

# ***Spread as Obama Talks Stimulus***

*By Jacqueline Baylón*

As Washington's political partisans and pundits attempt to decipher or frame the messages built into President Barack Obama's Feb. 24 stimulus presentation to the joint session of Congress, immigration reform continues to attract major attention across the rest of the county.

Both advocates and opponents of the

## **Penélope's Big Night: First Spanish Actress Romanced by Oscar**

*By Antonio Mejias-Rentas*

Penélope Cruz became the first Spanish actress to win an Academy Award, capturing the Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her role in *Vicky Cristina Barcelona*.

Cruz spoke first in English, then in Spanish at the Feb. 22 ceremony in Hollywood's Kodak Theatre, dedicating the Oscar to her

comprehensive immigration reform package that has been promised by the Obama administration are already noting that the word "immigration" never once passed his lips during his 52-minute speech.

Commented National Immigration Forum spokesperson Katherine Vargas to Weekly Report:

"Although President Obama did not mention immigration we remain confident about his commitment to immigration reform. Fixing the economy and fixing our immigration system should not be seen as priorities that are mutually exclusive."

She explained, "Immigration reform can be part of the solution to our economic woes.



**OBAMA**

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# Obama Didn't Mention Immigration to Congress, but It's Big News Elsewhere

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By legalizing an essential part of our work force, we can level the playing field for all workers, reduce worker exploitation, lift wages for all low-wage workers and generate revenue from increased tax contributions from workers who have been operating off the books."

Nationally, the issue sounds a constant beat on nightly newscasts and front pages. Here's a sample of what they're reporting:

## Napolitano Questions ICE

*Compiled from several outlets, Feb. 23-25*

**BELLINGHAM, Wash.** — Federal officials have been asked by Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to provide her with a detailed report on the agency's Feb 24 raid of an engine remanufacturing plant that resulted in the arrest of 28 undocumented persons, including three women.

It was the first worksite raid conducted since Obama took office. Napolitano told the House Homeland Security Committee that she had not been advised in advance that it was taking place.

Dozens of armed ICE agents entered the Yamato Engine Specialists plant and apprehended the 28 individuals, most of them from Mexico and Central America.

White House spokesperson Nick Shapiro said Napolitano was not happy and this incident sent the wrong message about the administration's approach to reforming U.S. immigration policy.

## Immigrants Block Jobless

*Newsmax, Feb. 18*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — A report released by the Center for Immigration Studies showed 6 to 7 million undocumented immigrants are holding jobs that could provide paid work for unemployed U.S.-born residents.

The study listed the unemployment rate of native-born high school dropouts as 17.0% and that of undocumented workers with no

high school diploma at 10.6%.

CIS noted it is "difficult to find any evidence of a shortage of less-educated workers." More immigration law enforcement would improve job prospects for U.S. citizens.

## Protesters Support Haitians

*France Presse, Feb. 18*

**MIAMI, Fla.** — Immigration activists are calling for a protest Feb. 28 at the Broward Transitional Center in Broward County.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency has processed deportation orders for more than 30,000 Haitians in the community. Hundreds have been put in detention centers or on electronic monitoring at home in preparation for deportation.

Haiti claims it is not prepared for the return of so many refugees.

## Stimulus 'Helps Undocumented'

*The Charlotte Observer, Feb. 19*

**CHARLOTTE, N.C.** — State residents fear the stimulus package that has promised to create jobs and millions in wages will end up helping many undocumented workers.

North Carolina is expected to receive at least \$1.3 billion for school and highway construction. This could translate to jobs for more than 5,000 undocumented immigrants. Studies show at least 14% who are employed in the construction industry are illegally employed.

The bill originally required recipients of stimulus money to use the E-Verify system, a federal program that checks Social Security numbers. That requirement was dropped. While acknowledging the program has flaws, supporters say it helps catch frauds. Opponents call it a waste of money.

## Utah Schools Ban Jobs

*Associated Press, Feb. 18*

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Immigrant students paying in-state tuition but who are undocumented will not be able to obtain a job on campus anymore.

On Feb. 11, the state legislature's House committee approved the bill 8-1 that now prohibits undocumented immigrants from being hired at Utah's public colleges.

Undocumented students have received in-state tuition since 2002, with the prerequisite of having attended a state high school for at least three years.

Rep. Richard Greenwood (R-Roy) said to The Associated Press "the measure could keep undocumented immigrants who are students from committing as many as three felonies: obtaining a fraudulent Social Security card, committing identity theft and filling out a false I-9 form at a workplace."

Opponents said it just creates another barrier for those trying to get an education.

## ICE Agents Acted Improperly

*Associated Press, Feb. 18*

**LANGLEY PARK, Md.** — Two years ago 24 Hispanics were arrested at a Baltimore convenience store by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents because they were "behind their annual quota of 1,000 arrests per team," according to an internal ICE investigative report revealed Feb. 24 by CASA de Maryland, an immigration rights group.

CASA officials charged that ICE agents ignored black and white customers at the 7-Eleven store and even crossed the street to round up Hispanics waiting at a bus stop. One later proved legal U.S. residency.

Now CASA is calling on Department of Homeland Security chief Janet Napolitano to review the agency's enforcement policies.

## Immigrants banned in-state tuition

*The Associated Press, Feb. 24*

**LINCOLN, Neb.** — State legislators are weighing a proposal that will keep all children of undocumented immigrants from paying the lower in-state college tuition rate.

Currently, they may pay in-state tuition if they graduated from a Nebraska high school and are pursuing legal status.