

Black politicians backing immigrants

By Betty Pleasant

Special to Sentinel-Voice

LOS ANGELES (NNPA) - As immigrant rights forces gear up for a national march on Washington, the U.S. Senate is preparing this spring to debate the legislative measure in the eye of the storm raging throughout the country - H.R. 4437: The Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 - which the House passed on Dec. 16, 2005 by a vote of 239 to 182.

The so-called immigration bill, authored by Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc.), was thoroughly trashed during the debates in the lower chamber by House Democrats, including members of the Congressional Black Caucus who viewed the entire bill - complete with its 25 amendments - to be a piece of enforcement legislation designed to punish illegal immigrants rather than a measure to reform the immigration and naturalization system, which is what they say is needed.

Of the 40 members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were eligible to vote on the bill, 39 voted against it, and only one, Rep. Harold E. Ford (D-Tenn.), voted for it.

Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) is the only African-American in the Senate and the only CBC member yet to debate and vote on the bill, but he has his opinions. In a written statement, Obama said: "My father came here from Kenya, and I represent a state where vibrant immigrant communities ranging from Mexican to Polish to Irish enrich our neighborhoods," he said.

The senator described H.R. 4437 as "a strong enforcement bill," which he says is necessary to secure our borders. He said that while security may start at our borders, it doesn't end there. "Millions of undocu-

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— Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.)



mented immigrants live and work here without our knowing their identity or their backgrounds," he said. "We need to strike a workable bargain with them. They have to acknowledge that breaking our immigration laws was wrong. They must pay a penalty, and abide by all our laws going forward. They must earn the right to stay over a six-year period, and then they must wait another five years as legal permanent residents before they become citizens."

The senator said that for accepting those penalties, the country must allow undocumented immigrants to come out of the shadows and step onto a path toward full participation in society.

"In fact," Obama said. "I will not support any bill that does not provide this earned path to citizenship for the undocumented population - not just for humanitarian reasons, but also because this is the only practical way we can get a handle on the population that is within our borders right now."

The Bush administration supports the House bill but also wants to create a new guest worker program permitting foreign citizens the opportunity to work in the U.S. on what it describe as jobs no U.S. citizen wants.

However, Obama said, "We cannot create a new guest worker program without making it as close to impossible for illegal workers

to find employment. We do not need new guest workers, plus future undocumented immigrants. We need guest workers instead of undocumented immigrants."

Toward that end, Obama and other members of the CBC believe American employers need to take responsibility.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, a non-elected civil rights leader, insists that the government crack down on exploitative employers and off-the-books hiring. Jackson said that Black, lower-wage workers in this country worry that employers are using immigrants to displace them, to undermine good jobs, force wages down and weaken labor organizing.

"But the answer to that isn't to turn on other poor workers," Jackson said. "It is to raise the minimum wage - which has been frozen since 1997 - bolster union organizing and run a full employment economy."

"Part of the anger directed at immigrants comes from workers understandably scared as manufacturing jobs are shipped abroad, and lower paying service jobs take their place. But global corporations, not immigrants, are taking those jobs abroad. The answer isn't cleaning up immigration, but cleaning out Washington and electing leaders who will challenge the corporate hold over our trade policies."

Rep. Diane Watson (D-

Calif.) agrees with the citizenship requirements described by Obama but adds "learning to speak the English language" to the list.

Watson, Maxine Waters and Barbara Lee, all Democrats from California, support the passage in the Senate of the McCain-Kennedy "Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act," which they claim provides for meaningful and comprehensive reform through measures to increase border security, a crackdown on businesses that employ illegal

immigrants and a path for illegal immigrants to earn citizenship.

Jackson's son, Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. (D-Ill), who voted with the rest of the CBC on this issue, makes the distinction between immigrants and African-Americans. "Americans are fond of saying that we're a nation of immigrants, and that's true for many but not for African-Americans," Jackson Jr. said. "Immigrants, technically, are volunteers. African-Americans didn't come to this country as volunteers. We were forc-

ibly brought here as non-citizens in violation of our human rights to participate in a labor system called slavery."

As a result, African-Americans were undocumented and without legal protection and citizenship for 246 years and afforded second-class citizenship for another 100 years. So why does the Congressional Black Caucus identify with the immigrant cause? Because we, as a people, have been there, they said.

Betty Pleasant writes for WAVE Newspapers.

