



Immigration Issues in Greater Seattle

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A REPORT BY THE IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SEATTLE

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INTRODUCTION

Each July 4th the Seattle League participates in the annual Independence Day Celebration at Seattle Center by registering new citizens to vote. On this day, throngs of immigrants from all countries of the globe take their oath of citizenship and are welcomed with waving flags and speeches by our elected officials. Immigrants who take the oath have already demonstrated their ability to read, write and speak English, as well as their knowledge of our customs, our civil rights and responsibilities, and the history of the United States. On this day our history becomes their history, and our national heroes become theirs.

Immigration is a central theme of American history and a central theme of the history of the Northwest. Immigrants, free and enslaved, fueled the westward expansion in our country by cultivating the land and establishing new centers of industry. Immigrants have been a constant fact of life in American history, but from time to time the steady flow of immigration has expanded into a large wave. Whenever this has happened, debate about immigration has swirled. Now is one of those moments. The unprecedented number of undocumented immigrants, estimated nationally to be between ten to twelve million, fuels much of the debate. The national wave and the national debate are being played out in distinctive ways in locales across the country; we focus here on how they are playing out in our locale.

A Somalian refugee remembers; "Coming to this country was very difficult. Everything is new and foreign... Also sometimes there is no one to tell you the things you really need to know...When I rode the Metro for the first time, I wanted to put my fare in the bus driver's hand, rather than in the machine, because that's the way we always did it in our country. Going to the store is very different. The meat is frozen. In Somalia, animals are butchered in the morning and the meat is displayed in the markets."

Refugees are a special subset of immigrants, about whom an introductory word should be said. Washington is one of the top refugee resettlement states in the country. In the 1970s, Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian refugees began arriving in the Seattle area; more recently, refugees have come in large numbers from Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and East Africa. Refugees share the adjustment issues of other immigrants, but they also have unique problems. Since they were forced out of their native countries, many suffer additional trauma and distress resulting from their flight from war, violence or persecution.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

At the May 2006 Annual Meeting, Seattle LWV members set the scope of this study: to identify the major immigrant groups in the greater Seattle Area and the key issues confronting them. We have defined the elements of this scope as follows.

Greater Seattle Area. The service area of the LWVS encompassing North and East King County defines the geographic area for this report. However, much of the data presented covers the whole county because that is how it is reported. Many policies and programs related to immigrants cover the entire county as well.

Major Immigrant Groups. Statistics in the box on this page show that about one in five persons in our greater Seattle area is foreign born. Although the foreign-born residents come from every part of the world, approximately half of them are from Asian countries. However, during the past 10 years the percentage of foreign born from African and European countries has increased. Currently, countries providing the largest number of immigrants to this area are Mexico, China, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Canada. Detailed statistics and trends of immigration were printed in the April 2007 issue of the *Seattle Voter*.

Percentage of Foreign-Born Residents (2000 Census)

Bellevue:	24.5%
Redmond:	20.6%
Renton:	19.2%
Seattle:	16.9%

Projections show there will be significant increases in each city by the 2010 Census. The American Community Survey estimated 30.8% foreign born in Bellevue and 18.8% in Seattle. (2006 ACS Survey)

Key Issues Confronting Immigrants. The most pressing needs for immigrants in our area are jobs, health care, affordable housing, understanding of the laws and customs and the acquisition of English. Regardless of their native countries or economic status, newcomers are challenged to live in a different culture, and to navigate the complex system of immigration law. An added burden for undocumented immigrants is the anxiety created by our government's unresolved policy regarding their status in the country. On the one hand, there is tacit agreement that immigrant labor is needed by our economy; on the other, workplace and apartment raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement push immigrants into leading their lives in the shadows, while at the same time trying to meet their own needs and those of their families for food, shelter, health care, community, and education. While immigration law is set at the national level, our geographic area is uniquely impacted since it is a port of entry and also houses a regional detention center nearby in Tacoma, Washington. Our local media has covered events at this detention center.

Focus of the Study. This report will focus on four of the areas just mentioned: education, employment, health care and law enforcement. It is important to note that several of the cities in our area have taken the initiative to learn about the specific needs of their immigrant populations, and have followed up with some efforts to respond better to those needs. One study done by the city of Seattle and another done by the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition (including representatives from Bellevue, Kirkland, and Redmond) identified language and cultural barriers as problems for immigrants trying to access services. Subsequently, government entities in these cities have taken steps to provide more translation and interpretation services, and to become more culturally sensitive. Such changes can ameliorate the issues we discuss in this report.

Terminology: References in this report to "immigrants" include all types of immigrants – refugee, asylee, documented, and undocumented – unless otherwise specified. These and other pertinent terms are defined in a glossary at the end of the study.

EDUCATION ISSUES

The Debate

Since its very beginning, one of the primary purposes of American public education has been the assimilation of the children of immigrants into American society. Between 1890 and 1930, nearly three million immigrant children arrived in the United States. It became of paramount importance that these children learn English, adopt American cultural values and become good citizens. The public schools were seen as the primary vehicle for achieving these goals. The role of education in helping immigrants integrate into American society is still an important one, but there is great debate over the services and resources that should be provided for them. On one hand, there are those who feel that immigrants are overburdening our public schools, straining our educational tax dollars and taking away resources from native-born Americans. On the other hand, many people feel that money used to help immigrants learn English, earn their citizenship, and gain job skills is well spent, because it helps immigrants assimilate and become more productive members of society.

Regardless of one's position in this debate, there is no doubt that immigrants have had a huge impact on our educational systems. In the 2004-05 school year, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction reported that public schools in Washington State served 87,343 English Language Learners speaking 177 different languages in its Transitional Bilingual Instructional Programs. King County school districts served 24,888 English Language Learning students; of these, eight school districts had more than 1,000 English Language Learning students enrolled (Seattle, Kent, Highline, Federal Way, Renton, Bellevue, Auburn, Lake Washington). In 2005-06, community and technical colleges in King County served 13,108 English as a Second Language (ESL) students.

In King County, school districts, community and technical colleges, public libraries, religious groups and community-based organizations provide educational services for immigrants.

K-12 Public School Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students

Funding for programs for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students in the public schools is a mix of federal, state and local money. In 2004-05, the federal government provided \$9.6 million to school districts in Washington State for programs for LEP students under the No Child Left Behind Act. However, educating LEP students is primarily a state and local responsibility. The state's Transitional Bilingual Instruction Act of 1979 provides state funding for services to "students who have a primary language other than English *and* who have English language skill deficiencies that impair their learning in regular classrooms." In 2004-05, the state provided \$55.9 million for ESL programs to school districts. Funding is allocated based on the number of LEP students in the district, with the per-pupil allocation adjusted annually. Many school districts supplement state money with local funds. Most state and local money is spent on staff salaries and benefits.⁴

Seattle Public Schools. The Seattle Public Schools reported 5070 "transitional bilingual" students in its October 2006 student count. These students come from over 70 countries and speak 129 different languages. The most common languages spoken are Amharic, Chinese, Laotian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Tigrigna and Vietnamese. English language learning programs for the school district are coordinated by the Bilingual Student Services Department. This department oversees English Language Learning Center schools, three elementary Bilingual Orientation Centers (BOCs), and one secondary BOC. The BOCs provide a more intensive language and cultural program for those students with greater needs.

