**

As we noted last year, North Carolina Representative Heath Shuler (D), a former football player, teamed up with immigration restrictionist Congressmen Brian Bilbray (R-CA) and Tom Tancredo (R-CO) to introduce the enforcement-only “SAVE” Act, H.R. 4088. That bill now has 132 co-sponsors, including a fair number of Democrats. One of the political struggles this year in Congress will be to prevent the Democrats from favoring proposals that might be seen as “Republican lite”—that is, enforcement- and deportation-only proposals that may not be as draconian as last Congress' “Sensenbrenner bill,” but might have the same effect of making our bad immigration policies worse while alienating the Hispanic and immigrant vote.

In November, Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR) introduced a companion bill, S. 2368, in the Senate. There are only two co-sponsors. Not to be outdone, Senator David Vitter (R-LA), introduced an identical bill, S. 2366. It has no co-sponsors. (.next page)

### **House Immigration Subcommittee to Hold Hearing on Naturalization Backlog**

Last year, USCIS received a near-record number of naturalization applications. There were a number of reasons for this. The climate towards immigrants has become hostile in the last few years, and obtaining citizenship offers a measure of protection from possible changes to the law that might make life harder for legal residents. There is also an unprecedented drive to help immigrants become citizens in the Ya es hora campaign, now being conducted by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, the National Council of La Raza, the We Are America Alliance, Service Employees International Union, and their regional partners. In addition, USCIS proposed and implemented a record fee increase for naturalization, raising the price from \$330 to \$595.

In the two months prior to the fee increase, USCIS received about as many naturalization applications as in the entire previous Fiscal Year—700,000. In all, there were approximately 1.4 million applications in the Fiscal Year that ended in September 2007. Although it was expected that the fee increase would produce a surge in applications, and although advocates had kept USCIS apprised of the Ya es hora campaign, USCIS was not adequately prepared for the volume of work it received.

Only recently has USCIS finished sending receipts to applicants who submitted their applications in June and July. USCIS says that there is now an 18-month backlog in processing those applications. In other words, if USCIS does not successfully address the problem of the current backlogs, immigrants who applied to be citizens back in July of last year may not be able to vote in the upcoming national election.

### **REAL ID Regulation Released**

On January 11, the Department of Homeland Security issued final regulations for the REAL ID Act, which will require states to provide standardized, “secure” drivers’ licenses to their residents. Among other things, the regulation pushes back compliance deadlines. According to a Press Release by DHS, the first compliance deadline under these regulations will be December 31, 2009, by which time states must check for the lawful status of applicants for a license.

Deadlines to enroll state residents are stretched out, so that states must have issued REAL ID licenses to persons under 50 years of age by 2014, and to older persons by 2017. DHS says it has reduced the cost to states, but as the National Governors Association notes in a News Release, the unfunded mandate to states is still substantial.

For more information, see this Statement from the American Civil Liberties Union on their Web site dedicated to this issue, [RealNightmare.org](http://RealNightmare.org).

## **Announcing**

### **New On-Line Tools for Congressional Advocacy and Community Activism!**

**[e-Activism.org](http://e-Activism.org) [ActivistVideo.org](http://ActivistVideo.org)**

**National Immigrant Solidarity Network, along with ActionLA Coalition and Activist Design Studio, are launching a breakthrough on-line activism tools: [e-Activism.org](http://e-Activism.org) and [ActivistVideo.org](http://ActivistVideo.org) Beta version!**

**[e-Activism.org](http://e-Activism.org): a free open-membership social networking site for the community activists for on-line activism with different tools to create your campaigns, useful tools for the policy research and on-line policy advocacy tools to contact the elected officials.**

**[ActivistVideo.org](http://ActivistVideo.org): a free video-sharing site for activist communities! Can create your own campaign pages to upload related videos!**

**Official Launch Date: Spring, 2008**

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## U.S. Immigration News Briefs

*Immigration News Briefs (INB), a weekly English-language summary of US immigration news, is forwarded out to the email list of the Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants (CHRI). E-mail: nicaig@panix.com*

### 1. DETAINEE KILLED IN WORKPLACE ACCIDENT

On Dec. 5, Cesar Gonzales-Baeza, a Mexican immigration detainee at the Mira Loma Detention Center in Lancaster, California, was electrocuted when the jackhammer he was using struck a high-voltage power line. Gonzales-Baeza was transferred to the University of Southern California Medical Center's burn unit, where he died on Dec. 7. The accident took place while Baeza and another detainee were moving fence posts as part of a voluntary program that allows detainees to earn \$1 a day or extra visiting hours in exchange for performing kitchen, janitorial or other light work.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials said in a written statement that Gonzalez Baeza suffered a "serious electrical shock while he was performing maintenance duties as part of a volunteer work crew." The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Department of Homeland Security are investigating the death, said ICE spokesperson Virginia Kice. Kice declined to comment on why Baeza was working with a jackhammer.

