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Vol. V. 77

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Deportations Plummet Under Obama's New Immigration Policy

BY BRIAN KOENIG



President Obama's efforts to tighten the leash on U.S. immigration enforcement have caused a sharp

drop in the number of deportations, according to a report by the Syracuse University Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse. In the last three months of 2011, following the administration's directive to curb deportations of illegal immigrants without criminal records or who came to the United States as a child or student (among other discretionary factors), deportations have plummeted.

The number of deportation proceedings instituted from October to December 2011 by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) plunged to 39,331, a 33-percent decline from the 58,639 filings documented the previous quarter. "Filings are typically lower at this time of year, but even adjusting for

this seasonal drop-off and for late reporting," the report noted, "there appear to have been over 10,000 fewer deportation filings than would have been expected last quarter."

The chief priority of the administration's June 17, 2011 directive was to restrict most deportations to those immigrants with criminal records. "It makes no sense to spend our enforcement resources on these low-priority cases when they could be used with more impact on others, including individuals who have been convicted of serious crimes," Cecilia Muñoz, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, wrote last August in a White House blog post.

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What the President's 2013 Budget Means for the Administration's Immigration Priorities

BY MICHELE WASLIN

This month, President Obama released his FY2013 budget proposal, estimating \$3.8 trillion in total spending in 2013. This budget proposal signals the beginning of the annual federal budget process. Congressional budget and appropriations committees will now spend months deliberating over the appropriations bills,

continued on page 8

Start Your Married Life Free of Debt

...see page 4

Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act

BY LYNN ROSENTHAL

Recently, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Pat Leahy (D-Vermont) and Senator Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

First championed in 1994 by then-Senator Biden, VAWA transformed the nation's response to domestic violence and sexual assault. VAWA has provided

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Angela Davis Calls DREAM Act One of Today's 'Most Important' Fights
...see page 10

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S. Gov't to Veterans: Want Your Immediate Family Members Legalized? Not so Fast

After risking injury, protecting the Motherland, and receiving honorary recognition, returning U.S. veterans face the toughest mission yet: keep wives and parents from getting deported. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has issued guidelines that offer spouses and children of men and women serving in the military immigration relief to “preserve family unity” and ensure “soldier safety and readiness for duty.” The benefits do not extend to parents nor to loved ones of U.S. veterans who have been discharged or face extreme hardships such as injury or PTSD and must now rely on close family members to survive. The Obama Administration recently announced updates which allow for broader prosecutorial discretion in determining immigration cases. USCIS has failed to adapt these changes to cases

involving veterans. In essence, USCIS has determined that not all U.S. veterans, regardless of time of service, valor, and recognitions, deserve the pursuit of happiness by granting their spouses or mothers the same immigration relief given to those who are now serving.

U.S. veterans and active duty soldiers are calling on USCIS to help them keep their families together. Recent government guidelines should give USCIS flexibility to consider additional factors when considering family petitions by members of the armed forces. All U.S. veterans, even those who have completed their service to our country, deserve to be together with the ones they love most.

These immigration cases are about men and women fighting for and willing to give their life to protect our most basic rights: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Yet, because of inflexible



USCIS guidelines, once these brave men and women come back home, their immediate family members (children, wife, and parents) who are undocumented cannot obtain legal status. Guidelines issued by USCIS provide relief to spouses

and children of active duty service men and women but do not include parents nor spouses or parents of U.S. veterans. ●

LGBT Couples Facing Increased Immigration Tensions

According to the Immigration Policy Center, there are approximately 36,000 same sex, bi-national couples living in the United States. These couples have to reach out to alternative methods such as student visas or other legal resources in order to remain together.

Kevin Goodman is associate dean at St. James Cathedral, in Chicago. He met

Anton Pulung-Hartanto, who is originally from Indonesia, at Disney World in 2000.

“I went to Disney with a youth group, to try to show them that one could have a religious experience in a place like that, and that’s where I met my partner,” said Goodman at a forum on LGBT Immigrant Rights held at the Adler School of Professional Psychology on

September 27th.

Pulung-Hartanto worked at Disney, in Florida, as a cultural host with a Q-1 visa, which is provided specifically for cultural exchange programs.

They have been together for 12 years and plan on marrying next spring in Vermont, said Goodman.

Back and Forth

The law known as DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act), approved in 1996, impedes the federal government from recognizing same sex marriages.

While a citizen can request his/her husband or wife and solicit legal residency under the immigration laws, this is not possible for same sex couples even if they were “Legally” married in the United States. This year DOMA has begun to lose its footing.

In mid-February, President Barack Obama determined that DOMA was unconstitutional and ordered the Department of Justice to stop enforcing it in the courts. Attorney General Eric Holder later announced the decision in a letter addressed to Congress.

However, President Obama said that although the law would not be enforced in courts, it should still be applied until it is overturned by Congress or the judicial system.

In March, Immigration Equality, a gay rights advocacy group, asked immigration authorities to suspend deportations of immigrants in bi-national same sex marriages and in cases that involved same sex couples until there has been a final declaration on whether or not DOMA is in fact unconstitutional.

At the end of the month, the spokesman for United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS), Chris Bentley, confirmed in a public announcement that cases involving same sex marriage have been suspended.

Couples with Benefits

A few days after that announcement Bentley said, “No policy changes have been implemented as of yet and the agency plans to follow the president’s directive and continue to uphold the law.” Bentley added that they have only suspended the cases for a brief period of time while lawyers cleared up a “legal issue” but that the agency would probably renew the actions in these cases and would continue to deny the legal status to immigrants in same sex marriages.

One of the couples benefiting from the suspension was in the case of Argentinian Monica Alcota and U.S. Citizen Cristina Ojeda, from Queens. The couple married three years back in Connecticut. In July of 2003 the couple took the bus from Buffalo to New York and during a routine check by immigration authorities they were asked for their papers and then held Alcota for having over-stayed her visa.

In early March, however, a New York judge suspended Alcota’s deportation until the issue regarding DOMA’s constitutionality had been decided and she did not have to return to court until December.

