

## CIIC News and Updates

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**Dear Reader,**

The big news in Ireland this month is the budget introduced by Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan on December 9. It was, as expected, a difficult budget with cuts in many areas including just over 4% in social welfare rates and reductions in the job seekers allowance for new applicants. The old age pension was spared cuts. The word on twitter among the young people is that Emigration is once again their only option.

On this side of the Atlantic the introduction of CIR ASAP legislation by Rep. Luiz Gutierrez provided a welcome and much needed push forward on the campaign to reform our immigration system. The next move is expected to be the introduction of legislation in the Senate by Senator Chuck Schumer in February.

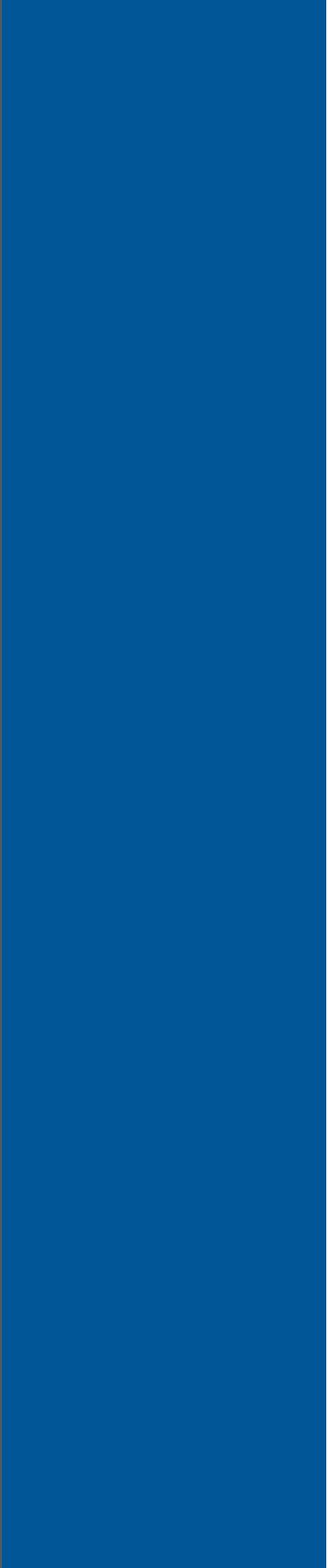
The latest statement from the Reform Immigration for America (RIFA) campaign expresses the belief that 2010 will be the year for comprehensive immigration reform. They say "We're going to make sure it happens, and we'll start 2010 with a roar."

The work to convince those legislators who are not on board has already begun and your help is needed so if you have not joined the campaign you can do so at the [Reform Immigration for America website](#).

Very best wishes to all for a peaceful holiday season. In particular we wish a speedy recover to Siobhan Dennehy, Executive Director of the Emerald Isle Immigration Center in New York, who is currently recovering from surgery.

Beannachtaí na Nollaig diobh go léir,  
Sheila

**Immigration Reform**



Rep. Luiz Gutierrez and a large group of legislators including Rep. Joseph Crowley from New York introduced an immigration bill in the house in mid December that would offer relief to for undocumented immigrants. The Senate are expected to take this issue up in February and if a bill is passed then the house will act.

Along with the talk about immigration reform comes the scam artists telling immigrants that they can jump start the process or get people to the head of the line for a fee. Please beware, if it sounds too good to be true then it probably is. Check with your local [Irish Center](#) or a trusted source before making any application for an immigration benefit.

The current situation is that an immigration bill has not been passed so no action is necessary and no new options are available to anyone. You should seek advice from your [local Irish Center](#) about what steps you can take now that might help you in the event that CIR passes in 2010. You may be advised to take steps to document your physical presence in the United States.

For most people contacting your Senator to ask them to support real reform is the most important step you can take to help yourself or your friends who are undocumented.

For details of Luiz Gutierrez bill, CIR ASAP bill, see the summary on the [RIFA website](#)

### **Secure Communities Program**

The Secure Communities Program allows state and local police to check the fingerprints of an individual they are booking into a jail against Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immigration databases. If there is a "hit" in an immigration database, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is automatically notified, even if the person has not been convicted of any criminal act. See the full paper on the [National Immigration Forum website](#).

### **Tax Exiles**

In the recent Irish budget a measure was introduced that was aimed at tax exiles. People who have worldwide income above €1m and Irish-located capital above €5m will be charged an 'Irish domicile levy' of €200,000 a year, regardless of where they are tax resident.

### **Detentions and Deportations**

In a example of how local advocacy can make a difference in the lives of immigrants the Irish Pastoral Center in Boston & Congressman Delahunt met with officials from Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE). Fr. John McCarthy and Board Chair Chris Lavery were able to discuss the distress and hardship inflicted on immigrants and their families and to point out that most of these immigrants have never committed a crime. There was agreement that there is a need to act on this issue to ensure that detainees who have no criminal record are not held for long periods.

### **Travel Warnings**

As we approach the holidays, and people make plans to travel home for the holidays there is need to sound a word of caution to immigrants. In recent years increased enforcement has meant that Immigration and Customs

Enforcement (ICE) begins removal proceedings against hundreds of returning immigrants because of prior criminal convictions or because their travels trigger the unlawful presence 3/10 year bars.

Recently, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) National Headquarters announced a change in policy regarding LPR's returning from trips abroad. **Effective Oct 1, 2009 returning LPR's with criminal convictions will be issued with Notices to Appear at ports of entry and many may be detained depending on the nature of their convictions.** Prior to this policy change returning LPR's were placed in deferred inspection status and not detained.

Please contact an [Irish Center](#) or an experience immigration attorney before you travel if you are and LPR (green card holder) and have had prior arrests no matter how small they are or how long ago they occurred.

### **High Court Judgement**

The Irish high court recently ruled on an issue that might be of interest to some people who are thinking of returning to Ireland with extended family who may not be Irish. The ruling refused permission to an Irish man, his Chinese-born wife and their two Irish-born children to bring a High Court challenge to the State's refusal to allow her widowed mother to live with them in Ireland. Read more [here](#).

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