Sixty percent of Seattle elementary schools are English Language Learning Center schools, and all comprehensive high schools in the district have ESL services. Programs vary in these schools, from self-contained English Language Learning classrooms where students learn English along with their regular curriculum to programs where students attend a separate ESL class once a day. Students at English Language Learning Center schools may receive help from a bilingual instructional assistant who speaks their home language, and many schools also offer after-school tutoring programs.

Tung, a Cambodian immigrant, reported that the community generally doesn't complain about the schools. They have ESL teachers and the school has translators. However, a spokesperson who has worked with Latino families in a variety of ways reported that parents feel that the "system is not working... Seattle Public School's website is confusing, WASL scores and demographics are not giving a helpful picture of the school... Parents need to know their rights to be true advocates for their children's education."

Three landmark court cases determined the right of immigrant students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) to obtain language assistance and to attend public schools:

Lau vs. Nichols (1974) The United States Supreme Court found that school districts not providing their LEP students with language-assistance programs were violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and mandated special language assistance programs for all LEP children.¹

Castaneda vs. Pickard (1981) In this case the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals established criteria for the educational programs stating that they (1) must be based on a sound educational theory, (2) must be implemented effectively with adequate resources and personnel and (3) must be evaluated as effective in overcoming language handicaps.²

Plyler vs. Doe (1982) The United States Supreme Court ruled that undocumented children have the same right to attend public primary and secondary schools as do U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Under this ruling, school districts may not inquire about a student's immigration status.³

Students who attend a BOC receive focused instruction in English while also studying mathematics, science and social studies. Specially trained English Language Development teachers staff the BOCs. Students typically stay in a BOC for one or two semesters before being transferred to an English Language Learning Center school. However, the secondary BOC principal believes that some students would be better served if they could stay at the BOC until they have met their maximum potential. Some slower learners have difficulties after transferring to another secondary school and then drop out without graduating.

The Bilingual Student Services Department administers federal and state grants for bilingual education,

develops curricula and standards for ESL students, provides professional development for staff, offers translation and interpretation services, and organizes summer school and after-school programs for ESL students. The Department also runs a Bilingual Family Center, which assist families with enrollment, transportation, testing, interpretation, and other services. Beginning in 2008, three elementary schools will have two-way language immersion or bilingual programs for students. At other sites curriculum is taught entirely in English, but adapted so that students can master it. All ESL teachers have ESL or bilingual training, and to support students in the higher academic classes the school district uses bilingual instructional assistants to assist students, teachers and families. The school district provides a summer school program for ESL students who have been in the U.S. for less than two years, and some schools also provide after-school tutoring.⁵

Bellevue School District. The Bellevue School District serves 1569 ESL students, the majority being at the elementary school level. The most common languages spoken are Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian and Romanian. The district prides itself on using a well-researched model for teaching ESL students. Ninety percent of the students move up at least one proficiency level in a school year. Elementary school ESL students who speak little or no English spend half a day at one of four Beginning Language Centers, and attend their regular school for the rest of the day. The focus at the centers is on teaching the English language through literacy. Most students spend two to ten months at one of these centers before transitioning out of the program. At the secondary level, a “sheltered content” model is used—the regular curriculum is taught entirely in English, but adapted so that students can master it. For intermediate and advanced elementary ESL students, a facilitator model is used. Facilitators are also available at the secondary level. In this model, ESL facilitators work with regular classroom teachers to support ESL students.

All ESL teachers have ESL endorsements, and unlike many other school districts, Bellevue does not use instructional assistants to work with ESL students, as they believe that ESL students need the most highly skilled staff. The school district pays for teachers to get their ESL training through a partnership with Seattle University.

Flora, a Mexican immigrant living in Bellevue, remembered: “When I first tried to enroll my kids, they told me I couldn’t because they didn’t have papers. But then when they found my youngest son was born here, they let me enroll all the kids.”

The school district provides an after-school program for ESL students who have been in the U.S. for less than three years and a summer school program for beginning ESL students and pre-kindergarten students who will be starting school in the fall. Some schools also provide tutoring. Translation and interpretation services are provided for parents, and registration materials are available in sixteen different languages. The district also has a phone line in six languages—parents can call and leave a message, then someone who speaks their language calls them back.

Community and Technical College Programs

Adult and family literacy programs are offered at all 34 community and technical colleges in Washington. In King County, the six community colleges with the highest enrollments in literacy services in 2005-06 were Highline, Seattle Central, Renton Technical, South Seattle, North Seattle, and Green River. Together, these six colleges served 10,290 students.⁶

Funding for adult and family literacy programs comes partially from grants from the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. State funding is allocated based on a formula that includes the number of residents in the area who lack a high school diploma and the number of residents over 18 years of age who indicate on the census that they do not speak English well. In 2007, the Washington State Legislature allocated \$11 million for Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs. These programs are either free or offered at very low cost to students.

It is estimated that there are approximately 800,000 adults in Washington State who need basic education services. Community and technical colleges average about 65,000 total annual enrollments, so they are only serving about 8% of the people who need their services. The population served includes native-born students who lack basic skills as well as adult immigrants.⁷

Adult and family literacy programs fall into three basic categories: English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, and Adult Secondary Education.

English as a Second Language (ESL) programs assist LEP students in learning to read, write, and speak English. ESL classes may be combined with workforce training. For many

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adult immigrants, English classes lead to competencies needed for enrollment at the next level.

Adult Basic Education programs focus on literacy and basic skills below the level of high school completion.

Adult Secondary Education programs help students complete the requirements for an adult high school diploma or General Education Development. Successful completion of this program qualifies students for entry into higher education or further training.

While most programs are offered on campus in traditional classroom settings, there are also some more flexible modes of instructions. Classes at off-campus locations may be more convenient to students' homes and less threatening.

Hybrid classes that combine English language classes with specific job training skills are also effective. One example of the hybrid approach is the I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) programs. As the name suggests, the programs pair English instructors with professional technical instructors, and students learn language and work skills in the same program. Some successful I-BEST programs offered at King County community and technical colleges include nursing assistant, industrial mechanics, accounting and automotive programs.

Community-Based Programs

Free or low-cost ESL classes and tutors are offered by many community-based organizations throughout King County. The number of immigrants served by these organizations is lower than the number served by community and technical colleges, but is still significant. In 2005-06, Literacy Source, Refugee Women's Alliance, Hopelink, and St. James Cathedral ESL program served over 400 people.⁸

Instructors may be paid staff or volunteers who have received some language instruction training, and class formats vary, including independent study, one-on-one tutoring, informal conversation classes, workplace classes and traditionally structured classes. Many classes are targeted to immigrants with health issues, irregular work schedules, childcare responsibilities, or transportation problems that prevent their enrollment in a community college program.

