
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Joe Davis, Sr.

(414) 286-3777

Ald. José G. Pérez

(414) 286-3762

Immigration reform holds promise for Milwaukee, U.S., aldermen say

The City of Milwaukee and the U.S. stand to benefit under much needed immigration reform principles announced by President Obama earlier this week, **Alderman Joe Davis, Sr.** and **Alderman José G. Pérez** said today.

The President's four-part immigration reform agenda can help Milwaukee retain immigrants who are already contributing in positive ways in the community, and who are eager for a chance to "play by the rules," said Alderman Davis, who was part of a White House briefing on the President's plans in his capacity as a member of the Board of Directors for the National League of Cities (NLC).

"In my experience as chair of the City of Milwaukee's Sister Cities Committee, I know firsthand that our city has seen a very diverse influx of African and Hispanic immigrants, and those communities are growing," said Alderman Davis, chair of the Common Council's Community and Economic Development Committee and long active in promoting international relations and trade opportunities to benefit the city.

"The President's reform ideas can help ensure that these residents who are not yet legal U.S. citizens get a respectful, fair and honest opportunity to become legal and fully-vested citizens of our great nation and our city," Alderman Davis said. "Milwaukee will be made stronger and will be enhanced in many ways by their presence and their contributions."

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Immigration Reform/ADD ONE

Alderman Davis said the President of the National League of Cities, Avondale, Arizona **Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers**, attended President Obama's speech in Las Vegas, and said this afterward: "Far too often the burdens of this broken system fall on local governments, and failure to act on this issue is increasingly detrimental to the livelihood of our cities and towns. Comprehensive immigration reform will provide municipal leaders the critical support necessary to integrate immigrants into our communities, and allow them to contribute both economically and culturally to our wonderful, diverse nation."

Alderman Pérez, who represents the city's most heavily Latino populated aldermanic district, said the current system "is flat-out broken."

"Our system forces millions of hard working, law-abiding, family-centered and truly good people into the shadows," said Alderman Pérez, vice chair of the Council's Community and Economic Development Committee.

Alderman Pérez, who is supportive of most of President Obama's reform principles, said he hopes the reforms include modifications so that deportation is used sparingly, and is reserved for cases involving unlawful activity. "I believe we are deporting people at a rate that is too high, and for reasons that are overly punitive," he said. "The result is that we are splitting up loved ones, and hurting families. I would like to see our policies modified so that can be prevented."

President Obama's reform plans emphasize strengthening our borders, cracking down on companies that hire undocumented workers, streamlining the legal immigration system for families, workers, and employers, and holding undocumented immigrants accountable before they can earn their citizenship. According to information provided by the White House, this means "requiring undocumented workers to pay their taxes and a penalty, move to the back of the line, learn English, and pass background checks."