



A Special Message on Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 from Dan Stein

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Message from Dan Stein

I want to thank each of you who attended and each of you whose generous gift made Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 possible. Perhaps the most ambitious undertaking in the history of FAIR, this event exceeded every expectation we had. Over 37 talk radio hosts, and hundreds of members, activists and listeners from all over the country joined forces in a four-day sustained campaign to tell Congress and the Bush administration that they oppose amnesty and support the rule of law. In particular, I admire, support and appreciate the talk radio hosts who attended, many of whom paid their own way and took valuable time to be here in Washington. These radio allies offer the best hope of communicating to the public what true immigration reform is really all about; a policy that sensibly serves the long term interests of America, instead of one that serves special interests, big business or Third World nations.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 was the largest immigration-media event of the year and its message resonated coast to coast with the largest sustained national television coverage ever for FAIR and for the movement. The timing was perfect and we are pleased to report that many members of Congress said the event helped them better understand the issues, gain greater awareness of public opinion, and helped them craft their viewpoints.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 could not have been possible without your participation, your support and your donations. Thank you for coming, contributing and making an enormous difference at a critical time.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire Shines National Attention on Need for Immigration Controls

It was by far the biggest and most successful demonstration of the American public's desire for comprehensive immigration enforcement. Hold Their Feet to the Fire, a joint effort by FAIR and San Diego radio talk show personality Roger Hedgecock, enlisted the combined efforts of the media and citizen involvement to drive home the need for Congress and the Bush Administration to enact an immigration enforcement plan that does not reward illegal aliens with amnesty, or undercut American workers with millions of low-wage guest workers.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire, which ran from April 22 to 25, included 37 radio talk shows, hundreds of citizen lobbyists who came to Washington and visited every office on Capitol Hill, and many thousands of people all across the United States who called, emailed and wrote to their representatives demanding that the government act to protect our borders and enforce our nation's immigration laws. The media footprint of Hold Their Feet to the Fire turned out to be significantly larger than the 37 radio who originated their broadcasts from the second floor of the Phoenix Park Hotel on Capitol Hill. The event received national media coverage from all three cable news networks, CNN, Fox and MSNBC, as well as by leading newspapers, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Washington Times, The Los Angeles Times, and many others.

For three days, from 5:00 am until midnight, three ballrooms in the Phoenix Park Hotel served as the headquarters of the biggest immigration reform event in history. With the expert technical services of Silver Lake Audio of Rockville Center, New York, 13 makeshift broadcast stations served as the home away from home for the 37 talk show hosts whose programs reached all across the country. As talk shows broadcast back to their home markets, a procession of members of the House of Representatives and Senate turned up to discuss immigration policy on the air. The dozens of members of Congress, including two declared presidential candidates Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) and Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.), who spent countless hours at the Phoenix Park, were coordinated by Kurt Bardella, press secretary to Rep. Brian Bilbray (R-Calif.) who chairs the congressional Immigration Reform Caucus.

In addition to members of Congress, FAIR arranged for other elected officials, including Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Mayor Lou Barletta, also traveled to Washington to participate in Hold Their Feet to the Fire. As well as politicians, FAIR also lined up an impressive list of other immigration policy experts, such as Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, to appear on the radio talk shows. Guests often moved from one broadcast table to another, one minute speaking to listeners in San Diego, and five minutes later filling the airwaves in Boston, or Nashville, or some other media market.

Citizen lobbyists and activists also had their opportunities to convey the excitement and energy of the Hold Their Feet to the Fire event. Activists returning from trips to Capitol Hill were frequently grabbed by the broadcasters on radio row to report to listeners back home about their experiences while visiting congressional offices. Whether members of Congress and their staffs greeted immigration reform activists receptively or not was immediately



known to thousands of that member's constituents back in their districts. Adding to the energy of Hold Their Feet to the Fire was the fact that instead of the normal sterile radio environment, where hosts carry out their business in sound-proof studios, radio row was filled with the buzz of activists milling around the three ballrooms that served as the nerve center of the event.