Federal, state and local governments, United Way, religious institutions, private foundations and corporations provide funding for the community-based programs. The Seattle Public Library has an ESL program that serves many English language learners at various library locations by offering classes and educational materials. Trained volunteers teach most

classes. The New Citizen Initiative within the City of Seattle Human Services Department supports twenty-two community programs that help low-income immigrants become citizens. While becoming a citizen provides additional rights and status to immigrants, citizenship is also a factor in their economic well-being. In 2005, 18.6 % of native-born Americans and 18.1 % of naturalized citizens lived below the poverty level, while for non-citizens, the percentage was 36.8.⁹

The Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County offers on-the-job English language instruction through its Literacy Works program. Classes are customized for each business and are often held at the workplace. Approximately 200 employees from a variety of employers were served during the most recent 18-month funding period. Employers from the manufacturing, hospitality and health care fields pay the cost of the instructor as well as at least 50% of their employees' salaries for the hours they are off work and attending class. This project helps improve the work-related literacy skills of participants and also gives them skills for career advancement. The program was recently recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as one of five noteworthy workplace education programs nationwide.¹⁰

Education Summary

Clearly, public educational institutions and community-based organizations in King County are expending considerable time, money, and effort in assisting immigrant children and adults to learn English, become citizens, and gain job skills that will help them adjust to American culture and become productive members of society. However, funding for these programs is inadequate, and it is estimated that in King County only about a quarter of adults needing services are being served.¹¹

There can be conflicts with other needs as well. The highest priority for immigrants at the lower rungs of the economic ladder is to be able to work and take

Hava Jazvin was well educated in the legal field in Bosnia, but her first exposure to an English class was very negative. She couldn't understand what was going on and did not return. Later she gave it a second try, and now her language skills are good. She works full time as a counselor at the Refugee Federation Service Center helping immigrants find housing and job training, as well as deal with legal problems

Tung, a Cambodian immigrant, reported there are waiting lists for ESL classes at South Seattle Community College. "We have to wait to get in and then many drop out of class because they have too many things that interfere with regular attendance."

care of their families. But as soon as they learn enough English to hold a job, they often have trouble fitting education into their schedules. The challenge is, first, to provide adequate services for all who need them, and second, to make these services sufficiently flexible that those who need them are able to take advantage of them.

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

The Debate

Native and foreign-born residents at all skill levels share a need for living-wage jobs; the availability of enough such jobs is an important issue in the immigration debate. Some argue that at all skill levels immigrants take jobs away from native-born Americans, causing lower wages and poorer working conditions for everyone. Others argue that immigrants are an important part of the workforce because, for various reasons, employers cannot find native-born workers to fill a wide array of jobs, and that moreover, the presence of immigrant workers stimulates the economy, creating additional jobs.

Worker Visas Issued by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS)

The U.S. government has established guest-worker visas that allow certain numbers and kinds of workers into the country to fill positions deemed essential to the economy. These include visas for high-skilled workers (e.g. H-1B and H-1C visas), and visas for low-skilled workers (e.g. H-2A and H-2B visas). In addition to guest worker visas, refugees and other immigrants may hold permanent residence cards, which allow them to live and work in the United States.¹² Positions taken by business organizations claim that the ceilings on all of these guest-worker visa programs are too low to allow in the numbers of workers needed.¹³ While labor organizations are generally supportive of immigrant workers, there is concern at the high end of employment that visa programs in some sectors oversupply the labor pool, thus depressing wages. Labor unions are also concerned that guest worker programs can exploit workers by failing to deliver on promised hours, wages or living conditions, tying visas to particular jobs so that workers cannot leave abusive work situations and failing to provide a fair grievance procedure. Unions also claim that companies are not required to verify their need for foreign labor adequately before receiving guest worker visas.

Occupations of the Foreign-Born in King County

The term “foreign-born” in U.S. census data captures not only immigrants, but also guest workers. In 2005, 14.2% of all workers in civilian occupations in Washington were foreign born. Of these, about 44% were naturalized citizens, and 56% non-citizens. The largest numbers of foreign-born workers in Washington were from Asia and Latin America; then, in descending order, from Europe, Africa, and North America.¹⁴ Across the state, foreign-born workers are found in a wide array of occupations. In King County they cluster in non-agricultural occupations. High and low skill occupations are included, with no single occupation predominating. The following chart presents 2006 figures for King County of the occupational categories of the foreign-born in which more than 3% are engaged in the particular occupation.¹⁵

Occupations of the Foreign-Born Population in King County	Number of Foreign-Born Workers	Percentage of Foreign-born Population
Office & Administrative Support	25,474	8.3%
Production & Operating Workers	20,823	6.8%
Managers	20,379	6.7%
Food preparation & Service	19,776	6.5%
Computer & Math Science	18,029	5.9%
Sales	16,909	5.5%
House & Grounds Keeping	14,449	4.7%
Construction	13,426	4.4%
Transportation	13,509	4.4%
Medical	9,392	3.1%
Unemployed	776	0.3%

We were unable to locate statistics on how many of these foreign-born workers are undocumented and what percentage of workers are in the formal sector as opposed to the informal. Such data is difficult to obtain because of fears of legal action.

Work Experiences in King County

In order to illuminate the varieties of work experiences of immigrants in the greater Seattle area, we offer glimpses of the situation across the high and

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low skill range, with data about high-skilled workers at Microsoft, about low-skilled workers belonging to Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 6, representing the formal economy, and about low-skilled workers at CASA Latina Day Workers' Center, as an example of the informal economy.

High-Skill Employment: The Washington economy, and especially the Western Washington economy, is driven by technology-based industries. Employers in this sector, including Microsoft, claim that the state does not produce enough of the highly trained workers they need, prompting them to turn to other states and foreign countries to recruit workers. H-1B visas usually cover immigrants brought in for these jobs. Capped nationally at 65,000 per year, these visas are at a premium. Microsoft CEO Bill Gates has been an advocate for higher (or no) caps on H-1B visas. When immigration reform failed in Congress in 2007, ending the immediate prospects for raising the cap, Microsoft announced plans to open a software development office in Vancouver, B.C. Presumably, workers who are unable to come to Washington because of the H-1B visa shortage are being based there.¹⁶ Currently, about one third of Microsoft's local workforce is comprised of immigrant workers on H-1B visas, most coming from India. Other Seattle firms hiring high tech workers on H-1B visas include Amazon, Expedia, Starbucks, and Boeing.¹⁷

Maria volunteers with Latinos: She reports that it used to be easy to find jobs, but hard after 9/11. Now it's easier to get fired. Some employers say, "Don't leave... if you stay, I'll fix your papers." This means long hours, often seven days a week, payment in cash, no insurance, and no way out. Basically the workers are slave labor.

Low-Skill Employment – Formal Sector. Sergio Salinas, president of SEIU Local 6 in Seattle, stated that Local 6 represents 2800 janitorial or security guard workers, 65% of whom are immigrants. Since documentation is not a requirement for SEIU membership, the immigration status of members is unknown. Immigrants in SEIU are from diverse countries including Mexico, Bosnia, Russia, Ukraine, Vietnam, Somalia and Ethiopia;

they speak about sixteen different languages. Most are thirty to fifty years old. While many come from lower economic backgrounds and have limited education, some have professional training and experience in their countries of origin, but nevertheless have been unable to find professional jobs here.