But after the USCIS announcement, the lawyers recommended that couples should exercise caution. Gay rights, and immigration activist, Lavi Soloway said that same sex couples should be careful when applying for immigration benefits as they could put themselves in risk of being deported. ●

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The Immigrant's Journal Legal & Educational Fund, Inc. is an organization dedicated to the educational and economic empowerment of all immigrants and immigrant organizations here in the United States. We at the Journal recognize the enormous contribution of immigrants to this country economically, socially and politically. Since September 11, 2001, however, immigrants have increasingly been discriminated against and Congress has passed legislation curtailing the rights of immigrants here in the U.S., broadly claiming that immigrants are a threat to "National Security." We at the Journal believe that these charges are unfounded, unsubstantiated and exaggerated.

The Immigrant's Journal Volunteer Intern Program: was introduced to give our volunteers the opportunity to work in an immigrant friendly environment while developing the necessary skills for college or law school. They assist our staff in resolving immigration and other legal concerns through personal interviews, radio, email and telephone contact. They also assist the public with citizenship applications and in researching whether or not children of naturalized U.S. citizens have derived citizenship from their parents. Some of our volunteers assist our legal staff by engaging in legal research and writing letters on other legal issues. Volunteer interns are also assigned various other jobs in our Youth Programs.

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How to Start Your Married Life Free of Wedding Debt

The average wedding now costs more than \$25,000, multiple studies show. Few couples starting their lives together have that kind of cash, and many will fund their weddings, wholly or in part, with credit. While it's normal to want the wedding of your dreams, your special day shouldn't lead to years of unmanageable debt.

Money problems, including too much debt, can cause significant disharmony in a marriage and can even lead to divorce. Fortunately, some careful budgeting and smart use of credit can help you prevent wedding-induced money problems from interfering with your marital bliss.

As soon as you set a wedding date, you need to begin thinking about, and discussing, how you'll pay for your big day. Your conversation should encompass several key financial talking points, including:

Credit

Discuss candidly how you've both used it in the past, how you'll use it going forward and what, if any, role credit will play in funding your wedding. If you haven't already done it, exchange your credit scores, and discuss how you both arrived at your respective credit statuses.

Consider enrolling together in a credit-monitoring product. Keeping a close eye on your credit leading up to marriage may help you better understand if and how you should use credit in funding your wedding. Websites like Freecreditscore.com allow you to see your credit score, which is a snapshot of your credit. The site's Credit Score Center can help you understand how your score works, how it's calculated, what factors impact it and when is the best time to apply for credit.

Budgeting

A budget will be key to financial security throughout your married life. Establishing and sticking to a budget for your wedding is not only a good way to avoid overspending, but it's a good team-building exercise for future spouses. You can learn a lot about each other based on how you manage your wedding-planning budget.

For example, every budget includes income. You'll need to realistically discuss your wedding "income" — funding sources you can rely on to help defray the overall wedding cost. Will your parents contribute? Will you dip into some savings? Will you pay for some things



with credit?

Savings

Saving money is often an exercise in compromise. For example, you may want a new car, but to save money you may buy a slightly used one instead of a current model. Saving money on wedding costs is the same. You'll need to look for creative ways to save money.

Fortunately, there are many ways to do this. Changing the time of your wedding to off-peak seasons or days of the week, opting to hold it at a different venue like a park, botanical garden or

even a zoo, choosing less-costly dinner selections and even making invitations and favors yourself, can all save you money.

Many people find it difficult to reconcile the idea of financial matters and romance. But don't underestimate the romantic appeal of starting out your life together free of wedding debt. Having good credit, solid credit scores and little or no debt can be a great foundation for creating financial bliss in your marriage. ● (ARA)



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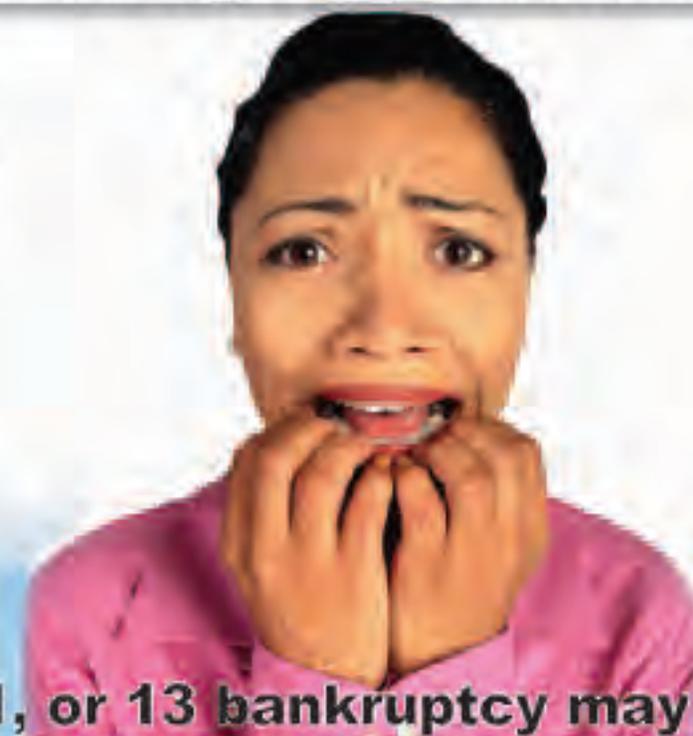
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March Visa Bulletin

1. This bulletin summarizes the availability of immigrant numbers during March. Consular officers are required to report to the Department of State documentarily qualified applicants for numerically limited visas; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Department of Homeland Security reports applicants for adjustment of status. Allocations were made, to the extent possible, in chronological order of reported priority dates, for demand received by February 8th. If not all demand could be satisfied, the category or foreign state in which demand was excessive was deemed oversubscribed. The cut-off date for an oversubscribed category is the priority date of the first applicant who could not be reached within the numerical limits. Only applicants who have a priority date earlier than the cut-off date may be allotted a number. If it becomes necessary during the monthly allocation process to retrogress a cut-off date, supplemental requests for numbers will be honored only if the priority date falls within the new cut-off date announced in this bulletin.

2. Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sets an annual minimum family-sponsored preference limit of 226,000. The worldwide level for annual employment-based preference immigrants is at least 140,000. Section 202 prescribes that the per-country limit for preference immigrants is set at 7% of the total annual family-sponsored and employment-based preference limits, i.e., 25,620. The dependent area limit is set at 2%, or 7,320.