Baeza's wife, Judith Gonzales, said authorities have provided little information about the accident. "This has been very hard for us," Gonzalez said. "I never expected something like this to happen because he was detained." Greg Moreno, an attorney for Gonzales-Baeza's family, said, "We want to know who was supervising this work and how it is that no one knew about the power line." Gonzales-Baeza, a legal permanent resident, had been picked up on a traffic violation and detained for 10 months while appealing his deportation, Moreno said. "This shouldn't have happened," Moreno said. "This is a man who should have been bonded out. He was a hardworking man, a father of two young boys. He wasn't a threat to society or anyone else. And now he is dead."

Gonzales-Baeza's death is believed to be the first workplace-related death involving an immigration detainee. [Most facilities do not allow immigration detainees to work.] "Typically, all the deaths we know about have involved medical issues," said Paul Wright, who runs Prison Legal News, a newsletter geared toward prisoners, lawyers and rights activists. At least 70 people have died while in federal immigration custody since fiscal 2004.

Despite questions surrounding Gonzales-Baeza's death, on Dec. 11 Los Angeles county supervisors unanimously approved a request from the County Sheriff's Department to spend \$10 million to double the bed space at the Mira Loma facility. In November, the Department of Homeland Security agreed to pay the county \$51 million to house 1,400 immigrants at Mira Loma, according to the

contract obtained by the Los Angeles Daily Journal. County officials charge the Department of Homeland Security \$100 a day to house a detainee, according to the county documents. Plans to expand Mira Loma come just months after the immigration detention center in San Pedro, also in Los Angeles County, was shut down temporarily by federal officials. ICE officials denied the agency plans to expand the detention contract at Mira Loma. "ICE has not entered into a contract at this time to add beds at the facility," Kice said in a written statement. [*Los Angeles Daily Journal 12/21/07*]

### 2. RAIDS HIT HAWAII

Early on Dec. 19, armed ICE agents with search warrants raided a warehouse in the Hawala district of Honolulu, Hawai'i and arrested 11 workers for allegedly being present in the US without permission. Later the same morning, ICE agents raided a construction site for a luxury condominium in downtown Honolulu, conducting floor-by-floor searches and arresting eight workers. Wayne Wills, special agent in charge of the ICE office of investigation in Hawai'i, declined to say who owned the warehouse or give further details about the raids. "We're working with the US Attorney's Office to look at additional charges," he said. The 19 people arrested were taken to the Federal Detention Center near the Honolulu airport.

"The aggressive law enforcement crackdown is highly unusual in the local construction industry given the multiethnic composition of the local workforce," said Pacific Resource Partnership, an organization of contractors and the 7,600-member Hawai'i Carpenters Union, in a statement praising the arrests. Partnership executive director Kyle Chock. said his organization was told the arrested workers are Hispanic and Chinese. "Companies that knowingly break the law by exploiting workers and creating slave conditions are simply unacceptable," said Chock. The Pinnacle condominium construction site is a nonunion location with a small crew of fewer than 50 workers, according to Chock. Partnership officials have been in contact with federal and local authorities about allegations of unauthorized workers, safety issues and unpaid wages, Chock said. [*Honolulu Advertiser 12/20/07; Pacific Business News (Honolulu) 12/20/07; KITV.com (Honolulu) 12/20/07; Honolulu Star Bulletin 12/20/07*]

### 3. CONNECTICUT NONPROFIT RAIDED

On Dec. 13, over a dozen agents from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and other federal agencies raided the office of the nonprofit Community Action Agency in New Haven, Connecticut, which helps poor residents file applications for help with their heating bills from the federally-financed Connecticut Energy Assistance Program. According to Community Action