Under SEIU contracts, workers typically receive wages that start at \$10.50 per hour and go up to \$12.60 within the first two years. They also receive benefits such as health care, pension plans, and a chance to take up

to six consecutive weeks of combined earned vacation and leave – a great bonus to immigrants who want to visit their homelands periodically without losing their jobs. Many stay in janitorial or security work because of these benefits. SEIU works toward raising wages, increasing health care benefits, and providing ESL and job-training for its members. Asked if members support the union's pro-immigrant stand, Salinas acknowledged that not all do, since the union is a microcosm of opinions held across the country, but said that he believes there is a slow but steady shift in the direction of support for immigrant worker rights underway.¹⁸

Low-Skill Employment – Informal Sector. CASA Latina is a non-profit organization, started in Belltown in 1994, that advocates on behalf of Latino workers, offers educational opportunities, and runs a day workers' center that matches employers with workers. The City of Seattle supports the CASA Latina Day Workers' Center and is its largest source of funding, providing \$140,000 annually.¹⁹

The Day Workers' Center is an alternative to standing on a corner waiting for work – and being subject to being asked by police to move on. By contrast, the center provides a safe space for workers to gather and learn of jobs. An average of 100 workers show up each morning, and anywhere from four to 100 may be employed for the day, depending on the season and the weather. A lottery system is used for assigning workers to jobs for which they possess the needed skills. Homeowners account for 80% of the requests for workers that CASA Latina receives. Employers must agree to supply at least five hours of work at a minimum of \$12 per hour. Upon request, the center delivers workers to the work site.²⁰

Employment through the Day Workers' Center is, of course, not steady, nor can it provide benefits; thus many workers live on the edge. It is estimated that 60% of the workers served by CASA Latina were homeless when the program began in 1998, but this number has declined in recent years. Some workers decide to share modest housing with others they meet at the center or with newly arrived family members. Many still stand in line to sleep in shelters, or alternatively, sleep in cars or on the street. And some find more steady work through the contacts made with those who hire them.

CASA Latina serves newly arrived immigrants, as well as those who have tried and failed to find steady employment. In addition to offering the chance of occasional jobs, CASA Latina offers English classes and a sense of community. We visited CASA Latina's Center one rainy, winter day at 10:00 a.m. The scant jobs had by then been filled; still, forty or so workers

were crowded around tables inside two trailers, some socializing and some taking advantage of an ESL class. CASA Latina has plans for a new location that will allow them to expand their programs.

Federal and State Worker Protections

Immigrants are accorded most of the protections that apply to native-born workers. These include a guaranteed minimum wage, time-and-a-half wages for overtime, safe and healthy working conditions,²¹ and the right to join a union.²² Only documented workers are eligible for unemployment benefits. Immigrant workers are eligible for the State's workman's compensation plan covering job-related injuries. It should be noted that in Washington State, drivers' licenses are granted to immigrants regardless of status on the same basis as to native-born residents. Although not a worker protection, a driver's license is essential to some workers as the sole means of transportation to job sites.

Flora: "I got a job at a clothing store and soon I was in charge of the stock room. When I'd been there eight months, a [native-born] man was hired to work under me. He started at \$8.00, and I was only making \$7.50. Not just that, but they didn't give me the raise at six months that the book said I should get."

Local Employment Policy and Programs

Policy. King County and Seattle are welcoming to immigrant workers, regardless of their immigration status. In 2006 King County adopted a resolution stating "King County is home to thousands of both documented and undocumented immigrants and their families who work determinedly on behalf of our county and state, paying taxes, enriching our

economy and enhancing our culture...." It then calls for immigration reform that "protects all workers regardless of immigration status" and "offers a pathway to citizenship for the millions of undocumented immigrants in this nation...."²³

The Seattle City Council also passed a resolution in 2006 supporting comprehensive immigration reform. Regarding labor, it notes the urgent need for legislation "to enable

employers to legally hire needed immigrant workers, to protect all workers regardless of immigration status from mistreatment by employers." It also supports extending "civil rights and equal protection to all workers...."²⁴ Neither the Seattle Police Department nor the King County Sheriff's Department takes it upon itself to check that employers have verified the immigration status of their employees.

In the area of employment, the policies of labor and business organizations are also germane to the immigrant's experience. We found that the Chamber of Commerce, the AFL-CIO and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) share common ground: (a) by supporting labor protections for all workers, and (b) by supporting comprehensive immigration reform, including a path to legalization for undocumented immigrants. Additionally, each group has its own emphasis. The Chamber of Commerce supports policies which meet the needs of the economy for workers, offer an effective way to confirm the work eligibility of immigrant workers, and "ensure that U.S. workers are not displaced by foreign workers."²⁵ The AFL-CIO emphasizes policies that reject temporary ("guest") worker programs (because they leave workers unprotected), and an extension of existing civil rights and liberties to all.²⁶ The latter is a position shared by SEIU, which also advocates for policies that recognize rights for immigrant workers to bring their families with them, and to enjoy visa portability (the right to find new employment when a job situation proves difficult).²⁷

Program. Seattle and King County have both investigated the situation of immigrants within their borders, have found jobs to be a problem area, and have adopted initiatives in response to their findings. Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative included interviews with immigrants from several communities (Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, East African, and Middle Eastern), each of which identified jobs and/or job training as unmet service needs. The interviewees pointed particularly to their need for English and job training classes in order to gain the necessary skills to obtain employment.²⁸

In response to these needs, Seattle is working to make jobs more accessible to all. One strategy is seen in community college courses which join ESL classes with either janitorial or hospitality job training courses.

One third of those participating in these programs are immigrants.²⁹ More recently, King County has adopted an Inequity and Social Justice Initiative that includes the goal of raising the standard of living of immigrants by improving their access to higher paying jobs.

Refugee father in Iraqi family: "At home in Iraq, each member of my family worked in our grocery store but this is not possible in the US. I've signed up for truck-driver training at South Seattle Community College, but this training will not be paid for by the welfare department and the truck-driver wage is too low for us to live on anyway. Other refugees in the camp in Lebanon thought I was lucky to come to the US, I don't think so now."

Employment Summary

The immigrant population of King County represents a great diversity of regions, countries, and languages of origin. The variety of the occupations of foreign-born workers in this area is also striking. The immigrants' experience is by no means monolithic; the difference between high tech workers at Microsoft and day workers at CASA Latina is vast. And yet there are similarities. All immigrants have to adapt to a new culture, including a new workplace culture; all have to navigate the system of immigration law.

The policies and programs which immigrant workers encounter here show that the local governments, business and labor organizations are clearly concerned with understanding the issues confronting foreign-born workers, treating them fairly, and extending protections and rights to them. But the programs in this sector, as in others, are not adequate to meet the needs of the community, especially at the low skill end. And the ever-present possibility of workplace raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement means that the undocumented worker lives in continual fear.

HEALTH ISSUES

The Debate

In the national debate on immigration reform, the question of who should benefit from social services is an important issue. One side of the debate argues that many of the immigrants coming into the country today are poorly educated and poorly trained, and thus more in need of social services. They are seen as a potential drain on an already overburdened system. So there are questions about to what extent services should be available to immigrants, and especially undocumented immigrants.

