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Dear Reader,

At a rally at the US Capitol attended by thousands of immigrants from across the country yesterday Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) called for a major change to our nation's broken immigration system. At the rally he outlined some of the [core principles](#) that should guide these changes.

This development provides hope for the estimated 50,000 Irish immigrants, who followed in the footsteps of their families, friends and neighbors across the Atlantic and who have been living in the shadows for too long.

The momentum on reform has slowed since the summer but there are some very encouraging signs including repeated statements of support from the President and Congressional leadership. There is an imperative need for all of our elected representatives to step up to the plate in support of the immigrants who contribute so much to our communities and our economy. We expect them to engage in a vigorous, but civil, discourse and to work to develop a caring and compassionate solution to the crisis of 12 million immigrants living outside of the mainstream of our society.

The acrimony of the health care debate and scapegoating of immigrants has underscored the need for a comprehensive immigration solution. There is little disagreement that our system is broken, there is wide acknowledgement that deporting millions of immigrants is neither practical nor cost effective; we

need a smart, just and sensible solution from our political leaders.

Slán go foill,
Sheila

Immigration Reform

The issue of immigration reform has been put on the back burner until the New Year. This means that there will be a fairly short window for achieving action on this issue. The early part of 2010 will provide the best opportunity for a bill. Once the Congress recesses for the summer legislators will be working on their campaign for the fall mid-term elections and will have little time or appetite for resolving the difficult issue of immigration reform.

In the plus column for immigrants there is the matter of the immigrant vote which helped to elect President Obama and many other pro-immigrant candidates last year. The pro-immigrant community must insist that our immigration system is reformed before we commit our votes in the 2010 Congressional elections.

Your phone calls to Congress do matter -- [so don't forget to tell Congress where you stand.](#)

[The Drum Major Institute for Public Policy](#) recently released a report that discusses how much the American middle class relies on the economic contributions of immigrants, both authorized and unauthorized.

The Drum Institute have also developed some interesting fact sheets: ["Principles for an Immigration Policy to Strengthen and Expand the American Middle Class: 2009 Edition," building on our earlier immigration research.](#)

News

More People Leaving Ireland

The Central Statistics Office in Ireland published figures this week that show for first time since 1995 that more people left Ireland than moved there. These figures support what Irish Centers in the United States and the UK have seen over the past 2 years, that emigration from Ireland is once again on the increase. See the full [CSO Report here](#)

[Boston Globe article: From Ireland... to the United States \(again\) Isle's sour economy, cultural shifts drive new diaspora](#)

Irish Echo article: [Older now, but still living on the edge in Boston](#)

Suicide in Ireland 2008

The annual report from the National Office for Suicide Prevention shows a downward trend in the number of suicides in Ireland. There were 424 recorded suicides last year, 36 fewer than 2007. This is a hopeful sign that outreach, support and education services are having an impact. However, suicide continues to be a serious public health issue especially among young people. Ireland still has the fourth highest rate of youth suicide in the EU.

The full HSE Report is available on their [website](#)

The [Irish Centers in the USA](#) provide a range of support and counseling services for immigrants as well as support and outreach to families and friends of those who have died by suicide.

Alcohol Factors into Increased Visa Denials

"State Dept. rules that screen out potentially dangerous immigrants have been used to bar visa applicants with a single drunk-driving conviction from years past." Read the article in [Business Week](#).

Detention Reform

We warmly welcome the recent news that the Department of Homeland Security plans to reform the immigration detention system. Plan include improving access to medical care and looking at more appropriate alternatives for non-criminal immigrants. We hope that this will soon end the practice of jailing immigrants who have never been convicted of a crime.

[Read the NY Times article here.](#)

[Listen to Rep. Zoe Lofgren](#) talking about the problems with the immigration detention system.

Irish American Leadership Council

The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers will be represented at the first meeting of this council in New York in October. The establishment of an Irish American Leadership Council was recommended by the recently concluded strategic review of US-Ireland relations commissioned by the Taoiseach last year. The Council will meet on a periodic basis under the chairmanship of the Minister.

The Council will be a forum for collective consultation and advice for the Government on issues of interest to the Irish American community and the Government. The Council will include the national leadership of Irish American business, community, philanthropic and cultural organisations.

