

# May Day 2013 Report from Across the Country

National Immigrant Solidarity Network

<http://www.ImmigrantSolidarity.org>

May Day 2013 Call to Action:

<http://www.immigrantsolidarity.org/MayDay2013/index.html>

## Global

### May Day marked by global workers' protests

Hundreds of thousands march in Cuba in support of workers' rights, and in honor of late Venezuelan ally Hugo Chavez.



01 May 2013 Al-Jazeera

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/05/20135175751177425.html>

Demonstrations have taken place across the world as protesters gather to mark May Day, the traditional date for demanding better workers' rights.

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans turned out for one of the world's largest parades in capital Havana on Wednesday, carrying banners and flags in celebration of workers' rights and in support of the ruling Communist Party.

This year's march is dedicated to the recently deceased Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez, who

was an ally of Cuba, and who had provided a lifeline for Cuba's government during recent hard economic times.

In Venezuela, tens of thousands of people both from the government and the opposition staged rival marches in Caracas, just hours after a brawl in the legislature injured several opposition lawmakers.

In the United States' third largest city of Chicago, May Day marchers called for end to deportations of undocumented immigrants. Unlike in the past however, the march only attracted at least a thousand protesters.

Protests first began in Asia, with tens of thousands of workers in Jakarta calling for improved conditions and mobilising against government plans to cut fuel subsidies.

Al Jazeera's Step Vaessen, reporting from Jakarta, said described the crowd as "the biggest rally I've seen here".

More than 20,000 people flooded the capital, angered by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's announcement on Tuesday to raise price of fuel.

#### Istanbul clashes

With 80 countries around the world marking May 1 as a public holiday, Istanbul's Taksim Square was in lockdown on Wednesday, after the Turkish government banned May Day protests there.

The square is the site of a 1977 May Day massacre in which dozens of people died under disputed circumstances.

Al Jazeera's Hashem Ahelbarra, reporting from Istanbul, said: "There have been scuffles, particularly in areas that lead to Taksim Square, which has been sealed off.

"Protesters say they should be given access to celebrate May 1 in a place of symbolic importance; they want to honour the memory of those who were killed here. There is a tug of war under way between the government and people."

Earlier images showed police spraying water at protesters who threw objects at their vehicles.

#### Cambodia workers

In Phnom Pehn, the Cambodian capital, garment factory workers demanded higher wages and better working conditions.

Organisers said about 5,000 demonstrators, including union workers, gathered for the rally, chanting slogans and holding banners.

Protesters came from 16 unions and associations in Cambodia to mark International Labour Day and urge whoever wins the general election in July to meet their demands.

"I demand that my pay is increased to \$150 per month," said garment worker Neang Leakena, from the Chinese-owned Deum Por garment factory.

In the Philippines, thousands of contract workers marched through the streets of the capital, Manila.

Banned from forming labour unions, the workers demanded that the government strengthen their rights.

#### European protests

In Athens, Greece's capital, the main public and private sector unions called a 24-hour strike to protest against the government's austerity policies.

Greece has had to enforce tax rises and spending cuts as part of deals with the International Monetary Fund and its eurozone partners to overcome a crippling debt crisis.

On Sunday, parliament approved a bill which will leave 15,000 civil servants out of work by the end of next year.

In Moscow, the Russian capital, authorities sanctioned 16 separate rallies, including one led by Vladimir Putin's ruling United Russia party.

Other groups, including the Communist Party, are holding gatherings of their own. Up to 90,000 people are expected.



(Manila, The Philippines)

## Los Angeles, CA

### Thousands call for immigration reform in Los Angeles May Day march

Alex Dobuzinskis – Reuters



LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Thousands of mostly Latino protesters marched through downtown Los Angeles in a boisterous but peaceful May Day rally on Wednesday urging an overhaul of immigration laws to provide potential citizenship for millions of undocumented residents.

The march was believed to be the largest of more than a dozen similar demonstrations planned in cities across California by a coalition of organized labor activists, students, civil rights advocates and members of the clergy.

In Arizona, where a state crackdown against illegal immigration was signed into law three years ago, organizers expected several hundred people to join a late-afternoon rally outside the state Capitol in Phoenix, ahead of a march through downtown.

The protests come about two weeks after a bipartisan group of U.S. senators introduced an 844-page bill, backed by President Barack Obama, that would rewrite America's immigration laws.

A centerpiece of the measure would create a path to legal status and ultimately citizenship for many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States.

It also aims to secure the U.S. border with Mexico against illegal entry and to make it easier for industry, particularly high-tech business and agriculture, to hire workers from abroad when needed.

Obama has made immigration reform one of his top priorities for 2013.

The protesters, who are generally supportive of the proposed immigration revamp, called for the U.S. government to halt deportations of individuals who are potentially eligible for eventual

citizenship.

Waving American flags and carrying signs with the slogan, "Stop deportations," the demonstrators chanted in Spanish, "Obama! Escucha! Estamos en la lucha!" ("Obama! Listen! We are in the fight!"), as they marched under sunny skies down one of downtown's main thoroughfares.

The march spanned across more than two large city blocks, and one police officer told Reuters that unofficial estimates put the size of the crowd at roughly 3,500 people. No arrests were reported.

Wendy Carrillo, a spokeswoman for the Service Employees International Union, one of the organizing groups, said march leaders expected to draw at least 10,000 demonstrators throughout the day.

"I think it's a really good start to get people to come together to feel empowered," said Raiza Arias, 19, a college student who wore a black traditional Mexican-style dress and a scarf over her pink-dyed hair, as she walked at the front of the march.

The throng paraded behind a flatbed truck carrying a band playing festive cumbia music.

While most protesters appeared to be Latino, there were a number of Asian groups, including a Korean-American contingent who banged on traditional drums strapped to their torsos.