3. INA Section 203(e) provides that family-sponsored and employment-based preference visas be issued to eligible immigrants in the order in which a petition in behalf of each has been filed. Section 203(d) provides that spouses and children of preference immigrants are entitled to the same status, and the same order of consideration, if accompanying or following to join the principal. The visa prorating provisions of Section 202(e) apply to allocations for a foreign state or dependent area when visa demand exceeds the per-country limit.

These provisions apply at present to the following oversubscribed chargeability areas: CHINA-mainland born, INDIA, MEXICO, and PHILIPPINES.

4. Section 203(a) of the INA prescribes preference classes for allotment of Family-sponsored immigrant visas as follows:

FAMILY-SPONSORED PREFERENCES

First: (F1) Unmarried Sons and Daughters of U.S. Citizens: 23,400 plus any numbers not required for fourth preference.

Second: Spouses and Children, and Unmarried Sons and Daughters of Permanent Residents: 114,200, plus the number (if any) by which the worldwide family preference level exceeds 226,000, plus any unused first preference numbers:

A. (F2A) Spouses and Children of Permanent Residents: 77% of the overall second preference limitation, of which 75% are exempt from the per-country limit;

B. (F2B) Unmarried Sons and Daughters (21 years of age or older) of Permanent Residents: 23% of the overall second preference limitation.

Third: (F3) Married Sons and Daughters of U.S. Citizens: 23,400, plus any numbers not required by first and second preferences.

Fourth: (F4) Brothers and Sisters of Adult U.S. Citizens: 65,000, plus any numbers not required by first three preferences.

On the chart below, the listing of a date for any class indicates that the class is oversubscribed (see paragraph 1); "C" means current, i.e., numbers are available for all qualified applicants; and "U" means unavailable, i.e., no numbers are available. (NOTE: Numbers are available only for applicants whose priority date is earlier than the cut-off date listed below.)●

Family-Sponsored All Chargeability	Areas Except Those Listed	CHINA-mainland born	INDIA	MEXICO	PHILIPPINES
F1	01FEB05	01FEB05	01FEB05	01MAY93	22JUN97
F2A	22JUL09	22JUL09	22JUL09	01JUL09	22JUL09
F2B	15NOV03	15NOV03	15NOV03	01DEC92	08DEC01
F3	01JAN02	01JAN02	01JAN02	08JAN93	22JUL92
F4	08OCT00	08OCT00	08OCT00	22MAY96	22DEC88

Source: U.S. Dept. of State



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Simple Safety Advice to Protect Young Children in the Home

When your child skins her knee or bumps her head, how do you comfort her? With a kiss and a hug? No matter how loving and careful you are, it's impossible to shield your children from all of life's little injuries.

Parents often think their children are safest in their own home. Sadly, every year home accidents send thousands of children to the emergency room, many with serious injuries. But by taking some important precautions, such as replacing traditional blinds with cordless, motorized versions, you can help ensure your child avoids serious home accidents.

Here are some safety tips that can help parents keep their children safe at home:

Choking and strangulation prevention

Choking and strangulation can be significant hazards in the home. You can minimize choking risks by making sure small children are served age-appropriate foods cut into smaller-than-bite-size pieces. Never give foods that are choking hazards, such as hot dogs, nuts or raw carrots, to infants. Always stay with your small child while he is eating, so that you can quickly respond if he does run into trouble.

Window treatments with cords are among the biggest home safety hazards for children. Since 1990, more than 200 infants and young children have accidentally strangled on window treatment cords, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The dangling cords are enticing to children, who may become entangled in them. Consider replacing traditional corded shades with motorized shades. These blinds and shades, powered by manufacturers like Somfy Systems, eliminate cord risks because they are controlled by a motor and remote control or wall switch. Motorization also offers many other benefits, from convenience to energy savings, that make them a good choice when you're making your home child-friendly.

Falls

Falling down is part of growing up, and hopefully your little one will suffer nothing more than a few scrapes and bumps. More serious falls, however, can be a significant risk to children's safety. And children falling down are not the only danger; parents need to take precautions to prevent furniture and home items from falling on children.

Keep stairs and floors clear of toys or other objects that could cause someone to trip. Secure stairs with safety gates at the top and bottom of the staircase. Windows should have safety guards and remain locked when not open. Never leave a child alone in a room with an open window, even if the window has a screen on it. A small child's weight can be enough to pop a screen out of a window and expose a child to a potentially fatal fall.

To help ensure your child's falls are minor, minimize situations that could lead to trouble, such as toys placed atop furniture that could tip over when a child climbs up to get the toy. Move furniture away from windows and secure items to the wall with anchor straps. If you have a flat screen in your home, consider wall-mounting it for safety.

Appliance and fire safety

Fire and electricity are fascinating to many children. Very young children may crawl over to a wall outlet and older kids may be tempted to try their hand at cooking without supervision.

To minimize danger, never allow children to play with any kind of power cord, even if it's not plugged in. They'll be safer in the long run if they learn that



cords are not toys. Cap unused wall outlets with safety plugs and use cable channels to hide cords and cables that may attract children.

Keep flammable materials like matches, gasoline and lighters locked away where children can't reach them. When cooking, never let a child use a microwave unsupervised until he is tall enough to reach it safely on his own. Avoid placing hot foods or liquids on the edges of counters or tables; place them safely in the center of the surface where they're away from little hands.

You can't protect your children from all of life's bumps and scrapes. A few precautions, however, can help ensure that all their accidents are the kind you can heal with a kiss and a hug. ● (ARA)

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OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

What the President's 2013 Budget Means for the Administration's Immigration Priorities

continued from page 1

which are unlikely to look anything like the president's budget proposal. However, the president's budget request does provide a window into the administration's immigration priorities and plans.

Immigration enforcement remains the priority in this proposed budget. As usual, USCIS's budget is dwarfed by that of ICE and CBP combined. Even within USCIS's budget, there are proposed increases for enforcement in the form of an expanded E-Verify program. Unfortunately, USCIS will remain a mostly fee-dependent agency, as there is no request for additional appropriations from Congress to cover the costs of processing refugees and asylees or any other costs.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) FY2013 request: \$3.005 billion (a 2.4% decrease from FY2012 enacted) \$0 appropriations requested to cover asylum and refugee processing costs, meaning these costs must be covered by fees paid by applicants for immigration benefits.

Proposes a 9% increase for E-Verify, including \$8.6 million for expansion of the E-Verify Self Check.

