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June 25, 2009

David Nachman
487 Goffle Road
Ridgewood, NJ 07450-4034

Dear David:

Thank you for contacting me to express your opinion on our current immigration system and a need for substantial reform. Your opinion is very important to me, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to you on this vital issue.

America has a proud tradition as a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws, but our immigration system is unarguably broken. Our borders are far too porous, our workplace enforcement is far too lax, and as a result, there are an estimated 12 million people living in the shadows of American society. We must enact practical, smart, and substantial immigration reform that reflects current economic and social realities, respects the core values of family unity and fundamental fairness, and upholds our tradition as a nation of immigrants.

I believe substantial immigration reform is possible. Together we can create reform in a safe, orderly, and legal process that preserves the promise of America for all. It can uphold the right of United States citizens to seek the reunification of their families, create a pathway towards citizenship, make the process for receiving green cards more efficient, and create employment systems that are both business and family based.

Despite real progress that has been made in the past year, the struggle for realistic and substantial immigration reform continues to this day. I have been working with my colleagues to create and pass legislation that would enhance border security, while also providing a legitimate way for the estimated 12 million undocumented workers to come out of the shadows and earn United States citizenship. These undocumented workers must pass a series of strict and critical benchmarks, such as paying fines, learning English, and waiting at the back of the citizenship line, behind those who have pursued legal means of attaining citizenship. We must continue to push the FBI and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) to move faster in the process of providing green cards to the over 14 million people who continue to wait on them. Without an efficiently run system, it is increasingly difficult to provide a pathway to citizenship that encourages immigrants to enter legally.

I have also made many movements towards creating a better run employment program that will not only benefit business owners, but will create a system that protects employees and their families. We need to create standards for employers that will require legal hiring practices and provides job benefits that will care not only for their employees, but their families as well.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me on this matter of utmost national importance. I appreciate your support. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance. I invite you to visit my website (<http://menendez.senate.gov>) to learn of other important issues to New Jersey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator

RM:sv