(Additional reporting by Richard Cowan in Washington and Tim Gaynor in Phoenix; Writing by Steve Gorman)



## Milwaukee, WI

### Thousands March in Milwaukee For A Broad Path to Citizenship on May Day

***Congresswoman Gwen Moore: "Enough to the suffering of families being separated; enough to US citizen children being put in foster care. Ya basta! Now is the time for reform."***

#### Voces de la Frontera



**MILWAUKEE-** As part of a national day of action focusing on amendments to the US Senate’s proposed immigration reform bill, thousands of people marched through the streets of Milwaukee today. Voces executive director Christine Neumann-Ortiz says that this year’s May Day march happened at a historic moment, when the opportunity to pass federal immigration reform has never been better.

**“This is both a moment of celebration for our progress, and a time to reflect on the fact that we haven’t won the fight yet.** Unity and action are more necessary than ever to achieve reform that keeps families together, protects all workers, ends the criminalization of immigrants, and doesn’t discriminate against other groups by denying diversity visas, or LGBT families the right to be together.”

Amongst the speakers were a married couple who work in Wisconsin’s dairy industry, Eduardo and Nancy Patiño. Eduardo is facing deportation on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Wisconsin’s signature dairy industry depends on a forty percent immigrant workforce.

**“I’m a dairy worker, and this is a very important industry that boosts our state’s economy.** I work very hard to put bread on the table for my family. And it is a great injustice that

I am facing separation from them simply because a police officer stopped me because of the color of my skin. I am not a criminal.”

**Congresswoman Gwen Moore rallied the crowd**, saying "Your tireless efforts have gotten us this far, and this bill should have all of your fingerprints on it."

**Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin echoed this message in a statement of support**, as she was out of state: "For me, this issue is personal as I hear the stories of people both young and old whose families have been torn apart. Their hopes to live the American dream have been stopped short. I recently had a chance to meet with young leaders, known as Dreamers, and their stories were inspiring to me because they are American stories."

Erica Sanchez, a DREAMer and member of Youth Empowered in Struggle (YES) said: **“Today I am representing a million DREAMers who come from mixed immigration status families.** While I am grateful that the Senate proposal offers DREAMers a five year path to citizenship, our parents, who were the original DREAMers, deserve the same.”

Terry Cooper, an African-American veteran employee of Palermo Villa, who was fired for supporting the organizing campaign at his workplace, told the crowd:

**“My story is the same as millions of African American workers and millions of undocumented workers across America. And it will take all of our communities uniting to stop the corporate exploitation of our families.** I know that what I did was the right thing, and it is for that reason that I am standing with my co-workers in trying to get Palermo to negotiate a fair settlement and respect the people who built their company.”

The march was sponsored by many local immigrant small businesses, and community groups including labor unions, faith, LGBT, and more.



(2013 May Day March in Milwaukee. Photo credit: Voces de la Frontera)

**Boston, MA**

## **May Day March to East Boston Draws Thousands**

by Jake Carman - Cradle of Liberty News.

<http://cradleoflibertynews.org/a-day-of-action-boston-may-day-events/>



On May 1st, 2013 at 5pm, around three thousand marchers poured into Central Square in East Cambridge, joining hundreds already gathered to welcome them on the long march from Chelsea, Everett, and Revere. Called by the May 1st Coalition, the annual march celebrates International Workers Day, and promotes immigration reform and a quick path to legalization for the approximately 11 million undocumented immigrant workers (1) living in the United States.

Two feeder marches, one from Everett and one from Revere, merged at 4pm with a large rally in front of Chelsea city hall. From there, thousands paraded peacefully, chanting "Si se puede, (We can do it)" "Today we march, tomorrow we vote," "We are a nation of immigrants," and "Obama, escucha, estamos en la lucha (Obama, we are in the struggle)." Some of the many organizations present included Chelsea United Against the Wars, Chelsea Collaborative, City Life/Vida Urbana, FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front – the ruling leftist party in El Salvador), Brazilian Mothers Group, The Industrial Workers of the World, Unite Here Local 26, Common Struggle/Lucha Común, and Service Employees International Union (SEIU). The marchers were workers, both documented and not, from all across the Boston area, of every age and nationality.

May Day as International Workers Day harkens back to 1886, when Chicago's workers led a national general strike for the eight hour day on May 1st. The movement gained global renown after the May 4th Haymarket Massacre, when police and anarchists clashed over the police shooting of striking

workers on a picket line the previous day. (2) Though celebrated in over 80 countries around the



world, May Day isn't recognized in the United States where it began. The modern Immigrant Workers Movement revived May Day in the United States with the 2006 Great American Boycott. Local and International media (corporate media...that is) failed to cover this year's mass gathering in East Boston.

## New York, NY

### At NYC May Day rally, calls for a more liberal immigration reform bill

Liz Goodwin - Yahoo! News



(Photo: Greg Dunkel)

One might imagine that activists at the pro-immigrant, pro-labor May Day rally in New York City would be happy about the bipartisan immigration reform bill currently in the Senate. But signs and activists at Wednesday's rally called the current draft bill an "unjust" plan that would leave out too many immigrants in its legalization scheme and focus too much on increased enforcement at the border.

One popular sign at the rally featured the face of Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., behind barbed wire. The words: "No to Schumer and the Gang of 8," in Spanish—referring to the eight senators who hashed out the plan.

Some activists said the immigration compromise—which would trade stricter enforcement of current laws for a 13-year path to citizenship for most of the nation's 11 million unauthorized immigrants—is unjust and unacceptable.

The rally was part of 85 May Day demonstrations in Los Angeles, Chicago, Phoenix and other cities pushing for immigration reform and labor rights. They drew thousands of protesters,

according to organizers.

"I speak for most immigrants when I say the gang of 8 is doing a bill that will give us almost nothing," said Carlos Canales, a community organizer from Freehold, N.J. "It's going to end up to be an elitist immigration reform."

Canales said he's organizing a hunger strike in front of Schumer's New York office in the coming weeks to urge him to change the bill to address criticisms from the left. Canales objects to the requirement that immigrants who want to be legalized must prove they've been employed since December of 2011 to qualify. He said many unauthorized immigrants will have trouble proving employment because they work in more transitory jobs that don't keep records.

