

Newsletter

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Dear Reader,

The death of Senator Edward Kennedy last night is a huge loss for all members of the immigrant community. He was a central figure in US politics displaying a tireless commitment to issues of justice, immigrants, civil rights and the poor. Through his many legislative successes he managed to have a direct, and positive effect on the lives of millions of Americans.

Through his long career Senator Kennedy never lost his idealism or his belief that each of us can contribute to positive change. We saw that when he took up case of reforming our immigration system a number of years ago. He exhorted all immigrants to join him in the fight for change. His speeches at the ILIR rally's in Washington DC were passionate and memorable.

His willingness to forge alliances across the isle in Washington DC as well as his commitment to reasoned discourse made an effective legislator, a formidable opponent and a real life hero to so many of us. He never forgot his own immigrant roots and his love for Ireland and all things Irish was a source of pride for our community.

We will miss the Senator as a friend of immigrants and the Irish community, as a visionary and true champion for justice. His steadfast support of immigration reform will be sorely missed as we continue to seek change but the work he has done will never be forgotten.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis

Slán go foill,
Sheila

Immigration Reform

A recent White house meeting between DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano and immigrant advocates included a surprise visit from President Obama who reiterated his support for immigration reform. Some advocates read this visit a measure of the Presidents support for immigration reform while others are concerned that it is an effort to appease immigrants and their supporters. See video responses from some of the people who attended the meeting on the [America's Voice website](#).

In a new report released last week, [Restriction or Legalization? Measuring the Economic Benefits of Immigration Reform](#), the Cato Institute seeks to quantify the benefits that would flow to the U.S. economy from comprehensive immigration reform which grants some form of legal status to unauthorized immigrants already living in the United States.

The study concluded that the "legalization of low-skilled immigrant workers would yield significant income gains for American workers and households." They state that "the positive impact for U.S. households of legalization under an optimal visa tax would be 1.27 percent of GDP or \$180 billion."

It is expected that Senator Schumer will introduce an immigration reform bill in the Senate in September it will be followed by a bill in the house later in the fall. It will need all the rational voices we can muster to pass positive legislation that will help citizens and immigrants alike.

You can help by:

- forwarding this newsletter to friends & colleagues -click on the "Forward email" link at the bottom
- Ask friends and family to help win positive reform that is good for America.
- Sign up to receive information and alerts at <http://www.reformimmigrationforamerica.org>

The CIIC will send out action alerts when the debate gets going. We will also keep you informed about important changes in the US Citizenship and Immigration Service as well as the latest on immigrant rights, news from Irish centers around the country.

News and Updates

The [Boston Globe Article](#) by Jim Smith details the new wave of **Irish Immigrants who are returning to the US** in significant

numbers. Irish Centers across the country are experiencing this trend with increases in their numbers. CIIC's Sheila Gleeson was subsequently interviewed by George Hook on his Newstalk Ireland show to talk about this new development.

In England word for Irish organizations that they are the experiencing the same trend. The [Irish Post reports](#) that Irish organizations there are holding out a vital helping hand for new wave of Irish emigrants.

A very compelling story of an undocumented **Irish immigrant family's life in the shadows** can be seen in the [Irish Echo](#).

The fall fundraising season is already beginning with the **Irish Immigration Pastoral Center in San Francisco** announcing their Annual Celtic Ball & Auction on November 14, 2009. The demand for services is increasing with the new arrivals so please support this and all the upcoming Irish Center fundraisers.

Seattle's Irish Immigrant Support Group and Consul General Gerry Staunton are hosting an Irish Seniors' Luncheon on Saturday, September 19, in Seattle, Washington.

The Boston Irish Group are hosting a special Town Hall Meeting Bad Abbots, Quincy on October 6th at 8pm. Irish immigrants are invited to attend to find out how the expected immigration legislation will affect them. For more information contact the **Irish Pastoral Centre** at 617-479-7404.

The Senior Helpline USA is up and running with volunteers from the Aisling Irish Community Center, the Emerald Isle Immigration Center and the New York Irish Center. Call the toll free number **Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon**
1-877-997-5777

Detentions and Deportations

The issue of detentions and problems with the current system continues to give cause for concern. The recent discovery by the ACLU that more than one in 10 deaths in immigration detention in

the last six years have been overlooked is particularly disturbing for the CIIC and other advocates who have raised concerns about the inadequate and often non-existent monitoring and accountability of the immigration detention system. We will continue to highlight these issues and to keep you informed of actions that you can take.

Another aspect of abuse of immigrants rights was outlined in a recent article in [San Francisco Chronicle](#) which reported that hundreds of U.S. citizens have been detained and, in some cases, deported by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Fraud Warnings

Please warn friends and family about the host of immigration scams that are out there. As the discussion about immigration reform increases the websites and scam artists seeking to take advantage of vulnerable and often desperate immigrants also increase.

We highlighted the DV Lottery scams last month and this week heard new reports of fraudulent individuals posing as immigration attorneys as well a new on line fraud scam with the new Internet ESTA registration.

To protect yourself from fraud take a few simple steps:

1. Check with an [Irish Immigration Center](#) for a referral to a qualified immigration attorney or assistance in checking out the attorney you have chosen.
2. Always verify the legitimacy of any website that requests money for a service.
3. Look for the .gov suffix on US government websites
4. [The official DV Lottery website](#)
5. [ESTA - the Official U.S. Government Web Site](#)

New Moves in England on Child Abuse Scandal

Irish victims of child abuse who are currently living in England met recently to plan their campaign for fairness. It is believed that many residents of state run institutions who were victims of abuse were not aware of the work of the Redress Board and did not have their claims heard. The Irish Post Reports that "Victims met at the London Irish Centre over the weekend to plan what action to take."

The Redress Board did little outreach or education in the United States because the Department of Education believed that there

were not many victims here. Advocates in the US disagree with this. Perhaps we will see victims in the US follow in the footsteps of their UK counterparts and form their own groups to seek justice.

See the Irish Post Article [here](#)

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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