While, often as many as a dozen talk show hosts were broadcasting their programs simultaneously, television cameras and sound crews, newspaper reporters and photographers were making their way around the hotel listening in on the broadcasts, interviewing the talk show hosts, or just about anyone they could get their hands on. CNN's Lou Dobbs, who covers the immigration issue on his program daily, included feeds from Hold Their Feet to the Fire two days in succession. Reporting for Lou Dobbs Tonight, CNN reporter Lisa Sylvester described the energy of Hold Their Feet to the Fire as "electrifying."

Most gratifying to FAIR was the feedback we received from almost every person involved in Hold Their Feet to the Fire. From the radio talk show hosts, to members of Congress, to activists, nearly every single person who participated came away from the event energized and committed to the effort ahead. As we move into the late spring and summer, immigration has become one of the key issues facing Congress. As a result of Hold Their Feet to the Fire, the network of groups, individuals and media outlets committed to looking out for the interests of ordinary Americans is bigger, stronger and more determined than ever.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire News Conference Draws National Media Coverage

The medium of the day at the Hold Their Feet to the Fire event was talk radio, but coverage didn't stop with talk radio. The four-day event in Washington, D.C., was covered by television, print and the blogosphere, spreading the message of true immigration reform across the country.

One of the major events of Hold Their Feet to the Fire was the Capitol Hill news conference that included all 37 radio talk show hosts who broadcast from Hold Their Feet to the Fire headquarters, hundreds of listeners, leading members of Congress and the wives of imprisoned Border Patrol agents, Ignacio Ramos and Jose Alonso Compean.

The news conference on the terrace of the Cannon House Office Building, organized jointly by FAIR and Rep. Brian Bilbray (R-Calif.), attracted reporters from CNN, Fox News, The New York Times and many others major news media.

The Hold Their Feet to the Fire news conference provided an opportunity for participants and organizers to explain to the national media why they had come to Washington and what they were hoping to accomplish by being there. Dan Stein, speaking on behalf of FAIR, and Roger Hedgecock, speaking on behalf of his talk radio colleagues, spoke about how Hold Their Feet to the Fire was meant to provide a voice for ordinary Americans in the immigration debate — a voice that is often overlooked or ignored in Washington.

In addition to Rep. Bilbray, presidential candidates Congressmen Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.) and Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), spoke about efforts in Congress to block guest worker amnesty legislation and focus on the kind of immigration enforcement that is favored by the vast majority of Americans.

The Capitol Hill news conference also provided an opportunity for Monica Ramos and Patty Compean, wives of the two imprisoned Border Patrol officers, to speak directly through national media to the American people about the plight of their husbands and the impact that the government's aggressive prosecution has had on their families.



Activists, Radio Hosts, Political Leaders Rally to Support Imprisoned Border Agents

While talk radio hosts and hundreds of activists converged on Washington, D.C., to bring the fight for true immigration reform to the nation's capital, Hold Their Feet to the Fire also rallied support for two Border Patrol agents who are serving long prison sentences for defending their own lives and the security of the American people.

Agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Alonso Compean were prosecuted by the federal government for an 2005 incident in which they wounded an illegal alien drug smuggler who had assaulted them and attempted to flee back to Mexico.

Because many of the radio talk show hosts have been instrumental in attracting the public's attention to the Ramos and Compean case, and many of the activists who attended the Hold Their Feet to the Fire event have worked hard for their release, FAIR organized a fundraising event on behalf of their families. Both agents' wives, Monica Ramos and Patty Compean, and other close family members, participated in Hold Their Feet to the Fire and attended the fundraising event on behalf of the two imprisoned agents.

The fundraiser for Ramos and Compean held Tuesday evening was also attended by key congressional leaders who have worked tirelessly for the men's release from prison, either through a new trial, or a presidential pardon.

The fundraising event was perhaps the most moving and gratifying part of Hold Their Feet to the Fire. Attendees packed the ballroom and gave generously to assist the agents' efforts to secure their release and to help their families endure this difficult time.

The remarks by FAIR president Dan Stein and a succession of political leaders on behalf of the two border agents were well received by the 300 people who attended the fundraiser, but it was the heartfelt thanks expressed by Monica and Patty for the support they have received from so many people, that provided the most inspirational moments of the four-day Hold Their Feet to the Fire event.