A Schumer spokesman, Max Young, said the bill has drawn "wide support among prominent Latino and pro-immigration organizations." And an organizer of the May Day rallies, Ben Monterroso, stressed before the rally that "there's so many good things in the bill," even if activists have some concerns.

"Sen. Schumer is working with the length and breadth of the Hispanic community to pass an immigration bill that accelerates family reunification and that sets a path to citizenship that gets all eligible 11 million people out of the shadows and into legal status as quickly as possible," said Young.

Other activists at the rally said they object to the way the bill would shift the legal immigration system to prioritize skill- and employment-based visas. Under the current proposal, visas for adult siblings of U.S. citizens would be eliminated and a cut-off age for applying for green cards for adult children would be instituted.

Christina Chang, an advocacy associate for the Korean American group Minkwon Center for Community Action, said she does not believe the current bill is unjust, but that she hopes it changes substantially in the coming weeks. "It's a fundamental change from a family-based immigration system to one that's merit based," Chang said.

Her group also believes that immigrants could end up waiting 20 years or longer to become citizens under the bill if lawmakers continue to make the process contingent on the U.S.-Mexico border meeting certain security standards.

The Senate Judiciary Committee is scheduled to hold a hearing on the bill May 9. Advocates believe it will be introduced on the Senate floor by May 25.

## **Chicago, IL**

### **May Day In Chicago: Thousands Issue Call For Immigration Reform, End To Deportations**

(Associated Press) Thousands of demonstrators poured into Chicago's streets on Wednesday -- May Day -- as part of a nationwide call for comprehensive immigration reform, worker's rights and an end to deportations.

Among the marchers in Chicago was Yolanda Villadomec, who emphasized to ABC Chicago that the issues share a central thread of "family unity," which she described as "very important" to her.

"That's the point that I always look at: family unity. We want the mother, the father, the children together as a family," Villadomec told the station.

The peaceful march -- only one isolated arrest was reported -- began at 2 p.m. on Wednesday at Union Park and proceeded to Federal Plaza in the Loop for a late afternoon rally. Demonstrators also rallied at the Haymarket monument in the afternoon.

Many demonstrators carried signs urging President Obama to cease deportations and embrace a comprehensive immigration reform platform. According to Chicago Sun-Times, many marchers chanted in Spanish, "Yes, we can. Stop deportations."

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin was on hand for the Federal Plaza rally and told the crowd to continue their push for change. Durbin said that Congress currently has "the best chance we have had in 25 years" for comprehensive immigration reform, according to the Chicago Tribune. Two weeks ago, Durbin was among a bipartisan "gang of eight" that introduced an immigration bill -- which has since been the subject of criticism from pro-reform groups -- in Washington. (Read below to learn more about the proposal.)

"We have to seize that opportunity," Durbin said, according to the newspaper.

Also among the demonstrators was Aracly Rafael, a 35-year-old restaurant worker who came to the city illegally 15 years ago and is hopeful for a path to U.S. citizenship.

"I could have a better job and I could travel to see my family in Mexico," Rafael told the Associated Press.



## San Francisco, CA

### May Day Marchers Spread Their Wings

Judith Scherr – Inter Press Service



(Photo: Robert Ristelhueber)

SAN FRANCISCO, California, May 2 2013 (IPS) - More than 1,000 people marched under the brilliant San Francisco sun on May Day. Their signs, such as “Work in America/Live in America/Dream in America. Immigration reform now,” their songs, chants and speeches wove together the twin themes of the day: worker justice and immigrant justice.

Alphonso Pines of the hotel and restaurant workers union Unite HERE put it this way, speaking to the crowd before the march: “We’re marching for our families; we’re marching to honour the sweat and the contributions of each and every working person. We’re marching to honour the beauty of each and every family – queer or straight, immigrant or born here. We’re marching because together we can make history.

“Together we can win immigration reform that includes all workers and all families. Together we can stop the pain of deportation.”

In all, there were some 85 marches calling for worker and immigrant rights around the U.S., including a march of 700 in Oakland, California, 2,000 in Los Angeles and several thousand in New York.

Seattle-based journalist Mark Taylor Canfield told IPS that unions brought large numbers of people out to a peaceful march of several thousand in Seattle. A break-off group broke windows and damaged property. Police reacted with “large amounts of pepper spray and flash-bang grenades,” he said. There were 13 arrests.

In San Francisco, Tessa Levine was getting ready to march with Mujeres Unidas. Like many in the crowd, she wore butterfly wings. The Monarch butterfly flies to Mexico then back to the U.S. every year, she said, explaining, "It's really a symbol that migration is beautiful, that migration is natural."

Still, migration is regulated by law. And at this point, no one knows exactly what the new immigration law will look like – or if one will actually make it through both houses of Congress and on to the president's desk.

A number of demonstrators told IPS they had serious questions about the bill known as the Bipartisan Framework for Comprehensive Immigration Reform scheduled for consideration by the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 9.

A primary concern with the bill is the 13 years it would take most immigrants in the U.S. without documents to become citizens. The positive aspect is that, during the waiting period, they would be able to work legally. However, during that time, they would be excluded from social services, including the right to purchase health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

"We want a fast and just path to citizenship," said Kitzia Esteva, of the advocacy organisation Causa Justa. Just Cause, noting that immigrants' taxes pay for these services.

Emily Lee, with the Chinese Progressive Association, expressed similar concerns. Noting that one million out of the 11 million undocumented persons living in the U.S. are Asian-Pacific Islanders, she asked, "What does that mean when you're paying back taxes, and you're expected to contribute to the society, but you're not receiving the benefits?"

But even getting onto the path for citizenship under the Senate bill under discussion could be impossible for people who have worked informally as day labourers or domestic workers, since the applicant is expected to show proof of having worked in the U.S.

"These are men who are working every day," said Emiliano Bourgois-Chacon, with the San Francisco Day Labor Program and Women's Collective. But because they are undocumented, they don't have paperwork to prove they have been working, Bourgois-Chacon said.