Agency president Amos Smith, the agents had a warrant demanding all documents from 2003 onward. The raid continued until past 3am on Dec. 14; agents took away as many as 90 boxes of documents and three computers from the office. Smith said the agents asked staff members if they had been instructed to accept applications from immigrants without legal status. The raid was apparently sparked by an employee's complaint—filed last June with the office of state attorney general Richard Blumenthal and in September with federal agencies including HHS—that ineligible immigrants had been receiving energy assistance through the nonprofit. [New York Times 12/18/07]

#### **4. VIGIL AT NYC DETENTION CENTER**

On Dec. 13, over 100 people (50 according to the Village Voice) braved the freezing rain to take part in an interfaith candlelight vigil outside the Varick Street service processing center in downtown Manhattan, New York City, where ICE processes immigrant detainees. The pro immigrant vigil was hosted by the New York City New Sanctuary Movement, a coalition of 19 churches that have banded together to protect and assist families facing deportation. Organizers said they were seeking to remind the public that the Varick Street processing center is often the first stop for New Yorkers who are ultimately deported and separated from their families. "People do get deported straight from Varick Street, or held here for 48 hours before being sent upstate or to New Jersey," said Angad Bhalla, a New Sanctuary organizer. "We just wanted to highlight what is happening right downtown in a building we all pass by all the time." Seven people from a group calling itself New Yorkers for Immigration Control and Enforcement (NY ICE) held a counter-demonstration, yelling insults at the crowd. [Report from the Varick Street Vigil by Juan Carlos Ruiz of New Sanctuary Movement 12/18/07; Village Voice 12/18/07]

Vigil participants included several workers who had just lost their jobs at FreshDirect, a grocery-delivery service, because they couldn't comply with the company's Dec. 9 order requiring them to prove they were authorized to work. Labor leaders accused the company of using the new requirement as a tool to intimidate workers and keep them from joining a union. [Village Voice 12/18/07] In a secret ballot vote conducted by the National Labor Relations Board on Dec. 22 and 23, 80% of the 530 participating workers at FreshDirect voted against joining either of the two unions that were competing to represent them. [New York Times 12/24/07]

#### **5. MARCH, VIGIL AT TEXAS DETENTION CENTER**

On Dec. 16, some 100 activists marched from downtown Taylor, Texas, to the T. Don Hutto immigrant prison at the outskirts of town, which holds families with children facing deportation. At sundown, the activists lit candles and held a vigil, then attempted to deliver holiday toys and wrapping paper into the lobby of the prison as gifts for the detainees. "Free the Children, Now!" chanted the crowd, led by Jaime Martinez, National Treasurer of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). "Close Hutto

Down!" Over more than a dozen protests in the past year, security guards have generally stopped protesters from crossing a line onto prison grounds, but this time the protesters were allowed to deliver their gifts, and prison officials appeared to be processing the toys for distribution to the detainees. The protest was co-sponsored by LULAC and Texans United for Families (TUFF). According to Sherry Dana, an activist from Georgetown, Texas, as of Dec. 14 the Hutto prison held 142 detainees: 13 men, 55 women, 31 boys and 43 girls. The number of detainees can change on a daily basis. [Counterpunch 12/17/07]

On Dec. 18, activists commemorated International Migrants Day with a candlelight vigil in downtown Dallas, Texas. The vigil urged an end to raids against immigrants and the closure of the Hutto prison. [AP 12/18/07]

#### **6. PHOENIX: PRO-IMMIGRANT ACTIVISTS MARCH**

On Dec. 19, about 100 immigrant rights activists marched six miles from Pruitt's Home Furnishings in Phoenix, Arizona, to City Hall to protest Mayor Phil Gordon's decision to end a policy that restricts Phoenix police officers from asking people about their immigration status during routine encounters. The march took place on the day of the last City Council meeting of the year; 25 activists entered City Hall to urge the Council to oppose the policy change. "I implore you to maintain the policy so the immigrant community can maintain trust of the police," Rev. Liana Rowe of Interfaith Worker Justice of Arizona told the City Council. About 30 anti-immigrant activists held a counter-protest outside City Hall.

