

## **AJC Welcomes Bipartisan Framework for Comprehensive Immigration Reform Legislation**

January 28, 2013 – New York – AJC applauds Senators Schumer (D-NY), McCain (R-AZ), Durbin (D-IL), Graham (R-SC), Menendez (D-NJ), Rubio (R-FL), Bennet (D-CO) and Flake (R-AZ) for creating a framework to permanently fix America's broken immigration system. AJC looks forward to working with this bipartisan team of Senators working on Comprehensive Immigration Reform legislation, and to achieving in 2013 a genuine breakthrough on this critical issue.

"By producing an initiative that accepts the premise of a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, the eight Senators recognize immigration as a key factor in bolstering America's economic strength and democratic pluralism," said Richard Foltin, AJC's Director of National and Legislative Affairs.

"Proposed reforms to the family and employment visa categories are also encouraging," Foltin continued. "Allowing immigrant families to more easily reunite with their loved ones promotes a strong social fabric in our communities. Making it easier for high and low-skilled immigrant workers to come to this country will help to ensure that American businesses have the labor they need to compete in a global economy."

AJC supports inclusion in the framework of enhanced enforcement measures directed at assuring an effective and fair immigration system that also protects national security. However, AJC is concerned that the framework does not quantify how and when the border will be deemed secure or provide specifics as to how the government would track visa overstays. Without objectively defining these critical components, it will be difficult to determine when these goals are met. In addition, the employment verification system proposed in this framework must include explicit protections against racial profiling and other civil rights abuses.

Since its founding in 1906, AJC has been outspoken in support of fair and generous immigration policies, characterized by the rule of law. As American Jews, we recall how our parents and grandparents made their way to this country seeking a better life, and know that we have prospered in and contributed to this country. That same opportunity should be available for others.

Comprehensive immigration reform will strengthen America's global competitiveness as well as allow hard-working immigrants an opportunity to succeed in the United States, for themselves and for future generations.