Keeping the family together was another concern of May Day demonstrators.

The bill in the Senate would make it more difficult for families to sponsor siblings. "Family reunification has been a cornerstone of immigration in the U.S.," Lee, of the Chinese Progressive Association, said. "And to start chipping away at that...is very problematic."

Many people in the Chinese community wouldn't otherwise have been able to come to the U.S., she added.

Deportations that rip families apart are of great concern to a number of demonstrators IPS interviewed. There have been some 800 deportations from San Francisco since 2009, with the introduction of Secure Communities or "S-Comm", the programme where local police share arrest information with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, according to Estava of Causa Justa.

Across the Bay in Alameda County, the Oakland-Berkeley area, there have been 2,000 deportations since 2009.

“People are getting separated from their families every day,” Estava said. “We want a stop to that immediately. We are fighting to get local police to stop the collaboration between police and ICE, and we have that same demand on the national level with immigration reform.”

Deportation has also heavily impacted the Arab immigrant community, said Lara Kiswani of the Arab Resource and Organizing Center. “There’s obviously racial discrimination and systemic criminalisation of Arabs and Muslims here in the United States, which leads oftentimes to deportation,” she said.

Like Estava, Kiswani said the high number of deportations comes from collaboration between local and federal law enforcement. “There should be an end to S-Comm so that there’s more accountability to local law enforcement and so that people aren’t unjustly targeted and deported for various misdemeanors,” she said.

Another problem with the current and proposed law is the E-verify programme through which an employer can verify a person’s social security number. ICE can request an employer perform an E-verify audit.

Olga Miranda, president of Service Employees International Union Local 87, said a few years ago several hundred of her union janitors were targeted by an E-verify audit, fired, and “lost everything overnight”.

Esteva pointed to another problem with the proposed law: putting resources into enhanced law enforcement on the border.

ICE and the border patrol have the most law enforcement money in the country, Esteva said. “Instead of putting that money into border enforcement, we could see a lot more social services and resources for the community. We think that money would not be well invested in protecting the border.”

Nancy Mackowsky marched the two-mile route holding an American Federation of Teachers banner. She teaches English as a second language at San Francisco City College and said some of her students work from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., then come to her class in the evening four days a week.

“They have goals, they have dreams and they deserve to be able to fulfill them,” she said.

Seattle, WA

## Seattle's May Day 'March for Worker, Immigrant Rights' peaceful

John Hopperstad – Q13Fox.com



SEATTLE — Immigration was on the minds of most May Day protestors who gathered at a sunny Judkins Park.

“We’re here today, to advocate immigration reform,” said John Martinez.

But among the peaceful protestors, there were also several anarchists, they’re faces covered, and some worried things could get ugly.

“That’s always a problem if there’s some disturbance or some incident,” said Martinez.

Protestors said during the march they had several monitors watching for anyone committing violence, and were ready to report it to police.

And there were a lot of police, on foot, on bike, on horse, and seemingly on every corner.

“We certainly up-staffed from last year,” said Seattle Police Captain Chris Fowler. “We have quite a few out here.”

Officers said they’re much more prepared this year than in 2012 when anarchists did a lot of damage in the downtown corridor.

This year, word got out that anarchists may be targeting banks downtown.

That was enough for two US Bank branches on 5th Avenue to close early.

But despite some small skirmishes, the 3-mile march to the Henry Jackson federal building was free of violence, and protestors could focus on what they came to May Day for: to talk, not about violence, but about immigration.

## Mountain View, CA



Close to 1,000 marched in Mountain View California on Wednesday to show support for comprehensive immigration reform. Gathering in the city's main plaza, protesters called the current state of U.S. immigration policy inhuman and unjust. Many mentioned deep concern that families are being broken up by Immigration Control Enforcement.

The immigrant rights movement has embraced May Day since 2006, when both San Jose in the South Bay and Mountain View on the San Francisco Peninsula saw huge crowds on the streets.

Photos: Jack Owicki and Reynita Roberts. Top photo by Jack Owicki.



## Fresno, CA

### Immigration reform march draws 1,000 to downtown Fresno

Jacob Rayburn - The Fresno Bee



An immigration-rights march through downtown Fresno Wednesday night drew about 1,000 people calling for reform of the nation's immigration laws.

The event began with an afternoon rally on the plaza outside of the Fresno County Courthouse. Several hundred people listened as organizers and advocates, speaking in Spanish and English, urged participants to hold onto their dream of citizenship -- and for those who could to vote and make their voices heard.

"The people who vote have confidence in politicians," march coordinator Leonel Flores said. "When politicians don't support reform, people are frustrated. I brought my son to marches when he was 1 and now he's 21 years old. That's more than 20 years of Congress neglecting reform."

Speeches given before the march offered words of encouragement for people to not give up, with shouts of "Sí se puede!" -- Spanish for "Yes, we can!" Some in attendance saw the march as a way to educate people about the possibility of reform and what it could mean for the future of undocumented immigrants.

"I work closely with high school students and a lot of them don't see a point continuing their education if they are in the country illegally," said Pocio Serrano, a charter school teacher who joined the crowd in the courthouse plaza. "I want to educate them that there are options for them. I want them to know there is hope."

Some participants waved U.S. flags. A smattering of Mexican flags also were visible, along with the red and black flags of the United Farm Workers Union.

When the march began about 6 p.m., the ranks swelled with late arrivals and cheers erupted when passing cars honked in support.

In the crowd was a junior from Fresno's Edison High School, who said the march drew her for reasons other than advocating for immigration reform.

"I believe in social justice and this march sparks so many to fight for what they believe in," Jamila Rice said. "I am here for the people. I am not Mexican-American, but to see so many people with passion is beautiful."

With chants calling for Obama to listen, the crowd came to a halt on L Street in front of the United Security Bank, where the Rev. Joaquin Arriaga of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Fresno shared words of compromise.