Outreach to the Diaspora

There has been a lot discussion and recently about reaching out to the Diaspora and redefining the relationship between Ireland and the global Irish. With a renewed interest in this issue there have been several events recently and many different ideas about how to tap into this powerful group.

Read about the recent [Global Irish Economic Forum](#) in h written by Noreen Bowden

[A Comparative Review of International Diaspora Strategies](#)

by Kingsley Aikins, Dr. Anita Sands, Nicola White

News from Irish Centers

Seattle Irish Immigrant Support

Our warmest congratulations to John Keane from the Seattle Irish Immigrant Support Group on his appointment as Honary Irish Consul with responsibility for Washington State. John's role as Honorary Consul will include assisting the Irish Government to promote contacts between Washington State and Ireland, to facilitate business and official visitors from Ireland and to provide consular services to Irish citizens who are visiting or residing in Washington State.

John Keane reports that everyone who attended the Irish Senior's Luncheon in Seattle in September had a great time meeting old friends and making many new ones, 95 of the 145 were born in Ireland which made for some great conversations.

It's a Boy and a Girl!

Congratulations to the parents and welcome to the new US citizens who arrived over the summer:

Orla Kelliher from the Aisling Center on the birth of her son Emmett, Abby Colbert for the Irish Immigration Center, Boston on the birth of her daughter Miren, Cora Flood from the Irish Pastoral Center Boston on the birth of her son Killian and Irish Vice Consul in Boston, Deirdre Ní Fhallúin on the birth of her son Joseph.

Emerald Isle Immigration Center

The Emerald Isle Immigration Center will host their 22nd Annual Dinner Dance on Friday, October 30, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Astoria World Manor. For information and tickets check out their website www.eiic.org

New York Irish Center in the News

There was a very nice description of the work of the New York Irish Center in the NY Daily News recently:

[**L.I.C. Irish Center a bright spot for seniors**](#)

Irish Outreach San Diego celebrated their 10th anniversary Celebration Saturday September 19th. Congratulations to the staff and all the dedicated volunteers that work to help immigrants in the San Diego area.

Irish Pastoral Center, Boston

The Boston Irish Group and the Irish Pastoral Center hosted a successful Town Hall Meeting in Quincy. For more information on how you can help contact the Irish Pastoral Centre, Boston at 617-479-7404.

The Senior Helpline USA

Irish Seniors who would like to talk to another Irish immigrant can

call the toll free number Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon 1-877-997-5777

DV-2011 Lottery October 2 - November 30

The DV-2011 Lottery began at Noon EDT on October 2, 2009, and will end at Noon EST on November 30, 2009.

Please warn friends and family about the host of immigration scams that are out there. **This is an on line application and there is no charge to apply.**

To protect yourself from fraud take a few simple steps:

1. Check with an [Irish Immigration Center](#) before applying
2. Any DV lottery website that requests a fee is not the official site.
3. Look for the .gov suffix on US government websites
4. [The official DV Lottery website](#)
5. Read the DV-2011 instructions on the [Department of State](#) website

Counseling for Abuse Victims

The Irish Government, as part of their response to citizens who experienced abuse in residential institutions in Ireland, established the National Counseling Service in 2000. This provides counseling for those resident in Ireland who had experienced abuse as children.

It is estimated that more than 40% of those who suffered abuse left Ireland, many going to England. Services are available through the Immigrant Counselling and Psychotherapy in London Tel: +44 (0207) 272-7906 Email: admin@icap.org.uk

In the United States there are no dedicated services but those who were abused in residential institutions are eligible to claim the cost of their counseling fees by applying to the External Counseling Claims Committee of the HSE in Ireland. If you would like to receive a copy of the guidelines, which detail how to submit a application, please email sheila@ciic-usa.org

Coming Out of the Shadows

Irish Echo - "Gateways to Tomorrow" Conference

Thanks to Mairtin O Muilleoir for providing an opportunity to highlight the difficult circumstances of some Irish immigrants in the USA. Sheila Gleeson of the Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers was invited to address the Gateways to Tomorrow conference on behalf of the undocumented Irish. See the article in the [Irish Echo Blog](#).

The Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers (CIIC) is a national umbrella group for all of the Irish Immigration Centers in the US. The CIIC was established in 1996 to promote the welfare of Irish immigrants in the US at a national level.

Sheila Gleeson

Executive Director

Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers

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Coalition of Irish Immigration Centers | 551 Washington Street | Brighton | MA | 02135

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