

A conversation with Sue Chinn and Marielena Hincapié on July 11, 2013

Participants

- Sue Chinn — Campaign Manager, Alliance for Citizenship
- Marielena Hincapié — Executive Director, National Immigration Law Center and Co-Founder, Alliance for Citizenship
- Alexander Berger — Senior Research Analyst, GiveWell
- Joshua Rosenberg — Research Analyst, GiveWell

Note: This set of notes was compiled by GiveWell and gives an overview of the major points made by Sue Chinn and Marielena Hincapié.

Summary

GiveWell spoke with Sue Chinn and Marielena Hincapié of the Alliance for Citizenship about policy advocacy related to the U.S. immigration reform bill of 2013. Conversation topics included: details about the Alliance for Citizenship's structure and operations, funding for immigration reform advocacy, and advocacy groups involved in this effort.

Background on Alliance for Citizenship

The Alliance for Citizenship (A4C) is a broad coalition of more than 60 organizations working to create a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States. A4C was founded in December 2012 and will continue operations until an immigration reform bill is passed and signed into law by the President.

There are eight organizations that play a leading role in A4C, helping to oversee fundraising and program areas. These organizations are:

1. Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
2. AFL-CIO
3. Center for American Progress
4. National Immigration Law Center
5. National Immigration Forum/National Immigration Forum Ed Fund
6. America's Voice/America's Voice Ed Fund
7. Center for Community Change/Campaign for Community Change
8. National Council of La Raza/NCLR Action Fund

Other kinds of organizations in A4C include women's advocacy groups (e.g. Planned Parenthood), environmentalist groups (e.g. the Sierra Club), civil rights groups (e.g. the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights), Asian American groups, African American groups, gay and lesbian groups, and online political organizing groups (e.g.

MoveOn). One of the notable developments in this round of immigration reform advocacy has been the diversity of organizations that are involved.

The Alliance for Citizenship's role in immigration advocacy

A4C has a small staff that supports advocacy for a road to citizenship in two key ways:

- 1) Directing resources to key local partners
- 2) Coordinating organizations

A4C uses most of its budget for re-granting to support important policy research, communications, and field organizing related to the path to citizenship. As part of the re-granting process, A4C makes contracts with local groups to produce certain deliverables. Funding fieldwork generally involves supporting the capacity of organizations—helping to increase staffing, fund events and communications, etc.—in important districts so that they can educate and persuade their representatives to support reform.

Additionally, A4C helps organizations to share information and coordinate actions in policy work, fieldwork, communications, and other areas. For example, A4C convenes a weekly communications phone call with about 150 organizations where those groups can discuss best practices and coordinate messages. After the Senate bill was made public, A4C's Policy Table formed 34 different policy sub-committees to dig into various aspects of the bill and help organizations prepare for the Senate Judiciary Committee markup.

Many organizations that are not explicitly part of A4C but are working to get the current immigration reform bill passed, like business advocacy groups or FWD.us, participate in A4C's coordination meetings.

Other influential pro-reform organizations

Because of the nature of the current immigration debate in the House of Representatives, some of the most important constituencies in the reform movement are law enforcement communities (particularly in border areas), faith communities, businesses, educators, and young people. Some examples of influential pro-reform groups among these constituencies are:

- Bibles, Badges, and Business, a network of conservative allies convened by the National Immigration Forum
- Evangelical Immigration Table
- Catholic bishops
- The National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the American Association of Community Colleges

California is a particularly important state for the reform effort because it has 10 or more members of the House that will play a role in the immigration debate. In California, the

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) is leading an immigration table in which dozens of organizations across the state participate.

Resources devoted to immigration advocacy

A4C has an annual budget of \$32 million, of which they have already raised \$21.5 million. The organization's funding comes primarily from foundations—both 501(c)3's and 501(c)4's. They also receive funding from labor unions and individuals. However, A4C's budget does not include all of the resources devoted to ensuring the passage of the immigration bill by its members. For instance, the SEIU has devoted millions of staff resources toward the current round of immigration reform efforts, which is not counted in A4C's budget.

Ms. Chinn and Ms. Hincapié could not give an estimate for the total spending on immigration advocacy related to the current legislation because of the large number of groups in the space. Such estimates would be complicated by the fact that many contributions are made in-kind.

Alliance for Citizenship's Funding Needs

The A4C hopes to raise about \$12 million in additional funding. If its fundraising is successful, the A4C will mostly fund more fieldwork and communications.

The immigration reform campaign is expected to conclude by the end of the year.

Groups representing potential future migrants

The A4C identified labor organizations and business communities as groups representing potential future workers in the US. An example of such a group is the National Guest Worker Alliance. Other organizations, like Asian Americans for Justice, advocate for potential future migrants in the sense that they are pushing for reform that allows more family reunification. The A4C supports processing the family-based immigrant visa backlogs so that families can be reunified and is concerned about the potential elimination of Diversity, Sibling, and Adult Married Children Visas.

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