"We are inviting people to change their minds," Arriaga said. "Those in favor of immigration reform and those who oppose won't listen to each other. Those who oppose forget we are a nation of immigrants, but the immigrants forget we are a nation of laws."

Arriaga hoped that both sides would take steps toward the middle to make progress in passing immigration reform legislation, but he urged politicians to act for the right reasons.

"The law shouldn't be written because they want immigrant votes," Arriaga said.

Organizers asked that the federal government halt deportations and workplace raids while immigration reform is being discussed. They also asked that any reform cover immigrants who are in the U.S. up until the law is signed, that immigrants not be required to learn English to apply for legal residency, and that immigrants get access to health services.

A bipartisan immigration reform bill in the U.S. Senate calls for enhanced border security, new guest-worker programs and the eventual chance for citizenship for most of the 11 million people in the U.S. who entered the country illegally or overstayed their visas.

## **San Bernardino, CA**

### **MAY DAY: San Bernardino march one of many nationwide**

**David Olson – Press-Enterprise**

Hundreds of people marched through downtown San Bernardino on Wednesday, one of many May Day demonstrations nationwide in support of immigration reform that includes a path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants.

At pauses in the walk, speakers talked of families torn apart by deportations and of immigrants living in fear that they will be next.

Sergio Gonzalez, 35, of San Bernardino, is in the country legally but said he has a dozen cousins, aunts and uncles who are not. They constantly worry that if they're pulled over by the police they'll be turned over to immigration agents, he said.

Gonzalez was one of many people at the march who criticized key components of immigration legislation that was introduced last month in the Senate. Among other shortcomings, they said, it would not allow undocumented immigrants to apply for green cards until after they spend 10 years in temporary legal status. They would then have to wait three more years to apply for citizenship.

"That's too much," Gonzalez said in Spanish. "There are many people who already have been here 10, 15, 20 years. And to wait 10 years more? That's not fair."

Gonzalez said his relatives and many others already pay sales, social-security and other taxes — but they're not eligible for social security or other benefits.

The march wended through several downtown streets, ending at San Bernardino City Hall, where the Rev. Leonard De Pasquale addressed the crowd.

De Pasquale, of St. Bernardine Roman Catholic Church in San Bernardino, later said he worries about how the Senate bill requires the attainment of stringent border-security goals before immigrants would be eligible for green cards. He also is concerned about the \$2,000 in fines that immigrants would have to pay to become residents and then citizens.

Many undocumented members of his parish are poor and would have difficulty raising that amount of money, he said.

"The legislation should create a smooth path to legalization rather than put obstacles in people's paths," De Pasquale said.

As participants in the San Bernardino demonstration criticized the Senate bill as too harsh, a group holding signs above a freeway overpass in the Orange County city of Brea denounced the bill as an un-American giveaway to lawbreakers.

"This was to serve notice to Washington, D.C., that we're not buying into their subversion," Raymond Herrera, a Victorville man and president of the anti-illegal-immigration group We the People California's Crusader, said by phone after the Brea demonstration.

But Ana Antunez, 19, said she deserves to live legally in the United States — as do the parents who she said have sacrificed so much to give her a better life.

Antunez, an undocumented resident and a student at Riverside City College, arrived in the United States at age 3. She has not been back to her native Mexico.

Antunez said that, if she were to be deported, "it would be heartbreaking. I've been to school

here. I graduated. I'm in college. I've never done anything bad. I'm not someone you can just throw away."



Salem, OR

Gov. John Kitzhaber signs driver cards bill at May Day rally as opponents pursue referendum

Yuxing Zheng - The Oregonian



SALEM -- About 2,000 people cheered at an "Immigrant Spring" May Day rally as Gov. John Kitzhaber signed into law a bill to grant four-year driver cards to Oregon residents who cannot provide proof of legal presence.

Hours later, leaders of Oregonians for Immigration Reform said they plan to file paperwork Thursday to place a referendum challenging the law on the November 2014 ballot. If they gather enough signatures to force the referendum, it would prevent Senate Bill 833 from going into effect on Jan. 1, 2014.

"Our phones are screaming with people who are furious about this," said Cynthia Kendoll, the group's president. "We think that through this referendum, we'll be able to let the public decide if this bill is right for Oregon."

The group would need to submit 58,142 valid signatures within 90 days of the end of the legislative session to qualify for the ballot, said Tony Green, spokesman for the Oregon secretary of state's office. Legislative leaders plan to finish the session by the end of June or early July.

Supporters of the legislation vowed Wednesday afternoon to fight the referendum if it qualifies.

"If they do that, we'll launch a campaign to oppose it and go to every corner of the state and educate people, just like we did to convince legislators that this was a great thing for Oregon and Oregon safety," said Ramon Ramirez, president of Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, a union that represents 6,000 farmworkers in Marion and Polk counties.

PCUN sponsored the May Day rally along with about a dozen other Latino and labor groups.

The bill grants driving privileges to applicants who have resided in Oregon for at least a year. They must also provide proof of identity and date of birth, such as an unexpired valid passport from the person's country of citizenship or an unexpired consular identification document.

The card is distinguished from a license, which requires proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful presence in the country under a 2008 state law.

Latino and other cultural groups also won a significant victory April 2, when Kitzhaber signed a bill to grant in-state tuition to undocumented Oregon high school graduates who meet certain criteria.

The driver cards legislation stemmed from a work group convened by Kitzhaber about two years ago. The 14-member group included business, faith, law enforcement and Latino representatives.

"It is clear from the diverse coalition that came together to pass Senate Bill 833 that the bill has broad support among Oregonians," said Tim Raphael, Kitzhaber's spokesman. "We're confident that the coalition would fight tooth and nail to support the bill."

Earlier Wednesday, Kitzhaber signed the bill on the Capitol steps under a sunny spring sky.

"This bill is part of a larger vision where all Oregonians deserve and get their shot at the

American dream," said Kitzhaber, who regularly paused for a Spanish translator. "We are celebrating the promise of a better future for each and every Oregonian."

