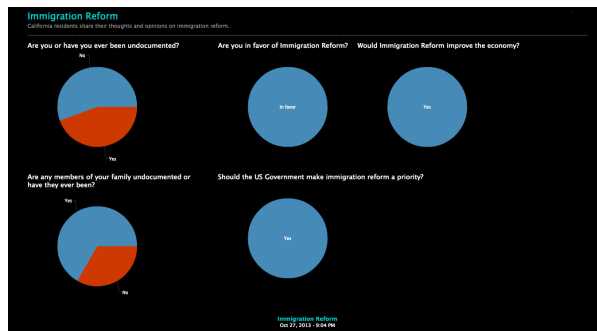


Not all Supporters of Immigration Reform Support Guest Work

In a recent anonymous survey conducted by NatyRockdriguez.com, results demonstrate that while Californian's who participated may be in favor of immigration reform, not all are in favor of guest worker programs. Social media conversations through [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) shed light on the fact that not all supporters are aware that the immigration reform bill that passed the Senate, [S. 744](#), includes guest worker programs.

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Infographic by Natalie Rodriguez

While the majority of participants in the survey are have never been undocumented, the majority have family members who are either currently undocumented or who have been. All are in favor of immigration reform; agree that a reform would strengthen the economy, and that that the reform should be a priority.

When asked about what makes an immigration reform plan comprehensive, some of the more popular responses included: taking into account family unity, length of time in the country, criminal backgrounds, and equal opportunities for all.

Responses on guest worker programs as a part of the reform showed concerned for the families of the workers and the workers themselves. One anonymous response was "I feel the guest worker program should not be included because what would

happen if workers find someone here in the states and then form a family, would the government then separate families just like what's happening currently?" In a [Twitter conversation](#), one response was that "It's the problem of people overstaying and becoming undocumented in the process."

[\[View the story "Support for Immigration Reform" on Storify\]](#)

This week, President Obama has once again called on the House to pass a reform before the end of the year and encouraged the public to petition. [FWD.us](#), the pro-reform organization, lead by technology industry leaders, continues hosting events and social media campaigns in support. The [survey](#) will remain open until the end of the year as the conversation on immigration reform continues.

Immigration Reform

Immigration reform continues to gain momentum with the government reopening, however there is still much debate not only in regards to whether or not there should be an immigration reform, but also in regards to what makes a reform plan comprehensive. President Obama has [urged House Republicans](#) to support a reform plan before the end of 2013 and during the government shutdown the House Democrats introduced an immigration reform plan on October 2, 2013. Mark Zuckerberg's organization FWD.us recently announced that in

Immigration Survey

collaboration with LinkedIn and its founder Reid Hoffman, it will be hosting a [DREAMer Hackathon](#) in which undocumented students will work hand in hand with top Silicon Valley programmers in an effort to draw attention to the need for Immigration Reform. Meanwhile, political movements such as [Yo Soy 132 Bay Area](#) and [By Any Means Necessary](#) (BAMN) continue to take action in marches asking Obama to end deportations and demand full citizenship rights for all.

According to the Pew Research Center, California is the state with the [largest population of undocumented immigrants](#). This survey is an opportunity for you to express your thoughts and opinions on immigration reform and what makes a plan comprehensive or not. Where do you fall in the immigration reform debate, and would an immigration reform affect you?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey on immigration reform. Your insight will be compiled into an article in which any questions and concerns that arise will also be addressed. Stay tuned for more on immigration reform at NatyRockdriguez.com.

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[Milli Atkinson of Centro de Ayuda Legal para Inmigrantes \(CALI\)](#) from [Natalie Rodriguez](#) on [Vimeo](#).

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Milli Atkinson is an [Immigration Attorney](#) for the *Centro de Ayuda Legal para Inmigrantes*, [CALI](#), who believes that although the proposed immigration reform [S. 744](#) is not perfect, it is a start to give undocumented immigrants an option to legalize their status in the United States. To her, the idea of having an open border is unrealistic, yet she believes that “we created a system that businesses welcome [undocumented immigrants] and then the government turns a blind eye, and then we’ve kind of created our own problems.”