Activist Salvador Reza, who organized the march, accused Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio of trying to intimidate marchers by sending deputies to patrol areas along the route. A Sheriff's Department van with a billboard on the side that said "stop illegal immigration" trailed protesters most of the way along the march route. Sheriff's deputies arrested nine people in traffic stops near Pruitt's; seven of those arrested turned out to be undocumented immigrants, according to sheriff's department spokesperson Paul Chagolla. Arpaio is a vocal opponent of out-of-status immigrants and has had a number of his deputies trained to act as immigration officers. [Arizona Republic 12/19/07; KTAR.com 12/20/07]

Pruitt's has been the site of weekly protests by rights advocates and supporters of day laborers and counter-protests by anti-immigrant activists. [AR 12/19/07] Reza started bringing protesters to Pruitt's to pressure the store's owner to stop paying off-duty sheriff's deputies to patrol his parking lot. Reza said the off-duty deputies have arrested and deported 65 immigrants in the area so far. "In essence, you have a private individual being able to implement US immigration laws," Reza said. "That's very dangerous and it cannot be tolerated." Reza said his group will continue to protest outside Pruitt's and boycott the store until the owner replaces the sheriff's deputies with private security guards, who do not have the power to deport people. [AP 12/21/07]

# REAL ID Struggles Across the Country

## NYCPP Statement on Driver's Licenses and REAL ID 1/15: New York Civic Participation Project (NYCPP)

Last week, the Department of Homeland Security released the new regulations for the REAL ID Act and set the deadline for states compliance for 2011. No new regulations or extended deadlines can make the REAL ID Act acceptable policy. We continue to oppose local implementation of the REAL ID Act and urge the Federal government to abandon it.

The REAL ID Act is a misguided attempt by the federal government to marginalize an entire group of immigrants in the name of national security that has negative consequences for all Americans. REAL ID creates a costly and complicated national ID system that raises serious privacy and civil liberties concerns for everyone. It does nothing to reform our dysfunctional immigration system and hampers states from dealing with the reality of millions of immigrants who contribute to local economies and to the communities in which they live.

As those of us who worked for immigrant access to driver's licenses in New York know too well, this is another example of how the federal government continues to put pressure on states to incorporate anti-immigrant policies.

The New York Civic Participation Project (NYCPP) has taken the months following our driver's license fight to discuss and analyze the state-wide campaign in a national context. Our vision for what comes next is based on our assessment of the current political climate and an analysis of the New York campaign as it played out in the last four years, and especially the last few months. We believe that the driver's license campaign holds lessons that we need to learn from in order to build power for the immigrant rights movement as we move forward.

Last month on December 1st, we held a Dialogue on Driver's Licenses where over 100 NYCPP members and allies came together to discuss the campaign. Specifically, we analyzed the internal and external circumstances of the driver's license campaign which led us to win fair access to driver's licenses for immigrant communities, but then to lose that major victory in an aftermath of significant backlash. Our dialogue led to some of the following conclusions: We were able to convince the Spitzer administration to make the policy change because we built a diverse coalition that included labor, community and religious allies; we built a base of workers and community members who informed our work and became public spokespeople for the campaign; we put effective pressure on the administration through mobilizations, call-in days and inside political pressure by labor groups. The elected officials representing the neighborhoods where our base held them accountable became the most outspoken supporters of the campaign in the final months.

However, it also became clear that we did not have the political power or an effective communications strategy to hold on to our victory. Elected officials who should have stood by us didn't because many of them did not feel accountable to a base that supported immigrant access to driver's licenses. We did not neutralize key stakeholders in the city or state that could have prevented this issue from becoming a partisan one. In a time where anti-immigrant, racist rhetoric dominates, we were not able to effectively communicate our message and persuade the broader public to support the Governor's decision to provide access.

The experience with driver's licenses in New York state provides a local example of where we are nationally in the immigrant rights struggle. It is clear from our experiences that we need to build broader power in support of our issues. The work we are planning this year as NYCPP is directly connected to doing local work that will strengthen a national movement:

- Opposition to REAL ID and Continued Support for One License for All New Yorkers. We will continue to inform the Governor and other policymakers of our commitment to realizing one license for all New Yorkers and our opposition to REAL ID. We will continue to support efforts to build a diverse coalition combating REAL ID in New York State and push the Governor to stand up for pro-immigrant policies.

- Redefining Victory. We will continue to use the experience of driver's licenses to build leadership among the base. NYCPP will hold trainings for its members on "What is a Victory" to remind our communities of the strength we have built and that our goal of building power for long-lasting change is happening in the process of working toward short-term policy changes. Too often we forget the small victories and accomplishments we have actually achieved by coming together and building our power. In the case of driver's licenses, we were able to stop the suspensions Governor Pataki threatened, stopped the implementation of separate driver's certificates for immigrants, passed the first and most powerful anti-REAL ID Resolution in the country and built a vocal, local base and leadership on this issue.