City of Las Vegas Housing Authority

PUBLIC NOTICE

EFFECTIVE MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2006

The Housing Authority of the City of Las Vegas
Will be accepting applications for
Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED
MONDAY-FRIDAY

BEGINNING ON MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2006

FROM 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM AND 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM.

APPLICATIONS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED DURING THESE HOURS AND ONLY VIA TELEPHONE

WE WILL ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FOR THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM, UNTIL WE REACH 2000. YOUR TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME MUST BE AT OR BELOW THE FOLLOWING LEVELS ACCORDING TO YOUR FAMILY SIZE IN ORDER TO APPLY.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
\$20,650	\$23,600	\$26,550	\$29,550	\$31,900	\$34,250	\$36,600	\$38,950	\$41,400

PLEASE CALL: 944-1260 FOR ENGLISH, FOR A BILINGUAL (SPANISH/ENGLISH) OPERATOR PLEASE CALL 944-1280. ONLY CALL DURING THE TIME INDICATED TO HAVE YOUR NAME PLACED ON HACLV WAIT LIST FOR THE SECTION 8 VOUCHER PROGRAM. YOU MAY NOT CALL ANY OTHER NUMBER TO HAVE YOUR NAME PLACE ON THE WAIT LIST. THE LINES MAY BE BUSY. THEREFORE, YOU MUST KEEP RE-DIALING TO GET THROUGH. PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST SPEAK TO A LIVE INTAKE PERSON TO SUCCESSFULLY GET ON THE WAIT LIST. PLEASE DO NOT CALL PRIOR TO JUNE 5, OR CALL OTHER NUMBERS AT OUR AGENCY.

GOOD LUCK!

Please not that you can only submit one application during each call.

NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE GIVEN OUT OR ACCEPTED FOR THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM IN PERSON OR BY MAIL, NO EXCEPTIONS!

PLEASE DO NOT CALL PRIOR TO JUNE 5, 2006 AT 8:30AM. IF YOU GET A MESSAGE THAT STATES ALL CIRCUITS ARE BUSY OR A RAPID BUSY SIGNAL, NOTHING IS WRONG WITH THE PHONES, YOU MUST HANG UP AND KEEP TRYING.

AS A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABLED FAMILIES, ANOTHER PERSON MAY CALL IN FOR SAID APPLICANT BUT THEY MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE

PLEASE HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AVAILABLE PRIOR TO CALLING:

1. Names of all persons to be on application.
2. Social security numbers, birth dates and ages of all persons.
3. Current address and phone number or message number.
4. Source of income and amount.

The Housing Authority of the City of Las Vegas does not discriminate on the basis of Race, Color, Religion, Sex, Disability, Familial Status or National Origin.

Our agency shall provide reasonable accommodations to disabled clients to ensure all programs and services are accessible. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please put your request in writing to the attention of: HACLV 504/ADA Office 420 N 10th Street. You may contact our agency for additional assistance in making your request by calling (922-6900).

Si usted no puede leer este documento porque no lee ingles o require que esta comunicacion sea interpretada o traducida, por favor llame inmediatamente a nuestra oficina (922-6900) para una interpretacion o traduccion gratuita.

FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED YOU MUST HAVE A RELAY PERSON CONNECT YOU.
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Miss Black Nevada

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decided what field I want to pursue."

Beevers has many interests but admitted, "Thanks to Miss Black USA, I have discovered I have a passion for working with students and helping them pursue their educational goals. But I also want to do counseling as well."

She loves to dance, especially ballroom style. In addition to playing the piano, singing and participating in other events at UNLV, she has danced and cheered at the Arena Football League's Las Vegas Gladiators games.

Some of her other accomplishments include making Honor Roll and National Honor Society Member, National Dean's List Recognition, as well as earning the Presidential Academic Award and a list of academic scholarships and other awards. In 2004, she

was the Undergraduate Commencement Speaker at UNLV. Beevers is also fluent in Spanish.

In her pageant, Beevers earned Miss Congeniality on her way to winning the title of Miss Black Nevada USA 2006.

She acknowledges God and her parents as the reason why she is the woman that she has become; and each day she lives by her philosophy that, "a wish changes nothing, but a decision changes everything."

She is considering relocating to Charlotte, N.C.

The Miss Black USA Pageant and Scholarship Foundation Inc. is a non-profit corporation in the state of Maryland, recognized under the 501(c) 3 code of the Internal Revenue Service. Their website is www.missblackusa.org for more information.