Requests \$11 million for immigrant integration and citizenship, which will be taken from the Examinations Fee Account.

Within ICE, the identification and

removal of "criminal aliens" remains the priority. There is a shift away from the 287(g) program and the Fugitive Operations Program, and toward Secure Communities, which is expected to be mandatory and activated in all jurisdictions across the country by the end of FY2013. There is a slight decrease in funding for detention beds, but that does not suggest an easing up of enforcement activity. Rather, there is additional funding for the more cost-effective Alternatives to Detention (ATD) program for low-risk individuals.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) FY2013 request: \$5.644 billion (a 3.7% decrease from FY2012 enacted).

A total of \$1.6 billion to identify immigrants convicted of crimes who may be deportable and to remove them if they are deported.

A proposed decrease of 25% for the 287(g) program. 287(g) is to be scaled back in deference to the Secure Communities program.

A proposed 26.6% decrease for Secure Communities (S-Comm)/Comprehensive Identification and Removal of Criminal Aliens. It's important to remember that for ICE, S-Comm is only the information sharing between databases. Since only 11% of all

jurisdictions remain inactive, there is an overall decrease in funding for equipment and services necessary to activate the program.

A proposed 10.2% increase for the Criminal Alien Program (CAP) and the Law Enforcement Support Center (LESC). When immigrants are identified through S-Comm, the CAP program is responsible for interviewing and initiating removal proceedings against noncitizens held in jails and prisons.

Funding for 32,800 detention beds, which is a reduction from 34,000 beds in FY2012 enacted.

A corresponding proposed 35% increase for Alternatives to Detention (ATD) for low-risk individuals who will not be kept in detention facilities.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) would receive a 2% increase under the proposed budget, much of it going toward great capacity at ports of entry. The US-VISIT program would also be transferred out of the National Protection and Programs Directorate and into CBP, with a budget of \$261.5 million.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) FY2013 request: \$11.979 billion (a 2% increase from 2012 enacted) Maintains funding for 21,370 Border Patrol agents.

Recommends savings of \$1.3 million by closing 9 inland Border Patrol stations

in Idaho, Texas, and California.

Proposes a 2% increase for border security, inspections, and trade facilitation at ports of entry and maintains funding for 21,186 CBP officers.

Includes \$327.1 million for physical and technological infrastructure and surveillance on the borders.

While ICE and CBP received slight budget cuts in the President's budget, it is clear that enforcement remains the top priority, and the Secure Communities program is the centerpiece of the administration's enforcement efforts.

This highly controversial and problematic program will be activated in all jurisdictions across the U.S. very soon. Unfortunately, the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties — the office that investigates complaints and abuses within Secure Communities and other enforcement program—got a 4% budget cut, leaving them with even fewer resources to tackle the mounting problems.

Clearly, the administration's emphasis on enforcement must be better balanced with resources for immigration benefits and services, and watchdog efforts. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that this Congress will provide that much-needed balance when they get around to appropriations. ●



President Barack Obama with community leaders: left, Gerry Hopkins and far right, Brian Figerox, at an exclusive meeting where the Mighty Sparrow (second left) presented a CD with a song "Barack the Magnificent" written especially for the President.

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Deportations Plummet Under Obama's New Immigration Policy

continued from page 1

"This means more immigration enforcement pressure where it counts the most, and less where it doesn't," she added. "That's the smartest way to follow the law while we stay focused on working with the Congress to fix it."

However, according to Syracuse University researchers, there is "little evidence" that immigrants with criminal records are representing a higher ratio of overall deportations. In fact, during the purported timeframe, only 1,300, or 3.3 percent, were to be deported as alleged "aggravated felons." Conversely, from July to September 2011, 3.8 percent were alleged "aggravated felons," while six months ago the proportion was 4 percent.

The researchers added:

An additional 4,193 were charged by ICE for other alleged criminal activity last quarter. When considered together with alleged "aggravated felons," the proportion of filings in the last quarter seeking deportation on grounds of any alleged criminal activity was still less than one out of seven (14%). And even this small slice is continuing to decline. Two years ago, slightly more than one of six (17.3 percent) were alleged to have engaged in criminal activity as the grounds ICE cited for seeking removal.

"People have heard about these policy changes but largely haven't seen any difference," asserted Frank Sharry, executive director of immigration advocacy

group America's Voice.

Many critics have alleged that President Obama's June 2011 directive was largely political, particularly considering deportations have reached record levels, averaging 400,000 per year, under the current administration. Astoundingly, that's double the annual average during President Bush's first term and 30 percent higher than the average when Bush left office. Due to those record numbers, along with Obama's failure to implement so-called "comprehensive immigration reform," there has been an ignition of criticism among the Hispanic community — a growing portion of the Democratic voter base.

"Latino immigrant voters know that the Alabama and Arizona laws didn't come about from Democrats. They're aware the Obama administration is fighting those laws. They know that Republicans blocked the DREAM Act. They know that Mitt Romney is talking about massive self-deportation," Sharry said. "and they're angry and disappointed that the Obama administration promised a legislative breakthrough, didn't deliver it, but has delivered on record deportations."

In response, the President has embarked on a political campaign to recover previous support from this pivotal sector of the American electorate.

"What we've been able to do is, administratively, we've said — let's

reemphasize our focus when it comes to enforcement on criminals and at the borders, and let's not be focusing our attention on hard-working families who are just trying to make ends meet," Obama said in an interview last week. "We've administratively proposed to reform the 'three and ten' program so that families aren't separated when they're applying to stay here in this country."

In emphasizing his newly coined "five more years" campaign slogan, the President assured a Hispanic audience that he would use his second term to push immigration reform. "My presidency is not over," Obama indicated, responding to a question about his failure to actualize an immigration bill. "I've got another five years coming up. We're going to get this done."

Moreover, the President rejected the notion that he broke a campaign promise, while passing the blame to Republicans who were unwilling to embrace any "sensible solutions" on the issue. "So far, we haven't seen any of the Republican candidates even support immigration reform," Obama charged, targeting his potential opponents in the upcoming presidential contest.

Political analysts and commentators have predicted that the Hispanic vote will be critical for Obama's reelection bid, as the minority's rising population has become an increasingly chief component of the American electorate. While

many Hispanics who supported Obama in 2008 may refrain from voting Republican, their disappointment over Obama's immigration efforts may deter them from even voting at all come November 6.