The other side of the debate argues that the presence of immigrants stimulates our economy and enriches our culture, and that providing social services to all immigrants is not only just, but leads to healthier communities. For the purposes of this report, we will address health care services as an example of the many social services offered in our community.

Funding Health Care

Federal Funding: Historically, all three levels of government – federal, state, and local – have contributed to funding health care programs. Prior to 1996, documented immigrants were eligible for the same federally funded programs as citizens were. However, since the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation

Act (PRWORA) in 1996, the federal role has changed dramatically. This law mandated that during their first five years in the U.S., documented immigrants would not qualify for any federal health programs except maternity care and emergency services. Undocumented immigrants are permanently restricted to only maternity care and emergency services. Finally, the law continued a broad array of services to refugees, but restricted eligibility in many programs to eight months, which according to service providers is too short a time for most refugees to develop other resources. Subsequent revisions to this law have changed some provisions, but for most immigrants these guidelines remain in effect.³⁰

State Funding: With the federal government's scaling back of health programs for immigrants, state and local governments were faced with the options of maintaining, reducing, or expanding levels of health care support. The greater Seattle community chose to expand services.

Its policies are inclusive of all residents, including immigrants, regardless of their status. The policies reflect humanitarian values, the view that a healthy community is dependent upon the health of all, and that primary health care is less expensive than emergency health care.³¹ The programs developed in fulfillment of these policies reflect these same factors. In King County and Seattle, health services that do not receive federal funds are open to everyone. The term "resident" replaced "citizen" in describing the population for which services are intended.

Since the federal government shares Medicaid costs with the state, Medicaid is not available to immigrants, with the exception of refugees. The state, however, funds health care insurance through the Basic Health program, which covers immigrants as well as others based on income eligibility (income less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)). Children are included in this program. The requirements for enrollment in Basic Health include meeting the income guidelines, ineligibility for Medicaid and not studying on a student visa. Basic Health covers hospitalization, provider visits, emergency services, and prescriptions.³² For those whose income is above 200% but less than 250% of the FPL, there is the Medically Needy Program, also open to immigrants. By January 2009, the Medically Needy Program will cover those whose income is up to 300% of the FPL.

A Ukrainian immigrant: "Many Ukrainians don't understand the laws and culture. Many think that health care is free because they are from a socialized medicine system."

To increase the chance of payment for services and to make future visits more feasible for the uninsured, financial counselors at medical agencies offer patients counseling about eligibility for these health care insurance programs.

Accessing Health Care in King County

According to a community report in 2005, there are at least three factors that lead to a growing number of underserved persons in the county, among them many immigrants.³³ The first is lack of funding because of state and local budget deficits; the second is an increase in the number of businesses that shift responsibility for health insurance to employees; the third is the unwillingness of many physicians to treat Medicaid patients because of low reimbursement rates. Through the efficient use of resources, some community health providers have increased staffing in existing Seattle clinics, and opened new ones in underserved suburbs.

The costs of serving the uninsured, however, whether immigrant or not, exceed the costs of providing health insurance, according to King County Public Health.³⁴ Early treatment of medical conditions leads to better outcomes and avoids the use of the emergency room, an event that is considerably more expensive than primary care.

Tung describes the experience of his community: "Many Khmer prefer to go directly to the emergency room for health problems. If they go to the clinic, the clinic will ask for papers. Also big problem, clinics often refer to clinics far away and transportation is a big problem."

Providers of health care in the greater Seattle area include the public health department, public and private hospitals and their associated clinics, community health care clinics and physicians in private practice. Supporting these are social service agencies that refer and link immigrants to health care,

and church and community groups that on occasion pay all or part of an immigrant's medical bill.

There are a number of factors that may stand in the way of immigrants' availing themselves of existing health services. "I was afraid of being deported" is a common reason cited by undocumented immigrants. Other possible reasons are inability to understand the health system in a new country, cultural barriers such as taboos against women being treated by male doctors, lack of confidence in culturally different approaches to treatment, language barriers, confusion when being sent to different facilities for special tests, lack of proximity to a clinic, failure to recognize early warning signs, and fear of being labeled a public

charge by the federal government, thus limiting chances for citizenship.

Recognizing the barriers immigrants face in accessing health care, Public Health-Seattle and King County has focused on outreach to those communities. As an example, it supplies interpreters through a phone system who are certified and experienced in health terminology. Because of issues of confidentiality, some immigrants prefer an anonymous interpreter to one from their own community.³⁵ An aid to understanding nuanced differences among cultures is the Cultural Orientation Resource Center that publishes on-line papers for health providers about specific refugee cultures such as Bhutani and Burundi.

Harborview, King County's largest public hospital, does extensive outreach to immigrant communities. Its International Medicine Clinic (IMC) serves all immigrants, regardless of status. Harborview's Interpreter Services staff includes 47 interpreters speaking 24 different languages. In addition, the Community House Calls program helps build trust between immigrant communities and health professionals through bilingual and bicultural caseworkers who interpret, make home visits, and do outreach.³⁶

Someireh, Iranian: "When I used the Language Line here in Seattle, it was a dialect of my language, Farsi, that I could not understand. There are not enough language options to be helpful to all."

In an effort to provide accessible health care near communities of underserved residents, Community Health Centers of King County (CHCKC), a non-profit organization, opened a health center in 2007 with an on-site pharmacy in Seatac. Until then, the City of Seatac had *no* medical doctors.³⁷ Many new immigrants and refugees come to realize that the low-cost housing they have found outside of the city of Seattle, frequently in apartment complexes in communities such as Tukwila and SeaTac, comes with a hidden cost—a lack of nearby medical facilities. Since the opening of its SeaTac Community Health Center, CHCKC has been able to provide geographically, culturally, and financially accessible primary health care to eight previously underserved King County communities.

Health Care Needs Among Immigrants

Immigrants need the types of health care all residents need: primary care, emergency care, and mental health care. Immigrants' special needs arise from several sources. Many come from countries where some combination of poor health care, poverty, famine,

IMMIGRATION

epidemics, and war has predisposed them to biological or psychological illness. Once here, all immigrants face the loss of a familiar culture, and the adjustment to an unfamiliar one. Many immigrants feel stressed by language barriers, the cost of living, transportation, employment, and other such problems. Additionally, two subsets of immigrants – refugees and asylees – have to deal with harrowing memories and losses.

