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Statement on Meeting between Presidents Bush and Fox

“It is now more important than ever that the two leaders work together on a comprehensive immigration reform that stands for the principles of justice and equity.”
-Deepak Bhargava, Executive Director, Center for Community Change

Washington, D.C. – Today, President Bush met with Mexican President Vicente Fox at the President’s Texas ranch to discuss relations between the United States and Mexico. In the interest of being good neighbors, the Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) – a national grassroots immigrant rights coalition, convened by the Center for Community Change – urges Presidents Bush and Fox to take advantage of our mutual interests in fixing our nation’s broken immigration system.

Today’s meeting provides an opportunity for President Bush to build upon his earlier commitment to comprehensive immigration reform.

FIRM is encouraged that Senators McCain and Kennedy are working together to develop a bipartisan approach to comprehensive immigration reform at the President’s request. Other signs of bipartisan agreement are both the DREAM Act and the AgJOBS bill, which are sponsored by key members of both political parties. Clearly, the President’s support for these bipartisan immigration reforms would be instrumental to moving these bills through Congress.

The Administration’s support is immediately needed to ensure that the REAL ID Act, an anti-immigrant bill that would trounce environmental protections, criminal law, and civil liberties – is stripped out of the Senate’s Supplemental Appropriations for military spending and international aid. Immigration reform should not be done on the backs of our military personnel, nor should a restrictionist agenda be pushed through Congress.

FIRM hopes that today’s meeting between Presidents Fox and Bush, and the bipartisan discussions in Congress, portend a readiness nationwide to reform our broken immigration system. FIRM stands ready to work with President Bush and Members of Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform as soon as possible.

FIRM (Fair Immigration Reform Movement) is a national coalition of grassroots community organizations, including statewide immigrant rights coalitions, organizing networks, faith-based groups, and other groups organized around low-income, ethnicity or national origin concerns, working on behalf of comprehensive immigration reform and immigrant rights. FIRM is convened by the Center for Community Change.