Considering the persistently stale economy — which has led to a sharp drop in Obama's approval ratings — the President will rely heavily on minority voting groups, observers predict. As the Los Angeles Times reported last October, the President has commenced an "all-out push to rebuild his popularity" with Hispanics, which has been "diminished by the weak economy and a lack of progress toward revamping the nation's immigration system."

"The excitement isn't there like it was," asserted Ana Canales, a volunteer and the county chairwoman for the Democratic Party of Bernalillo County in New Mexico, where the Obama campaign has accelerated efforts to recruit Hispanic voters. "There are a lot of people who are saying, 'We're not going to vote.' We have a lot of work on our hands ... to make sure those Latinos understand that he [Obama] is working for us." ●

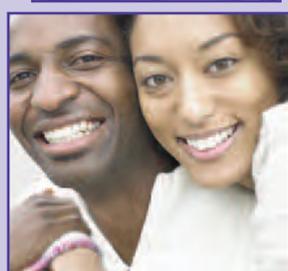
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Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act

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funding to states and local communities to develop specialized law enforcement units, provide services to victims, and improve prosecution of these crimes. Since the passage of the Act, the annual incidence of domestic violence has dropped by more than 50%.

While tremendous progress has been made, violence is still a significant problem facing women, men, families, and communities. Three women die every day at the hands of husbands or boyfriends. Domestic violence causes two million injuries a year to women and untold amounts of human suffering. Domestic violence shelters are still full, hotlines are ringing, and for every victim who has come forward, many more are suffering alone. And it's the nation's youth who are most at risk — young women between the ages of 16-24 suffer from the highest rates of dating violence and sexual assault.

In these challenging times, reauthorizing VAWA is more essential than ever. VAWA helps states and local communities maintain basic services for victims



while strengthening the criminal justice system's response to these crimes. Congress also has an opportunity to build on what we know today about intervening in and preventing violence:

Domestic violence homicides are often predictable and therefore preventable in many cases. The proposed legislation encourages states and local communities to screen victims for warning signs and provide immediate intervention for those at risk.

Sexual assault is a pervasive and misunderstood crime. More than 20 million women in the US have been victims of rape, and less than 1 in 6 rapes are report-

ed to the police. The proposed legislation will help improve the law enforcement response to these crimes, build strong cases that can be successfully prosecuted, and link victims with services.

When young people experience dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault, they need caring peers and adults who can intervene and provide support. The proposed legislation will help schools, youth organizations, and domestic violence agencies work more effectively with youth and engage young people in stopping violence before it starts.

Vice President Biden has often said that the passage of VAWA in 1994 is the legislative achievement he is most proud of from his many years in the Senate; and yet, he knew then that it was just the beginning. For all the victims today, and for future generations, VAWA represents a promise to end violence against women. The bipartisan introduction of VAWA is another step towards fulfilling that promise. I commend Chairman Leahy for his leadership and Senator Crapo for his many years of commitment to ending violence against women. Now it's up to Congress to move quickly to pass this important legislation. ●

Washington Post Lists Treating "Immigrants as People" as "In" for 2012

BY SETH HOY

You wouldn't know it from listening to the ridiculous anti-immigrant rhetoric over the past year, but treating immigrants like actual human beings is a concept some hope catches fire in 2012. The Washington Post recently added "immigrants as people" on "The List: 2012"—their annual zeitgeist-inspired list of ins and outs for the new year. Granted, "peacock feathers" and "Margaret Thatcher" also made the "in" column, but dialing down the immigrant bashing—a message Republican presidential candidates clearly missed during previous debates—is an idea that GOP political strategists are now embracing.

Republican strategists are apparently growing nervous as GOP presidential candidate, Mitt Romney, continues to alienate Hispanic voters. While Gov. Romney has flipped back and forth on his approach to immigration policy over the years, he announced this past weekend that he would veto the DREAM Act—a bill that puts undocumented students who were brought here by their parents on a path towards citizenship—if Congress were to pass it.

According to Mario H. Lopez, president of the Hispanic Leadership Fund, Romney's approach isn't going to sit well with America's fastest growing voting demographic—Latinos.

Romney's tin ear on this topic, on immigration, will hurt him should he be the nominee, is hurting the Republican Party and is hurting every conservative who cares about passing conservative legislation in the future.

But Romney's not the only one. In fact, anti-immigrant rhetoric has increased over the past few years—from Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's "beheadings in desert" to Republican Congressman Lamar Smith's portrayal of immigrants as stealing jobs from Americans. More recently, however, GOP presidential candidate Michele Bachman said she would deport every undocumented immigrant in the country while former GOP contender, Herman Cain, "joked" that he would electrify the border fence as a deterrent for unauthorized crossers. Not exactly rhetoric that warms Hispanic voters' hearts.

Nor, however, does the Obama administration's immigration enforcement strategies. According to a recent Pew poll, an overwhelming majority of Latinos (59% to 27%) disapprove of the Obama administration's deportation strategy, which hit an average of 400,000 since 2009—double the annual average of George Bush's first term.

Perhaps people are just tired of the same failed enforcement strategies and constant immigrant bashing that's plagued the immigration issue for the last several years. Poll after poll shows that most Americans—even those who consider themselves conservative voters—favor a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living and working in America.

Maybe it's time for those holding the microphone to take a step back and listen to what American voters really care about—comprehensive solutions to our immigration problems, not just more empty and hate-filled words. ●

Angela Davis Calls DREAM Act One of Today's 'Most Important' Fights

continued from page 1

Activist, scholar, and author Angela Davis says she is "absolutely" a "supporter of the DREAM Act."

In an interview uploaded recently to SoundCloud by Derek Washington, Chairman of Stonewall Democrats of S. Nevada, Davis explains why she believes the African-American community has a historical "responsibility" to support the DREAM Act.

"It's important because it represents one of the most important arenas in the ongoing struggle for civil rights in this country and particularly for those of us who have a history of struggling for civil rights — I'm speaking very specifically about the African-American community — it is our responsibility to support," Davis said in the interview.

