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Senator Dianne Feinstein

of California

Senate Approves Private Bill to Grant Permanent Resident Status to Porterville Family

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Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate today approved private legislation sponsored by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that would grant permanent resident status to members of the Arreola family, a Mexican family living in the Fresno area facing deportation.

“This brings the Arreola family one step closer to being permanent residents of the United States,” Senator Feinstein said. **“The Arreola family is in jeopardy of being deported, largely because of grievous errors committed by their former attorney, who has since been disbarred. In fact, the attorney’s conduct was so egregious that it compelled an immigration judge to write the Executive Office of Immigration Review seeking his disbarment for the legal detriment he caused his immigrant clients.”**

The legislation would grant lawful permanent residence status to Esidronio Arreola-Saucedo and Maria Elena Cobian Arreola and their children 17-year old Nayely and 14-year old Cindy. The Arreolas also have three U.S. citizen children: 11-year old Roberto, 8-year old Daniel, and 6-year old Saray.

Mr. Arreola has lived in the United States since 1986. He was employed as an agricultural migrant worker in the fields of California for several years, and consequently would have been eligible for permanent residence through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers (SAW) program had he known that he could apply for it. Mrs. Arreola was living in the United States at the time she became pregnant with her daughter Cindy, but returned to Mexico to give birth to Cindy to avoid any problems with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. It is likely that the family would have qualified to stay in this country, except for the conduct of their previous attorney.

“One of the most compelling reasons for allowing the family to remain in the United States is the devastating impact their deportation would have on their children,” Senator Feinstein said. **“Nayely, the oldest child, is a junior in high school. She is an outstanding student with a 3.91 Grade Point Average who ranks fourth in her class of approximately 300 students. At her young**

age, Nayely has demonstrated a strong commitment to the ideals of citizenship in her adopted country. She has worked hard to achieve her full potential both in her academic endeavors and through the service she provides her community.”

Nayely is a member of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), a college preparatory program in which students commit to determining their own futures through achieving a college degree. Nayely is also President of the Key Club, a community service organization. She helps mentor freshmen and participates in several other student organizations in her school.

According to immigration authorities, this family has never had any problems with law enforcement and has filed taxes every year from 1990 to the present. Mr. Arreola, who was previously employed as a farm worker, now has his own business repairing electronics. The family owns a home in Porterville, Calif.

“It is clear to me that this family has embraced the American dream, and their continued presence in our country would enhance the values we hold dear,” Senator Feinstein said. **“Enactment of the legislation I have introduced today will enable the Arreolas to continue to make significant contributions to their community and to the United States. It is my hope, therefore, that Congress passes this private legislation.”**

Private legislation is usually introduced on behalf of individuals whose compelling circumstances require Congress to act when administrative or legal remedies have been exhausted.

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