

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **D.C. COUNCIL LENDS SUPPORT TO IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY**

**SENSE OF THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION CRITICIZES AREA LEGISLATURES FOR TARGETING IMMIGRANTS FOR “EXTRA SCRUTINY”**

**Washington, D.C.** – Councilmember David Catania (At-Large) expressed appreciation that all 13 members of the D.C. Council co-introduced and voted to approve the “Sense of the Council Urging the Federal Government to Adopt a Sensible Immigration Policy Emergency Resolution of 2007,” at today’s legislative meeting.

In recent weeks, several regional legislatures passed laws targeting undocumented immigrants out of frustration with the federal government’s inability to formulate a modern policy on the issue of undocumented immigrants. These new laws frequently call for identifying people who appear to be immigrants and subjecting them to “extra scrutiny” in order to determine their citizenship status. These actions, however, invite discriminatory treatment in violation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, which provides for “equal protection of the laws.”

“The xenophobia and the immigrant bashing going on in other parts of our region are appalling,” said Catania. “I felt that it was important for this Council to go on record as opposed to these types of efforts.”

The Sense of the Council Resolution highlights the need for the federal government to address the status of undocumented immigrants in a way that is both sensible and fair. It states that, “While the Council does not condone the fact that individuals have entered this country in violation of federal immigration laws, the federal government’s failure to secure our borders and willingness to turn a blind eye towards the enforcement of our immigration laws has contributed significantly to the growing population of undocumented immigrants.” It goes on to say that the adoption of local laws targeting immigrants under the guise of assisting the federal government with its enforcement responsibility fosters a climate of fear, xenophobia, and discrimination.

“I hope our actions today will send the message to our immigrant community that we will not single them out for ‘extra scrutiny,’” explained Catania. “And we, as politicians, will not seek to score political points by pitting the rest of our community against them.”

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