"The DREAM Act is not something



we should be struggling about, it should have been taken for granted but it wasn't so therefore we have to all come together in support of the right of young people

to get an education in this country," Davis went on to say. ●

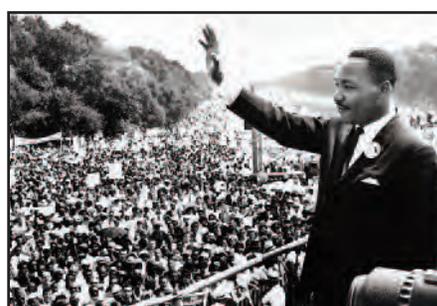
Rev. Dr. Omar Delmonte Participates in Historic Re-Enactment of 1965 Selma-Montgomery Civil Rights March

Rev. Dr. Omar Almonte, pastor of the Central Baptist Church in Bushwick, Brooklyn, was recently in Alabama to participate in a historic recreation of the Selma-Montgomery March for civil rights in 1965. The march, held on Sunday, March 4 treaded the same path Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and thousands of others walked in one of the key moments of the civil rights movement. They confronted racist Alabama laws and severe police repression calling out for equal civil rights for people regardless of the color of their skin.

This years' march will bring together a number of broad streams from the con-

tinuing struggle for justice — the immigrants' rights movement, labor, and civil and human rights organizations to confront a new age of threats to civil rights. Alabama's anti-immigrant legislation, HB56, has had a devastating effect on the state's economy, and has again focused national attention on the state.

Rev. Omar Almonte will march in representation of Make the Road New York, along with many other immigrant' rights leaders from across the country. Almonte, both a Baptist preacher and an immigrant, has picked up the mantle left by those courageous leaders of Dr. King's time. He has been a staunch defender of the rights and interests of



immigrant and working families across New York City. He was instrumental in the passage of a local law limiting NYC's engagement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which takes effect this month and will stop hundreds of deportations each year. ●

DHS Needs to Target Violent Drug Cartels, Not Immigrants Trying to Reunite with Their Families

BY WALTER EWING

Times have changed along the U.S.-Mexico border. In just a few short years, Mexican drug cartels have taken over the people-smuggling business. Although U.S. border walls and fences have proliferated, they have done nothing to prevent the cartels from moving drugs, human beings, guns, and money back and forth across the border. The combination of heightened U.S. border enforcement and cartel violence has made crossing the border increasingly dangerous. Yet large numbers of unauthorized immigrants who were previously deported from the United States continue to risk their lives by crossing the border in order to reunite with their U.S. families. The Obama Administration's current enforcement policies treat these family-bound migrants like hardened criminals, while failing to address the real threat to security — the cartels.

This is the picture that emerges from a recent, comprehensive *New York Times* story about the U.S.-Mexico border. The story highlights a number of facts that

are crucial for understanding U.S. border enforcement and immigration policy today.

Drug cartels are the threat — not the migrants they smuggle. Unauthorized immigrants are often portrayed by anti-immigrant activists as a threat to border security, despite the fact that they are less likely to commit serious crimes or end up behind bars than the native-born. However, the true threats to security are the drug cartels that smuggle unauthorized immigrants into the United States. These are large-scale, exceedingly violent, criminal syndicates that also smuggle drugs into the country, and guns and money into Mexico. As former Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard persuasively argues, it is the sprawling collection of cartel sub-contractors that makes illicit entry into the United States possible in this era of border walls and fences. Therefore, *"until the cartels are eliminated, the border cannot be considered secure. Period."*

More unauthorized immigrants are deportees trying to rejoin their U.S. families. The stereotype of the unauthorized

immigrant is of the young, single male who journeys northward for a low-wage job picking crops or washing dishes. However, that sort of migration across the border has come to a virtual standstill. There are few jobs to be had in the United States, a growing number of jobs to be had in Mexico, and a dwindling number of potential migrants who want to brave the often-deadly gauntlet of cartel smuggling operations and U.S. border enforcement. As a result, a growing number of unauthorized immigrants are people who have lived in the United States for several years, been deported, and are trying to rejoin their U.S. families.

U.S. immigration policy treats these family migrants the same as gang members and hardened felons. In August, the Obama Administration announced that it would target its immigration enforcement efforts on dangerous criminals rather than unauthorized workers without criminal records. Nevertheless, standing policy still treats deportees who cross the border again in order to rejoin their families the same as dangerous criminals. This policy defies common sense and



runs counter to the spirit of the guidelines released in August.

U.S. border enforcement policies don't make much sense. In an era of transnational criminal cartels that deal in drugs, guns, money, and human cargo, the U.S. government is more likely to prosecute the human cargo than it is to attack the transnational cartels. At a time when federal authorities are revisiting guidelines as to who should be deported and who should not, deportees trying to reunify with U.S. families are lumped together with individuals who pose a threat to national security. A system this irrational is in dire need of a comprehensive overhaul. ●

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Burden of Breast Cancer Deaths Shifts to Poor

A new report from the American Cancer Society finds that a slower and later decline in breast cancer death rates among women in poor areas has resulted in a shift in the highest breast cancer death rates from women residing in more affluent areas to those in poor areas. The authors point to screening rates as one potential factor. In 2008, only 51.4% of poor women ages 40 and older had undergone a screening mammogram in the past two years compared to 72.8% of non-poor women.

The findings are published in Breast Cancer Statistics, 2011, which appears in CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians. The report and its consumer version, Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2011-2012, provide detailed analyses of breast cancer trends, present information on known factors that influence risk and survival, and provide the latest data on prevention, early detection, treatment, and ongoing research.

More Highlights from Breast Cancer Statistics, 2011 and Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2011-2012

Breast cancer mortality rates have declined steadily since 1990, with the drop in mortality larger among women under 50 (3.2% per year) than among

women 50 and older (2.0% per year).

In 2011, an estimated 230,480 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Excluding cancers of the skin, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States, accounting for nearly 1 in 3 cancers diagnosed.

An estimated 39,520 women are expected to die from the disease in 2011. Only lung cancer accounts for more cancer deaths in women.

In January 2008 (the latest year for which figures are available), approximately 2.6 million women living in the U.S. had a history of breast cancer, more than half of whom were diagnosed less than 10 years earlier. Most of them were cancer-free, while others still had evidence of cancer and may have been undergoing treatment.

From 2004 to 2008, the average annual female breast cancer incidence rate was highest in non-Hispanic white women (125.4 cases per 100,000 females) and lowest for Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders (84.9). During this time period, breast cancer incidence rates were stable among all racial/ethnic groups.