The lively rally took on a celebratory tone as participants applauded the bill signing and the possibility of comprehensive federal immigration reform, which could include a pathway to citizenship for the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the country.

Chants in Spanish of "Obama, listen, we're still in the fight," emanated from a noon march that encircled the Capitol and the mall.

The rally and march attracted first-time participants like Portland resident Silviano Rico, who held a sign that read "We are not illegals. We are human beings."

Rico said he came to the United States from Mexico 22 years ago, works as a cook and pays taxes. He and his wife are undocumented, but their daughters, 7 and 9, are citizens because they were born in America. All four attended Wednesday's rally, and their older daughter held up a sign that read "Keep our families together."

"Our kids were born here," he said. "They don't want their parents taken away."

Several unions also participated in the rally, including the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters, whose members held up a large sign that said "An injury to one is an injury to all."

"We're here to support everybody having the same rights in the state of Oregon," said Tyson Stuber, a Eugene resident and member of the union's Local 156. "We're all brothers and sisters in the same state."

## **Detroit, MI**

### **Labor, immigration activists hold May Day rallies**

DETROIT — Hundreds of people have held May Day rallies in Detroit and Grand Rapids, calling for immigration law changes and other labor condition improvements on the international workers holiday.

Ismael Duran attends a rally to commemorate the legacy of May Day and support immigration reform in Detroit, Wednesday May 1, 2013. Immigrants and activists called for comprehensive immigration reform \_ an issue once again on the front burner politically after being virtually ignored in Obama's first term. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

About 200 community, labor and immigration activists gathered Wednesday in a Detroit park and heard speakers call on Washington lawmakers to work quickly to enact a federal overhaul of the immigration system.

The organizers include United Auto Workers and AFL-CIO locals and the immigration rights coalition Michigan United. Backers say combining the groups' interests is important to the effort of strengthening the rights of all workers.

A march in Grand Rapids has included protesters with signs calling for an end to deportations and the passage of U.S. immigration law changes. About 50 labor supporters have rallied in Flint.



**San Diego, CA**

**Hundreds March on Mayday in San Diego**

**By: Nadin Abbott.**



May 1, 2013 (San Diego)— Hundreds of Union Members and supporters came out today to the streets of San Diego to march for both labor right and immigrant rights. Pedro Rios of the Friends Committee (from El Cajon) said that “May Day is a day we are reclaiming for our community.”

Marches started in 2006 “when there were macro demonstrations around the country,” including San Diego. At the national level, this is about Immigrant Rights, which are connected to labor rights. May Day also celebrates the events of the Haymarket on May 1st, 1886 when a bomb went off at the Haymarket in Chicago, killing police officers and strikers alike. Labor leaders, immigrants themselves, were hauled before the court and were found guilty of setting this bomb off. They received the death penalty and ironically became a symbol for workers around the world. This is why May Day is International Labor day.

Around the world this is a holiday. In Mexico, where I grew up, the eight martyrs were remembered, but in the United States May Day was just another day. We have lost this day. So now, that we are seeing it recovered, it is striking. You might ask why? The workers were demanding a right most Americans workers take for granted. the eight hour work day.

So I asked Rios about this revival. As he put it, the unions that have been hit the worst with e-verify and other attacks on immigrants among them the Janitors Union and UNITE here, the hotel workers, are now aware of May Day. He also said that the goal was to get about five hundred people to come. I would say they met the goal, and perhaps more than five hundred people joined the march.

Rios also said that due to the support of the Labor Council and Lorena Gonzales, the compromise to celebrate the day is regional.

I asked him about expanding to the East County, where we have many workers in the service industry, as well as poverty levels that are unequal. He said that there are now alliances emerging, for instance with the Human Rights Coalition from El Cajon. Rios added that they were working to “create connections with communities that want to join the struggle for labor rights.”

Some of the Unions present were UNITE here, UFCW Local 135, EIU Healthcare, UDW (They are home care providers), Occupy San Diego, which while not a Union, it's still very active, and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). AFSCME was also present en force.

Geneve Aguilar of the Janitors Union (that like Hotel Workers are facing e-verify in order to suppress labor organizing, and face 500 dismissals soon), simply said, “enough of criminalizing the worker.”

She introduced Rosa Lopez, a member of the Union, local 19877 of the SEIU. This local represents workers at the Airport, among other places, there they clean so you can have a good experience. She said that she “came to the United States over twenty years ago.” She came to make a life, and give a better future to her children.

Then she mentioned her comrades, over five hundred janitors, “who came to this country to work, not to be separated from their families,” or to lose their ability to make a living. She added, “we are going to work for the migratory reform. It's not just for us, but others who have been affected by this situation.” She closed by reminding people that “they might take our jobs away, but not



our dignity.”

Rios reminded people that “It’s become a day for immigrants to assert their rights.” In an ironic twist of history, and Santayana was right, “those who forget history are bound to repeat it.” The workers at the Haymarket were immigrants, asserting their rights, though the strike and other methods. Here we are, over a hundred years later, and immigrants still have to assert their rights.

“We have seen too much when workers are denied jobs” whether it is the San Diego Mission Valley Hilton, or the five hundred Janitors that are about to lose their jobs. “All of us will be better off when eleven million come out from the shadows.”

Not stated by Rios, but one of the expected effects of these millions coming out of the shadows will be an upward wage pressure, as these workers will not be so easily abused, nor paid less because the threat of calling the Migra will be gone.

Herman Ramirez, an organizer for the United Food Workers told us that Northgate, a small supermarket, intends to also use E-Verify to solve their Union problem. Later on the march went in front of the supermarket, near the end of the march. He also added that “the teacher that is protesting, is also teaching.” He then pointed out that there was a lack of teachers this year for the march, and that Pink Slips should have none to do with their presence and solidarity with the rest of the working class.

He added that people are divided starting in school. Some kids will go to college, while others to the trades. But what we all need “is work with dignity.”