FAIR, talk show hosts and people from all across the country rallied to the support of agents Ramos and Compean because of the blatant political nature of their prosecution. Meeting and getting to know the Ramos and Compean families added a human dimension to this case that is certain to touch and inspire everyone who attended to redouble their efforts to secure their release.



Thousands of Floridians Send Their Soles to Washington

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The "Send Your Soles to Washington" effort was the brainchild of radio talk show host Joyce Kaufman of WFTL Radio in Miami. Joyce, who broadcast from the Phoenix Park Hotel during Hold Their Feet to the Fire, encouraged her listeners who could not be there to demonstrate their commitment to true immigration reform by sending their soles instead. And thousands of listeners did just that. In addition to the 5,000 pairs of shoes that graced the ballroom of the Phoenix Park Hotel, thousands more continued to pour into the radio station in Miami.

The promotion made national news. It was so successful that a New York Times reporter followed Joyce and her listeners around Washington for two days, while CNN sent a camera crew to include the shoes as part of their package of coverage of Hold Their Feet to the Fire. CNN's Lou Dobbs, who often invites radio talk show hosts to appear on his TV show, took the unusual step of appearing live as a guest on Joyce Kaufman's WFTL program as she broadcast from the headquarters of Hold Their Feet to the Fire.

In addition to being an innovative promotional success, the thousands of pairs of shoes sent by listeners in Florida were donated to the Salvation Army in Washington, D.C., for distribution to people in need.

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But Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 was truly a multimedia event. In addition to the thousands of talk radio listeners who tuned in to hear their favorite host broadcast directly from Washington, D.C., millions of other Americans saw, heard and read about Hold Their Feet to the Fire on national and local television news, in leading national newspapers, and on the Web. The unprecedented media coverage of Hold Their Feet to the Fire made it the most effective event in the history of the modern immigration reform movement.

Below is a partial list of the media coverage of Hold Their Feet to the Fire:

National Television

CNN Lou Dobbs (3 stories)
CSPAN (2 stories)
Fox & Friends
Fox News Live
Fox News Your World with Neil Cavuto
MSNBC (3 stories)
Telemundo

Local Television (39 stories)

Washington, D.C.
Miami
Baltimore
San Diego
Des Moines
Johnstown/Altoona (Pennsylvania)
Youngstown (Ohio)
Sioux City (Iowa)

Newspapers

Washington Post
Washington Times
Los Angeles Times
New York Times
Denver Post
Austin American Statesman

Oklahoma Legislature Approves Landmark Immigration Enforcement Bill

On May 1, the day that many illegal aliens and their supporters took to the streets around the country to demand amnesty and other rewards for having broken the law, the Oklahoma Legislature approved a bipartisan bill that set new standards for local enforcement of immigration laws.

By a landslide 84-14 vote, the Oklahoma legislature passed the Taxpayer and Citizenship Protection Act of 2007, H.B. 1804, providing a model for the rest of the country to enforce immigration laws at the state and local level.

The Oklahoma legislation was a result of bipartisan leadership from State Rep. Randy Terrill (R), and State Senators James Williamson (R) and Tom Adelson (D) who, along with 31 co-sponsors, took decisive action to protect workers and taxpayers in the state. The bipartisan leaders in the Oklahoma Legislature worked closely with the Immigration Reform Law Institute, FAIR's legal affiliate, to craft a bill that is tough on immigration lawbreakers while protecting the liberties and privileges of ordinary citizens.

Among other provisions, the Taxpayer and Citizenship Protection Act of 2007 mandates that all employers in Oklahoma verify the immigration status of all workers using a standardized system and imposes tough state penalties on employers who fail to comply. The law also bars illegal aliens from receiving driver's licenses or other state-issued ID, and most taxpayer funded benefits. It also nullifies efforts by local governments to create sanctuary cities for illegal aliens and mandates cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities.

The Taxpayer and Citizenship Protection Act of 2007 addresses the state's growing illegal immigration problem by following the money. Illegal immigration is encouraged by employers who seek a labor subsidy by hiring illegal aliens. The Oklahoma legislation, like other state and local efforts to seriously address illegal immigration, attempts to remove economic incentives for hiring illegal aliens while sending a clear message to illegal aliens that they will not be accommodated in Oklahoma.