

# Fast for Our FAMILIES



c/o WeCount!\* PO Box 344116\* Florida City, Florida 33034

January 6, 2010

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington , DC 20500

Mr. President,

We know that your time is very valuable and it is not our objective to add to your already busy agenda. However, the situation in which immigrants live and the hurt that the people we represent are enduring has forced us to take drastic action. On January 1st, 2010, while the country celebrated the arrival of a New Year, we, the undersigned, started the Fast for Our Families. Five individuals, some of whom are directly affected by deportation, entered St. Ann's Catholic Mission in Naranja, Florida (in south Miami-Dade County) and vowed to consume only liquids until you hear the voices of American families that have been torn apart by the deportation system. We ask you for two things:

1. That you act in your Executive Authority to *suspend* the deportation of immigrants with American families until Congress fixes our broken immigration system.
2. That you send your Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, to South Florida to meet with us, the fasters, to hear from us first-hand about the conditions that moved us to fast.

In the meantime, we will continue our fast indefinitely. We are asking all those of conscience, especially those that are losing a friend or family member to the broken immigration system, to join us in the Fast for Our Families.

Mr. President, we understand the risks we confront and we will not deny the fact that we are scared, but we cannot just sit and wait for Immigration Reform. Every day that goes by, dozens of families are destroyed. Every day that passes, hundreds of children are separated from their parents and thousands of young students are in detention instead of in college. We know you have good intentions and we are grateful, but, Mr. President, please put yourself in our shoes and just imagine for a minute what it would be like to be separated from your beautiful daughters just because you were born in a different latitude. Attached is the letter that we sent to your Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, as well as our ideas for stopping the separation of our families. We hope to hear from you soon. You may reach us by contacting Maria Rodriguez at the Florida Immigrant Coalition at (305) 322-6705 or by email at [maria@floridaimmigrant.org](mailto:maria@floridaimmigrant.org). Thank you for your time.

Signed,  
Wilfredo Mendoza and the rest of the Fast for Our Families

Cc: Secretary Janet Napolitano; Congresspersons Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Mario Diaz-Balart, Kendrick Meek, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; Senators Bill Nelson and George LeMieux; Governor Charlie Crist; Archbishop John Clement Favalora; and Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Miami-Dade County.