Although overall breast cancer incidence rates are lower in African

American than white women, African American women have higher rates of distant stage disease; are more likely to be diagnosed with larger tumors; and are more likely to die from the disease.

From 1998 to 2007, female breast cancer death rates declined annually by 1.9% in Hispanics/Latinas, 1.8% in non-Hispanic whites, 1.6% in African Americans, and 0.8% in Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders. Death rates have remained unchanged among American Indians/Alaska Natives.

Analyses by county level poverty rates showed that death rates were highest among women residing in affluent areas until the early 1990s, but since that time rates have been higher among women in poorer areas because the decline in death rates began later and was slower among women residing in poor areas compared to those in affluent areas.

Trends in breast cancer death rates vary by state. During 1998-2007, death rates declined in 36 states and the District of Columbia, but remained relatively unchanged in the remaining 14 states (Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming). The lack of a

decline in these states is likely related to variations in the prevalence and quality of mammography screening, as well as state differences in racial and socioeconomic composition.

Despite much progress in increasing mammography utilization, screening rates continue to be lower in poor women compared to non-poor women. In 2008, 51.4% of poor women ages 40 and older had a screening mammogram in the past two years compared to 72.8% of non-poor women.

"In general, progress in reducing breast cancer death rates is being seen across races/ethnicities, socioeconomic status, and across the U.S.," said Otis W. Brawley, M.D., chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society.

"However, not all women have benefited equally. Poor women are now at greater risk for breast cancer death because of less access to screening and better treatments. This continued disparity is impeding real progress against breast cancer, and will require renewed efforts to ensure that all women have access to high-quality prevention, detection, and treatment services." ●

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New Data Highlights Immigrant Integration and Economic Contributions

BY WALTER EWING

A recent analysis of data from the Census Bureau highlights the degree to which immigrants integrate into U.S. society and contribute to the U.S. economy. In its latest statistical profile of the foreign-born population, the Pew Hispanic Center presents statistics which illustrate that most immigrants have been here for more than a decade, more become homeowners the longer they are here, and growing numbers are becoming U.S. citizens. Moreover, the data show the degree to which immigrants fuel labor-force growth and fill valuable roles in the economy as workers in both high-skilled and less-skilled occupations.

According to Pew's analysis:

The majority of immigrants are not newcomers to this country. As of 2010, more than one-third (38.2%) of the nation's 39.9 million immigrants had come to the United States before 1990, while more than a one-quarter (27.1%) had arrived during the 1990s. Just over one-third (34.7%) had come in 2000 or later.

The longer immigrants are here, the



more likely they are to own a home. As of 2010, only one-quarter (24.9%) of foreign-born heads of households who arrived in the country in 2000 or later owned their own home. But this rose to nearly half (49.1%) of those who arrived during the 1990s and more than two-thirds (67.4%) of those who arrived before 1990.

Immigrants are becoming naturalized U.S. citizens in large numbers. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of immigrants who were naturalized citizens increased by 5 million, from 12.5 million

to 17.5 million. Those 5 million newly minted citizens are also potential new voters.

Immigrants have become a driving force in the growth of the U.S. population, which is a key component of growth in the labor force. Between 2000 and 2010, the size of the foreign-born population increased by 28.2%, while the native-born population grew by only 7.6%.

Immigrants fill vital roles in both highly skilled and less-skilled occupations. As of 2010, the foreign-born

accounted for:

- 42.6% of workers in farming, fishing, and forestry.
- 31.1% of workers in building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.
- 22.9% of workers in construction.
- 22.4% of workers in production occupations.
- 22.2% of workers in computer and mathematical occupations.
- 21.2% of workers in life, physical, and social sciences.
- 20.5% of workers in food preparation and serving.
- 18.1% of workers in personal care and service.
- 17.7% of workers in architecture and engineering.
- 17.3% of workers in health care support.

The Pew data illustrate the degree to which immigrants are part of the nation's social and economic fabric. Immigrants and the native-born do not exist in separate and distinct worlds. In fact, their lives and fates are very much intertwined. This is a critical fact that must be kept in mind if we are to have a meaningful debate about immigration in this country. ●

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- * Planning tips to help minimize your tax bill
- * The importance of keeping good records
- * Benefits of starting a retirement plan
- * Sales tax issues
- * Workers compensation issues

Figeroux & Associates

To schedule a free consultation contact our offices below:

Tel: 718-834-0190

26 Court Street, Suite 701, Brooklyn, NY 11242

Tel: 718-363-7788

1105 Nostrand Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11225

Testimonials from Journal Members

Immigration

I have been a member of the Immigrant's Journal Legal & Educational Fund since 2006. I was lost until I found this organization, which provided me with an identification card and my taxes. There were so many options open to me that I was not aware of before consulting with attorney Brian Figeroux as a member of the Journal. The free services and monthly seminars helped me to stay strong and informed.

Mary

Abused Spouse

I finally found someone who I fell in love with and who was willing to help me. In 2008 we were married, and my husband proceeded to file a petition for an alien relative under the attorney's advisement. Everything seemed fine for a little while, and then my husband began to behave strangely. He began to hold the fact that I was undocumented over my head and he was emotionally causing me grief. I felt abused. Our situation got better and then it got worse; at our initial interview there were many discrepancies, which caused us to fail the first interview. We were granted a Stokes interview. I was so worried after the first one had failed that I begged my husband to straighten up, but he refused. We failed the Stokes interview, and I was put into deportation

proceedings. I was so distraught. I ran to the office of Figeroux and Associates; with my unlimited free consultations I was able to speak to the attorney for free. He told me not to worry; my husband was abusing me by refusing to cooperate with me and taunting me about my undocumented status. Mr. Figeroux and the Immigrant's Journal helped me through the most difficult time in my life. I filed the self-petition for abused spouses, (VAWA), and I got my green card!

I just want to say thank you, and share my story.

Jennifer

Divorce

I am undocumented and was looking for an attorney who I could trust, and I would handle my case admirably. I became a Journal member in 2009 and decided to get a divorce the following year. I used my free consultations as a member of the Journal to meet with the attorney, Brian Figeroux. I felt good about him handling my case after speaking with him. My husband was a bit troublesome, so in November of 2010 Mr. Figeroux advised me to file a contested divorce being that my husband and I had a few assets, and we could not come to an agreement on who would get what. As a member of the Journal I was able to file taxes which came in handy while going

through a contested divorce. About nine months later after a lot of back and forth between my husband and I, I was divorced, happy and a lot wealthier than when I was married!

