

PETER T. KING

Member of Congress
Second District, New York

339 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-3202
(202) 225-7896

1003 PARK BOULEVARD
MASSAPEQUA PARK, NY 11762
(516) 541-4225

For Suffolk County:
(631) 541-4225

pete.king@mail.house.gov
www.peteking.house.gov
Twitter: @RepPeteKing



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3202
April 23, 2014

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

CHAIRMAN, COUNTERTERRORISM AND INTELLIGENCE

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND
COMMUNICATIONS

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT & INVESTIGATIONS

Hon. John Boehner
Speaker of the House
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker *John*

I am writing in regard to your stated intention to pass meaningful immigration reform legislation based upon the principles you enunciated earlier this year. It would be in our country's national interest as well as the interest of our party if this could be achieved and I want to assure you of my support as this effort goes forward.

I believe that a confluence of events makes it possible at this time to craft legislation which would (a) establish strong and real border controls and enforcement and (b) provide undocumented immigrants with the mechanism to pursue legal status and, ultimately, obtain citizenship.

The border security and enforcement components are essential. We cannot repeat 1986 where comprehensive legislation – including amnesty – was enacted and in the ensuing years tens of millions of immigrants entered the United States illegally or overstayed their visas. While the security provisions in S. 744 and Chairman McCaul's Border Security bill are a good base from which to work, the strongest language must be included in the final legislation to prevent this or any administration from waiving compliance.

As to the issues of legalization and citizenship for undocumented immigrants, I fully understand and appreciate the argument that illegal behavior should not be rewarded. The reality though is that we are not going to deport 11 million immigrants. Additionally Democrats realize that comprehensive legislation cannot be passed without strict border and entry controls which will prevent the type of illegal immigration we have seen for almost 30 years. Legalizing the undocumented would bring the immigrants out from the shadows. Once legalized – and after compliance with conditions such as learning English and paying backtaxes – they should be eligible to apply for citizenship. The alternative would be a permanent unassimilated underclass similar to what exists in several European countries.

Finally, of course, there is the reality that we are a nation of immigrants and the overwhelming majority of those who want to come to the United States are hard-working people who make valuable contributions to the American mosaic. As a grandson of immigrants who grew up in an immigrant culture and neighborhood, I believe that Republican policies of self-reliance and family values would have much appeal to immigrants if we take the time to articulate them. Passing legislation consistent with your principles would be a significant start to that discussion.

All the best.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter T. King", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

PETER T. KING

Member of Congress