



Citizenship Day 2009 Talking Points

Over 30 Citizenship in Sep. Honor Our Past & Future Strength as Nation of Immigrants

Citizenship Day Honors Nation's Greatest Values of Personal Responsibility, Inclusion and Opportunity

- America's greatness is deeply rooted in our rich immigrant tradition of welcoming and assimilating new arrivals. Naturalization is the culmination of that the immigrant experience—the final attainment of the American Dream and the ultimate embrace of the social responsibilities and limitless opportunities that come from U.S. citizenship.
- The strength of the U.S. Democracy and the prosperity of the U.S. economy depend on the full participation of its populous. Supporting the rapid integration of immigrants into the economic and civic life of this country ensures that immigrants are contributing at their highest potential—making for a more prosperous America.
- This Citizenship Day 2009—as America confronts the difficult task ahead of reforming failed, short-sighted public policies that have benefited the few at the expense of the majority—there has never been a more important moment to recognize and embrace the responsibilities of U.S. Citizenship. In President Obama's words, it is this commitment to overcome challenges and strengthen our nation that is “the price and the promise of citizenship.”

Despite Economic Hardship, and Spike in Fees, New Immigrants Continue to Realize the Dream of U.S. Citizenship

- Despite the largest economic recession since the Great Depression and a drastic hike in the citizenship application fee—which increased the cost from \$400 to \$625 in 2007—immigrants are still applying for citizenship in droves
- This month naturalization ceremonies are planned across the country, where new Americans will apply U.S. citizenship.
- Just like the historic one million naturalizations of 2007, today's continued motivation of eligible immigrant to become U.S. citizens will play a defining role in U.S. political life.

Rapid Integration and Civic Participation of U.S. Immigrants Continues to Strengthen our Democracy; Influence Elections

- Among hard-working immigrant communities we see today what we have seen since America's inception: new Americans stand out as a patriotic community, loyal to American ideals, and optimistic about America's potential. More than any other time in history, this community wants to help strengthen the U.S. Democracy and shape a more prosperous future for our country.
- The benefits of full integration of U.S. immigrant communities are seen throughout the political, social and economic fabric of American life. At the community level, integration facilitates trustful relationships with law enforcement, school PTA, advisory neighborhood commissions, faith communities, and with local civic leaders. At the national level, new Americans vote in some of the highest numbers of any demographic group; their motivation to stay informed strengthen their community's and builds a stronger Democracy for all of us.
- As we saw in 2008, the margins for victory are narrow and increasingly political races are being determined by immigrant voters. If just a small percentage of new eligible immigrant voters are mobilized to vote in 2010 elections, we will see drastic effects in battleground states throughout the country.
- **BY THE NUMBERS:** Record participation by new American voters played a decisive role in election outcomes—particularly in battleground states like Florida, Colorado, New Mexico and Nevada, North Carolina and Virginia.
 - In the 2008 election, there were 3 million more newly naturalized U.S. voters than there were in 2004.
 - Latino eligible voters accounted for 9.5% of all eligible voters, up from 8.2% in 2004. A record 10.5 million Latinos voted (out of 19.5 million eligible voters.)
 - The share of eligible voters who were Asian also increased, from 3.3% in 2004 to 3.4% in 2008.

Over 30 Events Held in Immigrant Communities across the Country will Help thousands of Eligible Immigrants Become U.S. Citizens.

- The *ya es hora: !ciudadania!* (Citizenship: It's Time) Campaign is working with organizations and groups nationwide this September to help eligible permanent residents surmount the bureaucratic and economic obstacles to apply for U.S. Citizenship.
- From September 12 to September 26, over 20 citizenship workshops are being held in 12 states—including Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. For a fee of less than \$50, the workshops will offer legal and administrative support to help eligible immigrants prepare their applications for U.S. Citizenship. The goal nationwide is to service more immigrants in September.

- Simultaneously, the Campaign's national Spanish media partners Univision, Entravision, and Impremedia will show PSAs to reach Hispanic households.

National Coordinating Partners



National Media Partners



National Partners



Ya es Hora !Ciudadania! (Citizenship: It's Time!) is an unprecedented campaign to inform, educate and motivate eligible permanent residents in the United States to apply for U.S. citizenship. For more information, visit www.yaeshora.info.