Through her career as an immigration lawyer Atkinson has been able to reunite families who had not seen each other in up to ten years as well as work in removal defense. Through Governor Jerry Brown’s recent signing of [AB 60](#) and the [Trust Act](#) in California, she believes that undocumented immigrants will be more willing to collaborate with law enforcement when they are victims of crimes and be less likely to become involved in deportation procedures. According to Atkinson, “a lot of people got caught up in the deportation process just for stupid things and some times even when they weren’t charged with anything.” Being able to drive legally in the state will change that for some of the more than two million [undocumented immigrants in California](#).

Atkinson obtained her Bachelor of Science degree from [Pepperdine University](#) in accounting in the year 2000. In 2003 she obtained her Juris Doctor degree from the University of California,

[Hastings College of the Law](#). In 2009 she began practicing full time immigration law through a private practice. Four years later, in February of 2013 she became CALI's lead attorney.

Before becoming a full time immigration lawyer Atkinson was working in finance and volunteering and interning part time in immigration law. She interned at the [International Rescue Committee](#) and the [Office of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi](#).

It was learning about human trafficking and international human rights that led to her interest in immigration law. While interning at non-profits, she learned about [U-Visas](#), which are specifically for victims of human trafficking and other crimes. She found immigration law to be rewarding and personal. "You kind of get involved in someone's entire family and their life history, in their story in a way that other areas of the law is not." Originally, Atkinson wanted to be a tax accountant.

Find CALI on [Facebook](#).

Find Milli Atkinson on [LinkedIn](#).

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[View the story "The Topic of Immigration in the first week of October 2013" on [Storify](#)]

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Labor Organizer, Al Rojas,
Opposes Guest Worker Programs as
a Part of Immigration Reform from
Natalie Rodriguez on Vimeo.

The International Longshore and

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[Warehouse Union \(ILWU\)](#) local 34 Hall in San Francisco Calif., hosted the panel “Northern California Braceros, Immigration, Labor & Human Rights” with former farm workers and organizers Al Rojas and Juan Martinez. The event took place as part of LaborFest 2013 on Tuesday, July 30. This year the festival commemorates its 20th anniversary with the theme “Solidarity Has No Borders.” The panel focused on the relationship between guest worker programs and the proposed comprehensive immigration reform.

Rojas is a labor organizer with the [Labor Council for Latin American Advancement](#) (LCLAA) and former farm worker. He was also a former [organizer of the United Farm Workers \(UFW\)](#) and worked side by side with the historic [Cesar Chavez](#).

According to [laborfest.net](#), “The history of California and the Bracero Program is one of the key issues in the debate in Congress about ‘immigration reform’.” The [Bracero Program](#) was a guest worker program that began in 1942 and ended in the 1964.

[Chavez](#) the labor union organizer of the UFW, [opposed](#) the guest worker program known as the [Bracero Program](#) on the basis that it undermined union efforts for fair pay because, guest workers were paid less than union workers and hired to work when union workers went on strike. Rojas sustains this argument to this day. He refers to the proposed immigration reform as “the greatest attack against working people in this county,” referring to guest worker programs as a

Part of Immigration Reform

form of “slavery.”

Martinez has been working on the [Bracero Memorial Highway Project](#) and has put together an exhibit of Bracero memorabilia including tools and newspaper articles of the times. The project is meant to commemorate the lives of Braceros who were killed in two tragic accidents during 1958 and 1963 in the [Salinas Valley](#).

Growing up in the valley he says, “the abuse was clear.”

Prof. Alex Saragoza teaches history in the department of comparative Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He believes that “the issue is not, for me, the guest worker program, per se, but rather the conditions and the enforcement of the conditions.” Saragoza claims that the problem of wages being suppressed “is a generic problem,” that is “not unique to guest worker programs.”

Currently there is a guest worker program in place that grants seasonal agricultural workers [H-2A Visas](#). The proposed [immigration reform bill](#) includes guest worker programs for agricultural and high skilled workers alike.