The incidence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is particularly common among refugee populations from war-torn countries. Diagnosis can be difficult, and treatment can be lengthy. The federal government, which is responsible for refugee care, has inadequately funded programs for this disorder, according to those who serve the refugee population. As always with immigrants, culturally and linguistically appropriate services are important. Currently there are three agencies in the greater Seattle area that are able to provide such care for PTSD: Asian Counseling & Referral Services, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, and Refugee Women's Alliance.³⁸

Because AIDS, TB, and Hepatitis B are prevalent in some immigrant communities, Public Health-Seattle and King County does outreach to inform these communities about these diseases, including the need for testing and follow-through treatment. A soccer tournament within the local African and Caribbean communities was used to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. The People of Color Against AIDS Network (POCAAN) provided personnel and a van so that those who were present could be tested.³⁹

Public Health-Seattle and King County has also been working with the International Medicine Clinic to address a high incidence of TB among refugees from some parts of Africa. Their work to develop appropriate models for educating, testing, and treating TB in this community has shown positive results; since 1999, the rates for accepting and completing treatment have gone up dramatically.⁴⁰

Domestic violence occurring within immigrant communities is frequently compounded by isolation, unemployment, ignorance about services, and fear or shame in accessing medical or legal help. Advocates ask for more culturally sensitive counselors, more emphasis on prevention through education, and policies that encourage trust of authorities.⁴¹

Maria, a volunteer in the Latino community, reports that victims of domestic violence are afraid to seek medical help, or any kind of help, because of the threat of detention or deportation.

Finally, in our interviews, several health care providers noted a problem with the method of collection of health data on immigrants. When data is collected from large regions such as Asia, the high incidence of a condition confined to just one small population (such as the Hmong) may be invisible in the statistics for the region. Thus detection and treatment of the condition may be overlooked or delayed.⁴²

Health Care Summary

Governing bodies in King County and Seattle are committed to treating the health care problems of all residents, whether native-born or immigrant, whether documented or undocumented, whether insured or uninsured. There is increasing awareness of the effect of inequity on the health conditions of those living in poverty. Thus, programs have been initiated to bring services to the underserved in the locations in which they live, and efforts to enroll people for in existing health insurance plans are continuing. And programs are in place that attempt to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate services to all who need them.

The commitment to appropriate health care for all is strong, and its proponents are persevering in bringing their proposals to fruition, as they must be in the face of shrinking resources and an increased underserved population. Despite these efforts, federal immigration policy, which runs counter to local policy, creates fear and confusion in many immigrants such that they are reluctant to seek help for medical problems. This is a major obstacle to city and county intentions to serve all.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

The Debate

In the aftermath of 9/11, local law enforcement was called upon to serve as a first line of defense against future terrorist attacks. The federal government also requested that local law enforcement agencies take a more active role in enforcing federal immigration laws; that request has been hotly debated. People on one side of the debate assert that local law enforcement agencies should pursue every kind of violation, no matter whether the law being violated is local, state, or federal. Those on the other side counter that

Lloyd graduated as an engineer in his home country and came to the University of Washington on a full scholarship to study Computer Science. He has since graduated from the program and continues to work in the US with an H1-B Visa. Since 2001 he has frequently been detained and interrogated at airports because his name is similar to a terrorist's.

Maria, a Latino community volunteer, reported: "Especially since 9/11, people who are not white live in fear... like with the Japanese. There was a legal resident who was stopped for a traffic ticket and jailed. His car was impounded and then he lost his job... He would not seek legal redress because he was afraid to risk his pending citizenship. People need education about their rights and they need allies in the community."

if local law enforcement agencies were to enforce federal immigration laws, their ability to protect the safety of the public at the local level would be severely hampered. A variety of positions exist among local enforcement agencies in King County.

Federal Enforcement Policy and Program

To understand this debate, it is first

necessary to understand the federal role, and how federal enforcement is conducted in this area. Enforcement of immigration laws is the responsibility of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), an agency created in March 2003 within the Department of Homeland Security as an amalgamation of parts of the old Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. ICE is not simply an immigration law enforcement agency – its responsibilities cover all violations that cross international borders. ICE has two enforcement divisions in the Seattle Area of Responsibility, which includes Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska: the Office of Investigations, which focuses on criminal violations of laws; and the Office of Detention and Removal, which is the unit that carries out the detention and removal of illegal immigrants.

According to statistics provided by ICE, during the last four fiscal years (October to September) the number of deportations in the Seattle Area of Responsibility has increased from 4109 in FY 2004 to about 5050 in FY 2006 and 2007. It is important to note that immigration violations are administrative rather than criminal violations under federal law; hence, the violators are not "criminals." However, violating a deportation order *is* a criminal violation, so if a person has been deported and illegally enters the U.S. again, the offender could be either jailed or deported. Over the last four fiscal years, criminal deportations in the Seattle Area of Responsibility have decreased from 2451 in FY 2004 to 1714 in FY 2007, while non-criminal deportations have increased from 1658 in FY 2004 to 3326 in FY 2007.⁴³ Criminal removals represent those people removed from the United States who had criminal convictions on their records, while non-criminal removals represent people

who do not have criminal convictions. All of the individuals, however, violated immigration law by being in the country illegally.

Nationwide, the FY 2008 budget for ICE is about \$5.6 billion, with about \$2.4 billion allocated to the Office of Detention and Removal Operations, and about \$1.4 billion to the Office of Investigations.⁴⁴

Local Enforcement Policy

Concerns and Recommendations of the Major Cities Chiefs Association. Because immigration law enforcement is a federal responsibility, and no federal law mandates that local law enforcement agencies provide information to ICE or assist in ICE operations (although they must notify ICE if they have incarcerated a foreigner, and ICE can inspect the jails for immigration violators), local governments and law enforcement agencies must decide on their own how directly they want to be involved in enforcing immigration laws.

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, whose members comprise the chiefs of the 64 largest police departments in the United States and Canada (including Seattle), adopted a position paper in June 2006. It stated that the debate over local police enforcement of immigration law has become more prominent, and noted the following concerns with local enforcement of federal immigration laws:

Undermine Trust and Cooperation of Immigrant Communities: When immigrants, whether documented or not, are victims or witnesses to a crime, police want them to come forward with information. However, this may not happen if immigrants are concerned that they, or family members, might be deported.

Lack of Resources: The increased demands of 9/11 have stretched police budgets, even as federal funding has been cut. Most major police agencies do not have the resources to take on the added burden of enforcing federal immigration laws.

Complexity of Federal Immigration Law: Immigration law is extremely complex, including both civil and criminal violations. Local police agencies generally do not have the training to evaluate possible violations of immigration law and act on them correctly.

Lack of Authority and State Law Limitations of Authority: The federal government clearly has authority over immigration enforcement, and state laws may prevent local agencies from pursuing immigration cases.

Risk of Civil Liability: Local police agencies can be and have been sued for wrongful detentions when they participated in immigration raids or deportations. In a recent highly publicized case, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office was sued for mistakenly deporting a mentally disabled U.S. citizen.

With these concerns in mind, the paper adopted nine recommendations, one of which says that: "*Any initiative to involve local police agencies in the enforcement of immigration laws should be completely voluntary.*"⁴⁵

Local Enforcement in the Greater Seattle Area.

Indeed, within the greater Seattle area, the willingness of local police agencies to enforce immigration laws, or to assist ICE in enforcing them, varies widely from locality to locality. In Pacific, a town of 6,000 in southeast King County, the police policy is to enforce any law—federal, state, or local.