- Launch an immigrant worker rights platform. We will convene several meetings to reengage our allies from the driver's license fight to create a pro-immigrant worker platform in New York City which we will highlight in a large forum in the Springtime.

- Votas y Voces/ Votes & Voices. This year we are kicking off our program for electoral work. As we use this election year to build power in immigrant communities, we will connect this work to a broad pro-immigrant worker platform that represents the interests of the community. We will incorporate political education and trainings into this work using the experience of driver's licenses to emphasize the need to build political power in our communities.

As we move forward this year, we believe that the lessons we have learned from our fight for driver's licenses can only make us stronger in the struggle for justice for immigrants communities. Reverend Clinton Miller from the Brown Memorial Baptist Church closed the December 1st event with an inspirational speech about struggle and building momentum for the fight ahead. In his words: "Every setback is a setup for a comeback."

## **Maryland To Comply With Real ID; Driver's License Fees To Go Up; No Mail Renewal** **Tuesday, January 15, 2008** **Robert Lang - WBAL Radio**

Maryland Transportation Secretary John Porcari said today the state will create new driver's licenses to comply with the federal Real ID law.

Under the law, the federal government is ordering states to come up with more secure driver's licenses that could be used to board an airplane and enter a federal government building.

However, Porcari and MVA Administrator John Kuo say it will cost up to \$60-million to create the new license, and produce one for every driver in the state. Kuo says that cost will be passed onto motorists in higher driver license renewal fees.

Kuo says the fees to renew driver's licenses would likely go up from \$45 to \$60, starting in 2010, when Maryland begins offering the new driver's license. Kuo says the MVA would review its cost figures, before asking lawmakers to increase the fee.

Real ID also requires driver's to present MVA officials with some form of identification like a birth certificate or passport to prove U.S. citizenship, and other documents like utility bills to prove Maryland residency.

Porcari told members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, because of those requirements, motorists will not be able to renew their driver's license via mail or online, and will instead have to go to the MVA to renew their licenses.

Porcari told lawmakers that requirement will mean longer lines at MVA offices.

Under Real ID, driver's licenses would have to be renewed every five years, instead of every four.

Kuo says motorists whose licenses under 50 years of age whose licenses expire in 2010 would be the first to get the new licenses.

By 2017 he says every driver in the state would have one.

Before agreeing to Real ID, Maryland was one of seven states that did not require proof of U.S. citizenship to get a driver's license.

The others are Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington.

Kuo also says the state has not decided if it will offer a separate license for undocumented immigrants, that would allow those who are not in this country legally to drive, but not use their license to board a plane.

A Baltimore County State Senator wants to prevent the state from doing that.

Democrat Jim Brochin introduced the legislation today.

Brochin told WBAL News that he is concerned about the number of illegal immigrants who may already have driver's licenses.

"We don't know how many of them are legal. How many of them are illegal, because they don't have to show proper documentation that they are legal citizens of the United States right now. It's absurd," Brochin said.

## National Immigrant Solidarity Network is Looking Student Intern/Volunteers! Project: National Immigrant Support Hotline

National Immigrant Solidarity Network (NISN), a national grassroots-based immigrant activist coalition, looking for passionate students and volunteers to support our research to help us create, planning and open our **National Immigrant Support Hotline Service**. Still in the planning stage, this will be a volunteer-based multi-language immigrant support 24-hours toll-free hotline for immigrant-related emergency supports and general support referrals, we're targeting launching day for summer of 2008.

We are looking for students or volunteers with backgrounds on: Immigration law, Public policies and Computer science to help us develop the strategies, policy research, data/information gathering and analysis for this project.

If you're interest to help or for more information, contact us: **(213)403-0131** or e-mail: **info@ImmigrantSolidarity.org**

### Please Donate to National Immigrant Solidarity Network! All Donations Are Tax Deductible!

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##### Virginia state-wide immigrant organizing E-mail list

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##### May Day 2008 national organizing e-mail list

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#### About National Immigrant Solidarity Network

NISN is a coalition of community, immigrant, labor, human rights and student activist groups, founded in 2002 in response to the urgent needs for the national coalition to fight immigrant bashing, support immigrant rights, no to the sweatshops exploitation and end to the racism on the community. Please visit our website: <http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

##### Contact Information:

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