



## Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials (GALEO) Established: 2003

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### **MORE THAN A “TEMPORARY” FIX: The Role of Permanent Immigration In Comprehensive Reform**

In the January 2006 issue of Immigration Policy's *IN FOCUS*, Dr. Walter A. Ewing, Research Associate with the Immigration Policy Center, recommends that an effective and a comprehensive “immigration reform” debate needs to not only reflect immigration law enforcement and guest worker programs, but that it also must create a just pathway for permanent immigration. Without pathways for permanent immigration, any immigration reform, the report concludes, will be ineffective. Because of the arbitrary guidelines and flaws of the inadequate current immigration system many of the vital contributions of temporary workers and permanent immigrants demanded by the U.S. economy go unrecognized.

For the full report, please visit [www.galeo.org](http://www.galeo.org) and look under the Reports & Publications section.

#### **Permanent immigration must be expanded because...**

- Permanent immigrants are more likely to assimilate to society, learn English, and achieve their economic potential as workers taxpayers, entrepreneurs, and consumers.
  - When given the chance the seasonal labor will become more productive and climb the job ladder.
  - In 2003, 63% of immigrants that had been in the U.S. for 7-9 years spoke at the proficient English level.
  - Immigrants welcome the chance to work legally in the U.S. in order to save money to build a house, start a business, or buy consumer goods.
- Permanent immigrants provide the economic and social benefits of a stable workforce, which incorporates into the U.S. society, compared to temporary workers, fill higher skilled jobs, earn higher incomes, create businesses, and revitalize urban areas.
- A stable population will also be created through permanent immigration with the creation of family roots and a more invested interest in safe and clean neighborhoods, good schools, and effective public services.
  - In 2003, 37% of immigrants that had been in the U.S. for 7-9 years owned a home.
- A temporary worker program that does not allow valuable and productive skilled labor to attain permanent residence is a waste of talent. This talent is critical in filling the gaps of the labor force that ultimately assist in achieving full economic potential.