

**Call for Action on Immigration Reform
Advancing the Interests
of People of African Descent
An Action Agenda**

By The Pan African Unity Dialogue

Research supporting this document was conducted by Dr. George Irish, Dr. Waldaba Stewart and Angelo Laine. It is a contribution of the Caribbean Research Center at Medgar Evers College.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part I: THE CALL FOR ACTION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

A- THE GOAL

B- AFFECTED NATIONALITIES AND CONSTITUENCIES

C- AFFECTED CONSTITUENCIES BY ECONOMIC SECTOR

ECONOMIC SECTOR **A** for Small and medium sized farmers of African descent and legal farm laborers in general.

- a) concern /issues
- b) action items

ECONOMIC SECTOR **B** for Persons of African descent residing adjacent to and/or in communities in which groups of immigrants reside.

- a) concern/ issues
- b) action items

ECONOMIC SECTOR **C** for Para-Professional, lower management and trained professionals including teachers and nurses

- a) concern/ issues
- b) action items

ECONOMIC SECTOR **D** for Legal Residents and Citizens who sponsor relatives

- a) concern/issues
- b) action items

ECONOMIC SECTOR **E** for Community leaders, religious leaders, local political leader and advocates for a just immigration system.

- a) concern/issues
- b) action items

Separate documents

Part II: References and Supporting documents

- D.REFERENCES TO THE RELEVANT SECTIONS OF LEGISLATION

- Supporting documentation for economic sector A
- Supporting documentation for economic sector B
- Supporting documentation for economic sector C
- Supporting documentation for economic sector D
- Supporting documentation for economic sector E

Part III: Legislation language

- Economic sector A: legislation

Economic sector B: legislation
Economic sector C: legislation
Economic sector D: legislation
Economic sector E: legislation

Part I

Call for Action on Immigration Reform Advancing the Interests of People of African Descent An Action Agenda By The Pan African Unity Dialogue

Introduction

The Pan African Unity Dialogue (PAUD) is a periodic gathering of leaders of Afro descendant constituencies, convened by the Institute of the Black World 21st Century, that seeks to strengthen relationships among people of African ancestry in the United States from any part of the world, including African Americans, Caribbean Americans, Continental Africans and Afro-Latinos. It promotes collaborative actions aimed at advancing the interests and aspirations of people of African descent in the United States and globally.

The members of PAUD have concluded that it is in the best interest of their constituencies to engage more actively the struggle to ensure the enactment of just and effective immigration policy reform for the future.

The PAUD notes the fact that the *Black Alliance for Just Immigration* and *Congressional Black Caucus* joined forces with an alliance of Hispanics and others in a failed attempt in 2007 to pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation. The efforts of these organizations also did not result in the passing of the

Dream Act in 2011, which would have helped innocent young people of undocumented parents who were brought to this country as minors to achieve their dream of contributing to the success of our nation.

It was observed that in the previously described efforts there was less than enthusiastic support by a significant portion of the African descendant community residing in this country.

The PAUD has decided to reach the disinterested segments of their respective constituencies and share with them the following Action Agenda, in the hope that the inclusion of their proposed language will strengthen and expand the coalition working for the adoption of positive immigration reform policies and regulations.

Accordingly, this initiative is intended to convert well-meaning passive supporters in African descendant communities into a force fighting for a positive immigration reform which reflects their interests.

The Goal

The primary goal of this Initiative is to ensure the inclusion of legitimate concerns of constituencies of African descent in the discussion of immigration reform legislation and regulations.

Affected Nationalities and Constituencies

-The constituencies represented by the undersigned leaders include:

- African descendants, Africans and African Americans born in the United States of North America**
- Immigrants from Continental Africa**
- African descendants from Central and South America**
- African descendants from the Caribbean**

CONSTITUENCY REACTIONS SORTED BY ECONOMIC SECTOR

Economic Sector A:

Small and medium sized farmers of African descent and legal farm laborers in general.

Concerns / Issues:

- It is alleged that this economic sector is being adversely affected by competition from large farm companies that are beneficiaries of current agricultural guest worker arrangements.
- It is also alleged that as guest worker activity increases, the wages of farm workers decrease

Action Items:

- We call for a study financed by the Department of Agriculture on whether large farm corporations utilizing the Guest Worker program have an unfair advantage over small farmers.
- We also call for a study financed by the Department of Agriculture on the impact that the Guest Worker program may have on the decrease in farm worker wages as guest worker activity increases.
 - If the study shows that small farmers are unfairly disadvantaged, we call for a program that will assist small farmers to avail themselves of the Guest Worker Program and/ or provide them with an offset subsidy.

Economic Sector B:

Persons of African descent residing adjacent to and/or in communities in which groups of immigrants reside.

Concern/Issue:

- There have been complaints that in some instances where special resources are made available to new immigrant groups, that there may be bias/discrimination in the delivery of social and economic services to new immigrants of African descent and other similarly situated constituencies residing in the same community (See Attachment Two).

Action Item:

- We call for the modification of (Title VI SEC 611 and 612 'Provisions for New Immigrants') to include equal participation by low income persons of African descent in any CAPACITY BUILDING AND ADJUSTMENT SERVICES financed under this Act.

Economic Sector C:

Para-Professional, lower management and trained professionals including teachers and nurses

Concern/Issue:

▪ This group is losing out to H1 and HB Visa competition being generated by large corporations, scientific institutions and universities that take advantage of widespread abuse of the work visa system to bring in cheap labor (See Attachment Three).

Action Item:

• We call for language that will reduce the use of visas to avoid paying comparable wages to similarly qualified U.S. residents and citizens.

Economic Sector D:

Legal Residents and Citizens who sponsor relatives

Concerns/Issues:

▪ Members of this economic group that are in the U.S. legally have petitioners who appear to experience undue delays in the waiting line. There are perceptions that the difference in waiting time for petitioners from some countries may be the result of biased interpretation of immigration policies and unfair practices in the management of the immigration process.

▪ In addition, there appears to be difference in determination and treatment of some classes of refugees such as Haitians (See Attachment Four D).

Action Items:

- We call for inclusion of provisions for independent research grants to investigate the role of bias in the Visa processing system and to ensure that there is transparency and efficiency in the processing of applications.
- We call for the strengthening of the section of the Immigration Reform Legislation that can address the issue of disparities in the issuance and processing of visas from nations with large populations of people of African descent.
- There must be provisions for giving Haitian Refugees the same consideration that is granted to Cuban and Eastern European refugees.
- We demand an equitable system in the allocation of visas to countries with large African descendant populations.

Economic Sector E:

Community leaders, religious leaders, local political leader and advocates for a just immigration system.

Concern/Issue:

- There is a perception among this constituency that there is sometimes bias in the interpretation of policy and application of immigration laws and regulations (See attachment Five E).

Action Item:

- We call for a requirement in immigration reform legislation that units of government responsible for policy interpretation, and application of immigration law, include appropriate and adequate number of representatives of communities of African descent.

"Call for Action on Immigration Reform and Action Agenda," Signatures

The following participants of the Pan African Unity Dialogue do hereby affix their signatures to the before described

"Call for Action on Immigration Reform and Action Agenda" as the first major step toward impacting the national dialogue and political process on immigration reform with the objective of achieving a just and effective policy.

Signatures:

Print Name and then sign in the same box	Organization

--	--

***"Call for Action on Immigration Reform and Action Agenda,"
(Signatures Continued)***

Print Name and then sign in the same box	Organization