

News Release

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LGBT Groups Mobilize for Big Immigrant Rights March

Amigas Latinas, Orgullo En Acción, the Association of Latin Men for Action, and the Gay Liberation Network (GLN) are jointly organizing an LGBT contingent for the big immigrant rights march set for Thursday, May 1st. The contingent will assemble at 11 AM in Union Park, near Ashland Avenue and Lake Street. The coalition suggests that people simply look for the Rainbow Flags in the park in order to join the contingent, or call GLN at 773.209.1187 (cell) to find it.

Past immigrant rights marches have been the largest political demonstrations in Chicago history, numbering as high as 1 million people.

The four groups say there are many reasons why LGBT people should support immigrant rights, from the desire to support others who are facing hate and discrimination, to achieving reforms crucial to the LGBT community itself. These reforms include:

- ▼ **Humane asylum laws** so that LGBT people fleeing vicious repression abroad can find a safe haven in the U.S. It is particularly incumbent upon U.S. gays to support this right since so many of the brutal, undemocratic regimes which persecute our people are supported by the U.S. government.
- ▼ **Justice for "bi-national" same sex couples.** Many Lesbians and Gays are in bi-national relationships where one partner is a U.S. citizen and the other is a foreign national. Unlike heterosexual couples, we can't sponsor our spouses for naturalization. Currently none of the presidential candidates support the "Uniting American Families Act," which would end this particular form of discrimination against LGBT people.
- ▼ **Repeal of the backwards law that prohibits HIV+ people from immigrating here.** The U.S. is one of only 13 countries that prohibit HIV+ people from immigrating into it, even though the U.S. is one of the epidemic's epicenters, and hence is a net **exporter** of the disease.

AL and GLN note that many commentators brand undocumented immigrants as "illegal," but they say this label misses the point. The most important question is, "Are the laws themselves moral?"

It wasn't too many years ago that gays were considered "illegal" – until the *Lawrence v. Texas* Supreme Court decision "legalized" us. Jim Crow racism was "legal" for the vast bulk of U.S. history, as were prohibitions against equality for women and many minorities.

Rather than accepting labels at face value, the LGBT coalition organizing for the May 1st march says we need to support reforms which support human equality, such as the legalization of the undocumented. These reforms of unjust laws would serve the humanitarian interests of people who, like the LGBT community, have been the targets of hate and discrimination.

For more information about the march and the LGBT contingent, please contact GLN at 773.209.1187

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