

# American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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## Statement by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney On the Martinez-Hagel Proposal April 6, 2006

The Martinez-Hagel proposal on immigration tears at the heart of true reform and will drive millions of hard-working immigrants further into the shadows of American society, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. By dividing immigrants already here into three different classifications, the Martinez-Hagel proposal will create an undemocratic, three-tiered society that degrades and marginalizes millions of immigrant families in our communities while driving down wage and benefits standards for everyone.

We need an immigration policy that provides a real path to citizenship for *all* workers already here, paying taxes and contributing to their communities and that helps meet the future need for workers in a fair way. We should recognize immigrant workers as full members of society -- as permanent residents with full rights and full mobility that employers may not exploit.

The idea that any group of workers in America should be treated as less than equal is downright appalling. It undermines a core value of our society and jeopardizes all workers' rights.

It's long past time to put this struggling underground community above ground and recognize their enormous contributions.

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