Virginia (One of the hunger strikers who has lost her job since) was the last to speak. She told us that she is originally from the State of Veracruz in Mexico. She came to this country ten years ago looking for work. (Many of the people living in the country side in Mexico have abandoned the fields and come to the US since NAFTA)

She added that she has sent her three kids to college. She started work at the Mission Valley Hilton two years ago, where “she had to find time to clean sixteen rooms in eight hours.” It is very physical work. When word of a Union organizing effort came, she immediately joined the struggle. This was led by UNITE Here Local 30. “We deserve a descent pay.”

In March the hotel was sold, and on the First of March there was civil disobedience leading to twenty arrests. In the end the company said that they would rehire all one hundred and ten workers, but go through E-Verify. The workers tried the five day hunger strike in April, and they were still fired.

“We want a migratory reform to live in peace, but we also want the Union so we can have dignified work, with respect, and benefits. And we need to lose the fear and organize.”

Then she addressed the President of the United States, in a formula more common in Mexico, “Citizen President of the Republic, we ask for dignified work, we are important to the nation.

Then the march started. It was a long march, taking us downtown, to the Hotels near the Convention Center, in front of the center itself, up the Gaslamp and into the Golden Hills area of

San Diego. It was a good, hilly climb, and throughout they kept themselves up, with chants. Some old ones from Occupy were there, "Tell me what democracy looks like, this is what democracy looks like," Or "We are the 99%"

There were others that were very much labor related, or immigrant rights related. "The Worker's Struggle does not have borders," "without papers, without fear," and my personal favorite, "up with the Union, down with exploitation."

The chants were done in both English and Spanish, and leaflets were given to passers by. At one point the marchers were confronted by one person, who screamed at them to "go back to Mexico." This gentleman did not do anything more than just scream epithets and got no rise from the marchers. One of the march Marshals positioned himself between the marchers and the person, and it never escalated.

When the workers marched by Northgate, they screamed, "Northgate listen, we are in the struggle."

At the end, Laura Reyes, General Secretary of the United Domestic Workers International and leader of AFSCME took to the stage. "We all know these are challenging times. We have to pull together so we can defeat every obstacle they put in front of us." She also reminded those listening that "too many employers depend on an endless supply of cheap labor."

Reyes reminded people that the Unions have power, and with that comes responsibility, "to seek unjust labor conditions, not just for the immigrant but for every worker."

She then addressed the dreamers, many of them were in the crowd. "The dreamers want to serve this country, the one they call home." Immigration reform "is about freedom, respect and dignity."

Workers have a right to speak while on the job, an essential freedom that many want to take away from workers. "This is our moment. This is our challenge, and make no mistake, San Diego we have seized this moment."

Reyes later told me that AFSCME will recognize immigrants in this country.

To put a little context on this, until a few years ago Organized Labor saw the immigrant community as a threat. But the AFL-CIO did split into the Federation and the United For Change Coalition. The latter sees immigrants, in the service industries, as a natural growth area for the Unions. Why? It's difficult to export the job of a hotel worker, while the Auto Workers of America face their jobs being sent abroad.

Labor has yet to fully face the reality of Globalization. But it does look to this observer, that Labor is starting to. During the march itself I talked about this with Aguilar, and how these divisions will have to be overcome. But, it does look that we might be seeing the renewal of Labor, or at least on this May Day, I sure hope so.

## Raleigh, NC

### May Day in N. Carolina: 5 students arrested fighting for worker rights

#### NC Student Power Union



Raleigh, N.C. — On May Day, the NC Student Power Union mobilized more than 350 students from 10 colleges from all around North Carolina to participate in a demonstration against the Legislature’s regressive agenda.

Students began their day with a rally at the North Carolina State University Bell Tower and then marched to the Civitas Institute, a far-right think tank funded by multimillionaire and deputy state budget director, Art Pope. The demonstration raised opposition to the avalanche of backwards policies being advanced by legislators. They joined a broader coalition of workers, immigrant rights groups and many other community organizations for a march from Moore Square Park to the North Carolina Legislature.

When the march arrived at Jones Street, students, young people and others took over the street, and five sat down with a banner that read, “We Demand a Future! Stop budget cuts! Stop racist voter laws! Stop attacks on workers!”

During the street occupation, which lasted for nearly an hour, leaders of the Congressional Black Caucus, the North Carolina NAACP, the AFL-CIO and the Southern Workers Assembly, among others, delivered messages of support and solidarity as students spoke out against the attacks.

Demonstrators then attempted to bring their demands for justice into the Legislature and five were arrested — Jessica Injejikian from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Tristan Munchel and Dhruv Pathak from UNC Greensboro, and Zaina Alsous and Carissa Morrison from

UNC Chapel Hill. All five were charged with disorderly conduct, and Morrison and Pathak were additionally charged with misdemeanor assault on a government official.

“We stand behind these five students who took a bold and powerful action today and put their bodies on the line to stop the attacks on the people of North Carolina,” said Juan Miranda, a student at UNCG. “Our hope is that many others are inspired to join the fightback against these forces from destroying our state and taking us backwards. We will fight these charges to the end. The fact that these students were arrested simply for peacefully trying to enter and bring their demands into the ‘People’s House’ is absurd, and the additional charges that Morrison and Pathak received are entirely baseless.”

In a statement, Pathak explained why he participated in civil disobedience: “Education should be affordable and accessible to all students. The right-wing Legislature and current budget proposal will make it harder for students to get into school and stay in school. My family struggles with finances every day and has trouble making ends meet. The last thing I need is a multimillionaire writing the state budget who wants to take away my financial aid. ... That’s why I took this action today.”

Students have vowed that they will be back to continue demonstrations throughout the summer with other organizations, and as long as is needed.

## New Heaven, CT

### 700 Rally For Rights

By: Allan Appel – New Heaven Independent



Labor Leader Bob Proto called it a “crime” that Congress has left immigration reform and a pathway to good jobs so broken for so long for so many. And local student Cinthia Perez declared “I am Mexican, undocumented, unapologetic, and unafraid.”

