



# Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees

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Despite rising to the top of the domestic policy agenda last year, comprehensive immigration reform fell victim to the politics of mid-term Congressional elections. Will Congress finally pass—and the President finally sign—comprehensive immigration reform legislation this year?

To find out, GCIR asked some of the leading national immigration policy advocates to dust off their crystal balls and—in 250 words or less—offer their best predictions on federal legislation affecting immigrants and refugees. Eight advocates took on this challenge, and we thank them for taking the time to share their insights and expertise.

GCIR invites you to read their “predictions” and share with us your own perspectives, comments, and suggestions by emailing Daranee Petsod, our executive director, at [daranee@gcir.org](mailto:daranee@gcir.org).



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**Together, American voters may just create enough furor that Congress has no choice but to come through with results.**

We're going to hear a lot about immigration in the 110th Congress—at least in its first nine months, until early autumn 2007. That's when the 2008 campaign season kicks off in earnest, and that's the window for Congress to pass immigration reform. Will Congress succeed? No one knows.

The political pressures will be intense. Both parties will start the session—they already have—promising to step up and solve the problem. And this will be followed by a flurry of activity: bills and hearings and speeches for the cameras. But both parties will also be tempted by politics: Democrats by the prospect of a divided GOP (John McCain and Mitt Romney, or some other anti-reform candidate, scratching each other's eyes out over immigration), Republicans by worries about their conservative base and how it might vote in a GOP primary where border security is a wedge issue. So for every member trying to pass reform, there will be another relishing the prospect of a partisan blame game, fully expecting the process to run off the tracks before any bill becomes law.

But this doesn't mean there is no hope. Because the American public, fed up with the dysfunctional immigration system, is hungry to see Congress get something done.

Employers who can't find enough workers. Latinos with friends or family living in the shadows. Ordinary soccer moms and dads increasingly angry that Washington can't seem to solve the problems we face—can't in this case secure the border or end the rampant illegality spreading from state to state. Together these voters may just create such a furor that even the most calculating members of Congress have no choice but to come through with results.

And wouldn't that be something—talk about democracy in action. It may sound like a long shot. It's easy to be cynical about Washington. But sometimes even politics as usual has to give way to that other kind of politics—the politics of what voters want.