On occasion this has caused problems. Consider this case publicized in May 2007. An immigrant from Latin America, married to a U.S. citizen and in the process of obtaining legal status, was pulled over for speeding. When he could not show a social security number, the officers took him to the detention center in Tacoma, where it took eight days to collect the documentation proving that he was, indeed, in the process of obtaining legal status. During this time he lost his job because, he said, "the police scared my boss."⁴⁶

Similar enforcement policies exist just north of Seattle, in Bothell, where immigrants are turned over to ICE even when there are no local criminal charges involved, and in Lynnwood, where the police department provides desk space to an ICE agent, and where people coming to deal with an infraction as minor as a parking ticket have been turned over to ICE.

By contrast, in Kent, officers generally do not ask about immigration status, because they want people who are undocumented and are victims of a crime to report it. And the city of Seattle and the King County Sheriff's Office (which covers unincorporated King County, and has contracts with several cities) have written policies adopted by the governing councils that forbid any employee, including police, to ask about a person's immigration status, unless that person has been charged with a crime.⁴⁷ The focus of these departments is public safety. Because they maintain that simply being an illegal immigrant does not by itself jeopardize public safety, they do not enforce immigration laws. The Seattle Police Department does coordinate with ICE from time to time on major criminal investigations and assists when ICE is making a raid on immigrants suspected of involvement in major criminal activity, but their role is to contain

the situation and provide for public safety – they do not participate in the raid. The King County Sheriff, on the other hand, has never been asked by ICE to participate in an ICE enforcement action, but, if asked, would consider it on a case-by-case basis.

The Seattle Police Department has made concerted formal efforts to build the trust of the immigrant and minority communities. Since 1995, the department has created ten demographic advisory councils, representing different immigrant and minority groups, including African American, East African, Filipino, Korean, Latino, Sexual Minorities, Muslim/Sikh/Arab, Native American, Southeast Asian, and Youth. Most of these councils meet monthly, and discuss a wide range of issues such as police policies, hate crimes or perceived profiling incidents, legal questions, upcoming community meetings, and cultural customs. Each advisory council is assigned a Deputy Chief or Assistant Chief who represents the Chief of Police, at least one liaison officer, and a support staffer. The advisory council program is part of the department's Community Outreach Program, which consists of the Community Outreach Program Manager, two liaison officers dedicated full-time to the program, a part-time AmeriCorps Member, and other police officers and civilian support staffers. Much of the effort is the work of volunteers.

The cultural customs may be unexpectedly vexing. For example, in some cultures, when a driver is pulled over by police, the custom is to get out of the car and walk over to the police officer. However, one doesn't do that in the United States, and the Seattle Police Department has a "Cops, Culture, and Conversation" video on the do's and don'ts of interactions with police that explains why that is exactly the *wrong* thing to do in this country.

In 1996, the Seattle Police Department established the Community Police Academy, which is currently a 10-week, intensive program designed to increase understanding between the department and the community members of Seattle through education and interaction. Many members of minority communities attend the Academy and become interested in applying for positions in the department. The SPD is actively seeking to recruit individuals from minority communities. One of these academies was conducted in Vietnamese; however, this was expensive and is unlikely to be repeated.

The King County Sheriff's Office does not have formal outreach programs, because they believe that separate advisory councils would be duplicative, but county officials may attend Seattle advisory council

meetings. King County relies mainly on word-of-mouth to circulate their policy of not inquiring about immigration status, but the sheriff characterizes the training officers receive regarding outreach to immigrant communities as “weak.”

Whether these programs, and the policy of not inquiring about immigration status, do in fact make it more likely that immigrants living in Seattle, Kent, or unincorporated King County will report crimes and cooperate with police investigations is an open question. On the one hand, leaders of immigrant communities who attend the outreach sessions have a better understanding of police policies and laws, and can advise their friends on these. In the South Park neighborhood of Seattle the community addressed a festering gang problem by teaming up with local police, a partnership that was possible because the participants knew that police could not ask about immigration status.⁴⁸ On the other hand, many immigrants come from countries where the police are clearly not their friends, and an immigrant fearful of deportation might view all uniformed enforcement officers as the same, without distinguishing between a federal officer who enforces immigration violations, and a local officer from an agency that does not.

One immigrant, despite living in a locality that does not ask about immigration status, reported that she would not call the police even if a burglar broke into her apartment, because she had seen the police respond to a domestic violence call and then haul the husband to the Tacoma detention center. “We know,” she said, “that the police are working with ICE.” Another immigrant said that it is difficult to erase the fears brought from one’s own country, especially since, in her opinion, police still profile foreigners.

While the policy of not asking about immigration status may not earn the trust of every member of the immigrant community, the opposite policy almost certainly produces less trust in the local police. In Pacific, where police enforce immigration violations, the mayor is concerned that this is discouraging people from reporting domestic violence and other crimes, including the gang activity that is a major problem in his area. He is therefore forming a citizens’ task force to explore ways to enforce laws without creating paranoia among the immigrant community.⁴⁹

Cities Chiefs Association endorses the view that local police involvement in enforcing immigration laws is voluntary. And we have seen that in the greater Seattle area, police agencies are arrayed on a spectrum from explicitly trying to enforce immigration laws, to generally not enforcing them, to explicitly not enforcing them. Obviously, from the immigrant’s point of view, this situation lacks clarity – which is stressful and even dangerous.

Until the federal government addresses the complex issue of illegal immigration, local governments will continue to struggle with their role in the enforcement of immigration violations. Ultimately, the debate over whether local enforcement agencies should also enforce immigration violations comes down to a question of whether the public is safer if local agencies enforce immigration violations than if they do not.

CONCLUSION

Our study has found that, with few exceptions, local governing bodies in the greater Seattle area are responding to the current wave of immigration in positive ways. Both King County and Seattle have policies which support immigrants and value their contributions to our economy and our culture. They have studied and taken steps to act on the needs of immigrants in the areas of education, employment, health, and law enforcement. One problem which shows up regularly, however, is the difficulty of achieving a balance between the provision of adequate services for growing numbers of immigrants on the one hand, and funding and staffing them on the other.

A second problem, one that undermines the positive goals of our local public and private agencies, is the fear and distrust of perceived authority figures. This is seen among undocumented immigrants in particular, who fear that encounters with authority may result in detention or deportation. Fear and anxiety are seen as well in documented immigrants due to the complexity of immigration law, which leaves many worrying whether they have met deadlines or completed applications correctly. If not, they stand to be deported also. Thus there are many who decide against any encounter with authority that is not absolutely necessary to their lives here. Many avoid ESL classes, preventive health care, reporting crime to police or finding jobs in the formal sector. Their fears are not unfounded, as local authority cannot shield them from enforcement of national immigration policy.

Law Enforcement Summary

Enforcing immigration laws is clearly the responsibility of the federal government; the responsibility of local governments to do the same is less clear. Indeed, we have seen that The Major

GLOSSARY

Asylee One who has fled his/her country due to well-founded fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group and sought refuge in the USA. The person gets here somehow and then petitions for asylum. If denied, he/she is sent back to country of origin, or to a third country if his/her country denies entry.

Green Card A Permanent Resident Card that allows a foreigner to live and work permanently in the United States.