Thank you so much,
Claudette

Personal Injury

I am a permanent resident, and I have been a member of the Immigrant's Journal Legal and Educational Fund since 2005. I support the organization in any way I can. It has been very helpful for me and my family. Early this year my son and I were in an auto accident. Thank God our lives were spared, but the right side of the car was totaled. I suffered minor back pain, and my son seemed to be fine, maybe because he was secured in his car seat. Using my free legal consultations awarded to me by the Journal, I made an appointment and spoke to the attorney. He took my case and at the end of it all I was very thankful. I received full property damage from the other driver's insurance company. I also received money for the wages lost during the time I had to take off from work, and full medical coverage for soft tissue damage and \$7,500 for pain and suffering.

Thank you,
Rondel

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My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. — Hosea 4:6

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- Assistance to get your Tax ID
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Annual membership fee is \$150.00

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Motor Vehicle Accident Claims

BY JOHN BENJAMIN & LOUVE STEELE

You're driving along and suddenly you're hit! What do you do next? For many people, that is a blank page. Here are some ways to best handle the situation. Remember, time is of the essence.

• **Stay at the Scene of the Accident and Wait for the Police and/or EMS to Arrive.** The most important rule for all car accidents is that you NEVER leave the scene of an accident until it is appropriate to do so.

• **Check on All Drivers and Passengers.** Before checking property damage, make sure that everyone else involved in the accident is okay. Be sure to get medical attention for anyone who may need it. If a person is unconscious or complains of neck or back pain, DO NOT MOVE THEM until qualified medical personnel arrive.

• **ALWAYS Call the Police.** Especially if the accident involves significant property damage, physical injury, or death, you may need to call the police. Ask that a police report be filed in situations where law enforcement officers do arrive at the scene, and obtain the name and badge numbers of any responding officers.

• **Exchange Information.** Talk to the drivers of any other vehicles involved in the accident. Be sure to get their names, phone numbers, addresses, drivers' license numbers, license plate numbers, and basic insurance information. If there are passengers in any of the vehicles, obtain their names, telephone numbers, and addresses as well. When talking to drivers of other vehicles, you should try to be cordial and cooperative in determining that everyone is okay and in exchanging basic information.

• **Talk to Witnesses.** Ask every witness what they saw. Write down what they tell you and, if they agree, simply get their names or addresses and phone numbers so that you, your attorney, the insurance company, or the court can contact them again.

• **Take Pictures – Property Damage Estimate.** Take photographs of any damage to your vehicle as soon as possible after the accident. Having photographic proof will help your insurance adjuster determine how much you should be compensated for the damages to your car, and may also assist your case in court, if needed.

• **Relax and Stop Worrying!** Disregard the myth you heard about your insurance rate going up after an accident.

Your policy covers you, in addition to all passengers in your vehicle for injuries sustained.

• **Consult Figeroux & Associates.** Let us take the burden off of you! After your free consultation and you retain our services, we will make sure your medical bills are paid by the insurance carrier. If you lose time from work due to the accident, we will file a loss wage claim on your behalf, as well as resolving any personal damage issues.

Should you be a passenger, rest assured that there is no fault to you. In fact, you can bring forth a claim for all vehicles involved unless liability is clearly proven to be with the driver of one or more vehicles.

Should you be a pedestrian/bicyclist, you can usually file a claim against the driver's or vehicle owner's auto liability insurance policy. Most states require that vehicle owners and drivers carry liability insurance to cover personal injuries to third parties and damage to third parties' property. Recoveries are dependent on whose fault the accident was and various state statutes. Remember, the lawyer you hire does make a difference.

PREMISES TRIP & FALL CLAIMS

You're walking along the sidewalk or in a building and you somehow get hurt. You now have a Premises Liability Issue. Premises liability addresses absent of the breach of duty that is owed by an owner or occupier of property to protect invitees from dangerous conditions and defects on the property. The owner/occupier has the

responsibility to exercise reasonable care in the management of the property to assure people are protected from an unreasonable risk of harm.

• **Call/Seek Medical Help.** Receiving prompt medical treatment is the best way to ensure that your injuries heal properly. Furthermore, seeking medical treatment will help you document that your injuries were in fact caused by your slip and fall accident.

• **Take Mental Note of Your Exact Location.** Know the cross-streets, building numbers, or any descriptive attributes surrounding your place of injury. It can prove to be extremely vital to your potential lawsuit.

• **Get the Names and Contact information of any Witnesses.** If you are able, retrieve as much information from eyewitnesses as possible. Every and any amount of information is helpful.

• **Take Pictures of the Exact Location Where the Incident Occurred.** Go back to the scene of incident as soon as possible for pictures. Physical evidence of the appearance of the place of incident is a key factor in maximizing your budding case.

• **Seek Legal Counsel ASAP!!!** It is extremely important for you to protect your rights! A premises liability lawyer will be able to review the accident and provide you with an explanation of your rights. Additionally, the attorney will be able to investigate the accident in an official capacity. Be prompt in retaining a lawyer as there are time restraints for filing a claim. ●

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7:00am - 08:00am

◇ Operation Rescue with AGM - Pastor James' Show

8:00am - 09:00am

◇ Redeemers Tabernacle - Bishop Clarke's Hour

9:00am - 10:00am

◇ Atmosphere of Deliverance - Pastor Dupeola

10:00am - 11:00noon

◇ Gospel Music Mix (Caribbean & African-American popular artists)

11:00am - 12:00noon

◇ ICE (Immigration & Caribbean [Cultural] Exposé)

12:00noon - 02:00pm

◇ The Global View - Gospel Music & Positive Talk

2:00pm - 03:00pm

◇ Music Mix

3:00pm - 04:00pm

◇ NACC Empowerment Hour

4:00pm - 05:00pm

◇ Music Mix

5:00pm - 06:00pm

◇ Welcome to America

6:00pm - 07:00pm

◇ The Caribbean Consulates Show - Hosted by St. Vincent Consulate General

7:00pm - 10:00pm

◇ DJ CALLI B



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The lawyer you hire does make a difference!

Figeroux & Associates

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