They were two among 20 passionate voices addressing a crowd of more than 700 who rallied and marched for labor and immigrant rights on a picture-perfect May Day late afternoon on the New Haven Green.

## Montpelier, VT

### Vt. activists rally at Statehouse on May Day

By: WILSON RING - Associated Press



More than 1,000 activists highlighted their visions of social justice Wednesday at a May Day march through the city and rally on the Statehouse lawn that featured live music, speeches and lots of red T-shirts.

Speakers at the event labeled Put People First promoted the rights of immigrant farmworkers, the need for universal access to health care and other topics.

Traditionally, May 1 is celebrated internationally as the day of the worker.

"We are trying to build the community we would all like to live in, where peoples' needs are all being met, whether that be housing, whether that be food, access to transportation," said Sandra Schlosser, a volunteer with the Vermont Workers Center who helped organize the rally.

Organizers also called on Vermont legislators, who met inside the Statehouse while people rallied on the lawn, to take action on various issues.

The Workers Center asked that lawmakers pass a budget that "meets the needs of the people." Some of their criticisms of the Legislature include proposals to cap the welfare-to-work program, inadequate citizen participation in the state budget process and what they see as a too-slow process to implement the first-in-the-nation single-payer health care system.

Schlosser recognized that Vermont is far ahead of many states on social issues but said residents need to support similar efforts elsewhere.

"Even though Vermont probably is leading the way in a lot of those areas it's something that isn't just happening here, it's something that's happening all over the United States. And it is really exciting," she said.

About 1,500 people attended the rally, Schlosser estimated. The Montpelier police did not have an independent estimate of the crowd size.

Others at the rally included Alberto Madrigal, 22, from Tabasco, Mexico, who has been working on a Vermont dairy farm for the past 18 months.

He spoke in favor of an effort by a group called Migrant Justice to legalize driver's licenses for farmworkers in the country illegally. An estimated 1,500 immigrants work on Vermont's dairy farms.

"I'm involved with Migrant Justice to fight for my rights and to reclaim our dignity as human beings that we are," he said. "We are struggling for our licenses for a better day for us and for you."

## Denver, CO

### About 200 rally for immigration reform in Denver

ALEXANDRA TILSLEY - Associated Press



About 200 people turned out in Denver to rally for immigration reform despite some wet spring

snow.

The rally kicked off Wednesday morning at the state Capitol, and featured speeches from advocacy and labor group leaders and state legislators, including Sen. Jessie Ulibarri, Rep. Crisanta Duran and Rep. Joe Salazar.

As the group marched southwest from the Capitol, drivers passing by honked and waved in support.

Though the snow might have kept some people away — organizers said the crowd was definitely smaller than last year's — the group that marched was undeterred by the conditions. Marchers chanted the whole way, shouting refrains like, "The people, united, will never be divided."

"I know the Latino people do it whether it's thunderstorms or snow or anything," said Claudia Esquivel of Boulder, who spoke at the rally at Sunken Garden Park after the march. "Nothing can stop us."

Naykary Silva, a 26-year-old mother from Mexico who is in the country illegally, said she marched Wednesday because she has a 3-year-old son with autism who needs health care, and she wants to be part of the movement working to make that a possibility. The wintry weather, she said, never made her doubt her decision to march.

"If you want to do something, you do it no matter what," Silva said. "There's still more work to do."

Most attendees seemed to agree that there is still progress to be made, though most also were pleased that the Colorado Legislature this spring passed a bill allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities.

Esquivel told the crowd at Sunken Garden Park, nicknamed Citizenship Park for the day, that they must still push for change.

"We need to remind our senators we voted for them, and they need to work for us," Esquivel said in an interview with The Associated Press.

The biggest change she, and most others, wants to see is a path to citizenship for those in the country illegally.

"I would like the rest of our people to become residents," said Esquivel, who is a citizen. "I don't want families to be separated, don't want people to be living in fear."

Carrying a Mexican flag as he marched, Antonio Moreno said although he is a citizen, he thinks it's important to fight for the rights of other members of the Latino community.

"I have solidarity with them," Moreno said. "We are all one people, and we all should have civil rights."

Tens of thousands of people are expected to rally in dozens of cities in what has become an

annual cry for easing the nation's immigration laws.

The May Day rallies carry a special sense of urgency this year, two weeks after a bipartisan group of senators introduced a bill that would bring many of the estimated 11 million living in the U.S. illegally out of the shadows. One Denver participant carried a sign that read "11 million out of the shadows (equals) \$1.5 billion into the economy."

## **San Antonio, TX**

### **Activists march downtown for immigration reform**

**By Michelle Casady – San Antonio Express-News**

What started as a group of about 50 gathered in Milam Square Park on Wednesday afternoon swelled to nearly 200 people, marching through downtown streets and across Alamo Plaza, carrying flags and signs in support of immigration reform.

“Obama, escucha! Estamos en la lucha!” — which means roughly, “Obama, listen, we are in the fight!” — was chanted repeatedly, and the marchers' signs were painted with messages demanding better wages and the end of deportations that split up families.

The mile-and-a-half march, organized by the National Immigrant Solidarity Network, ended at the Southwest Workers Union offices at 1416 E. Commerce St. and coincided with International Workers' Day, also known as May Day.

Democratic Congressman Lloyd Doggett made an appearance at the beginning of the rally and used a megaphone to tell the crowd he considered himself an ally in the cause.

“This year, this is our best chance at getting comprehensive reform passed,” he told the marchers before encouraging them to continue fighting for change.

Rita Urguijo-Ruiz, an assistant professor at Trinity University who became a citizen in January but has lived in the U.S. since she was 16, marched Wednesday mainly in support of “more humane immigration laws,” she said.

“Families are suffering because of these laws that are completely irrational, given that immigrants give so much to this country,” she said. “I had the greatest opportunity to come here, become documented and get a Ph.D. to serve my community ... And others want that, too.”

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