Immigrant A person from a foreign country who comes to another country intending to establish permanent residence in that country.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

An agency within the Department of Homeland Security responsible for enforcement of immigration law. Its responsibilities include actions against illegal gang organizations, illegal workers and their employers, fraudulent immigrant benefit applications and documents, human trafficking and fugitive aliens.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (See USCIS) The former federal agency established to provide administrative services for all immigration matters. The INS ceased as a federal agency in 2003 when a reorganization of several federal agencies occurred in conjunction with the establishment of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS). Most INS functions were transferred to divisions within USDHS.

Refugee A person who has a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion,” according to the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Due to that fear, the person has left his/her home country and seeks asylum in another country.

Undocumented Immigrant A foreign national who lives in the U.S. without authorization, either because he/she entered without authorization or because he/she overstayed a non-immigrant visa. Also referred to as an unauthorized or illegal immigrant.

United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) The successor agency to the INS under the Department of Homeland Security. Its responsibilities cover the administrative tasks related to immigration, but not the enforcement duties. USCIS processes immigrant visas and citizenship applications, applications for asylum and refugee status, employment authorization documents, petitions for non-immigrant temporary workers, and Permanent Resident Cards, among other administrative tasks.

Visa A printed document or stamp by an official government representative that allows a foreign national to legally enter the country. The entry is for a specific purpose and a specific time period.

Appendix I

RESOURCES

- Bilingual Student Services, Seattle Public Schools
website: www.seattleschools.org/area/bilingual/programs.htm
- Citizenship Assistance, Human Services Department,
City of Seattle
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- Community Perspectives: Ideas for Improving Immigrant and Refugee Access to Human Services in East King County,
Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition and the Eastside Human Services Forum, September 2005.
www.eastsideforum.org/pdfs/CommunityPerspectives.pdf
- Directory of ESL Services, Bellevue School District
website: www.bsd405.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1368
- “Educating English Language Learners in Washington State: School Year 2004-05,” Migrant & Bilingual Education, Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction
website: www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/pubdocs/BilingualReport2004-05.doc
- Fact Sheet Fiscal Year 2008. U.S. Immigration and
Customs Enforcement
website: www.ice.gov/doclib/pi/news/factsheets/2008budgetfactsheet.pdf
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City of Seattle, 2007-2009.
www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/rsji/immigrants/default.htm#plan
- “Immigrant Students’ Rights to Attend Public Schools,” Migrant & Bilingual Education, Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction
website: www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/ImmigrantRights.aspx
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- “Literacy Overview,” Adult Basic Education, Washington State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
website: www.sbctc.ctc.edu/docs/education/abe/literacyoverview.pdf
- Literacy Works, Workforce Development Council of Seattle – King County
website: www.seakingwdc.org/Templates/ipp_literacy.html
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website: www.washblog.com/story/2007/9/21/131744/236
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- “RFP for Adult Basic Education,” Adult Basic Education, Washington State Board for Community & Technical Colleges.
website: www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_e-abe_grant_rfp.aspx
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website: www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=64418288&sc=emaf
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Soundpolitics.com/archives/008361.html.
- Turnbull, Lornet. “Police toughening stand on illegal immigrants.” *Seattle Times*, August 3, 2007.

IMMIGRATION

Appendix 2

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

- Adams, Matt, Legal Director, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, September 26, 2007
- Aid, Dianne, Coordinator, and Adolfo-Ojeda-Casimiro, Immigration Attorney,, Jubilee Center, St. Matthew/San Mateo Episcopal Church, Auburn, March 26, 2008
- Amirfaiz, Someireh, Executive Director, Refugee Women's Alliance, January 23, 2007
- Bruger, Maura, Senior Advisor for Federal Relations, Office of King County Executive, October 17, 2007
- Dankers, Lorie, Public Affairs Office and Spokeswoman, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Deno, Allison, ESL Program Coordinator, Bellevue School District, February 25, 2008.
- Dutton, Gillian, Senior Attorney, Northwest Justice Project
- Holland, Annette, Program Manager, Interpretation and Refugee Screening, March 5, 2008
- Hul Ngy, Director, Refugee Federation Service Center, White Center
- Jackson, Carey MD, Director, International Medicine Clinic, March 6, 2008
- Jayapal, Pramilla, Executive Director, OneAmerica With Justice for All, January 16, 2008
- Jazvin, Hava, Counselor, Refugee Federation Service Center
- Johnson, Bob, Regional Director, International Rescue Committee, October 16, 2007
- Johnson, Jeffery, Organizing and Research Director, Washington State Labor Council, February 7, 2008
- Kerlikowske, Gil, Police Chief, Maggie Olsen, Seattle Police Community Outreach Officer, and Cathy Wenderoth, Police Department, City of Seattle, September 19, 2007
- Koehler, Christopher, Director, St. James Cathedral ESL Program, September 17, 2007
- McCool, P. Michael, Deputy Special Agent-in-Charge, Office of Investigations, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Medina, Tom, Washington State Refugee and Immigrant Coordinator, Economic Service Organization, DSHS, Washington State, December 10, 2007
- Miller-Parker, Donna, Dean of General Studies, South Seattle Community College, December 13, 2007
- O'Callaghan, Martin, Principal Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center, Seattle Public Schools, August 22, 2007
- Omar, Farhiya, Instructional Assistance, Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center, Seattle Public Schools, October 11, 2007
- Pierre-Louis, Martine, MPH, Manager, Interpreter Services & Community House Calls, Harborview, March 5, 2008
- Pynda, Oleg, Director, Ukrainian Community Center, November 28, 2007.
- Ramos, Michael, Director of Social Justice Ministry, Church Council of Greater Seattle, March 5, 2008
- Reyna, Maria, Community Partnerships Program Manager, Campfire USA, April 2008
- Rahr, Sue, Sheriff, King County Sheriff's Office, October 23, 2007
- Roble, Mohamed, Family & Community Engagement Liaison, Department of Equity, Race, and Learning Support, Seattle Public Schools, October 11, 2007
- Salinas, Sergio, President, Service Employees International Union, Local 6, SEIU, February 21, 2008
- Schuyler, Kinza, Immigration Counselor, Lutheran Community Services, February 28, 2007, March 21, 2007
- Sok, Yany, Youth Coordinator, and Thuong Thach, Program Coordinator, Khmer Community of Seattle-King County, February 22, 2008
- Stern, Hilary, Executive Director, CASA Latina, November 9, 2007
- St. Clair Lazar, Janet, Director North Puget Sound Area, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, January 2008
- Tadesse, Haddis, Senior Policy Advisor for the Mayor, Office of Human Services, City of Seattle, September 19, 2007
- Trompeter, Tom, MPA, Chief Executive Officer, Community Health Centers of King County, April 4, 2008
- Uomoto, Cal, Western Washington Director, World Relief, October 16, 2007
- Woods, Shash, Professional Development Coordinator, NW Region, Adult Basic Education, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, December 13, 2007

Appendix 3

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES POSITION ON IMMIGRATION

The League of Women Voters of the US reached consensus on national immigration policy reform in April, 2008, after a two-year study. The LWVUS position is shown below.

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

CRITERIA FOR LEGAL ADMISSION TO THE U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- Educational program opportunities; and
- Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANTS ALREADY IN THE U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

ENDNOTES

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