



**New Prices  
Effective  
May 1, 2010**

## Martin Cleaning Service

**Carpet & Upholstery  
Cleaning  
Residential &  
Commercial Services**  
Minimum Service CHG.  
\$45.00

A small distance/travel charge  
may be applied

### CARPET CLEANING

2 Cleaning Areas or  
more \$30.00 Each Area

**Pre-Spray Traffic Areas**  
(Includes: 1 small Hallway)

1 Cleaning Area (only)  
\$40.00

Includes Pre-Spray Traffic Area  
(Hallway Extra)

**Stairs (12-16 stairs - With  
Other Services): \$25.00**

### **Area/Oriental Rugs:**

\$25.00 Minimum

**Area/Oriental Rugs (Wool):**  
\$40.00 Minimum

### **Heavily Soiled Area:**

Additional \$10.00 each area  
(Requiring Extensive Pre-Spraying)

### UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

Sofa: \$69.00

Loveseat: \$49.00

Sectional: \$109 - \$139

Chair or Recliner:

\$25 - \$49

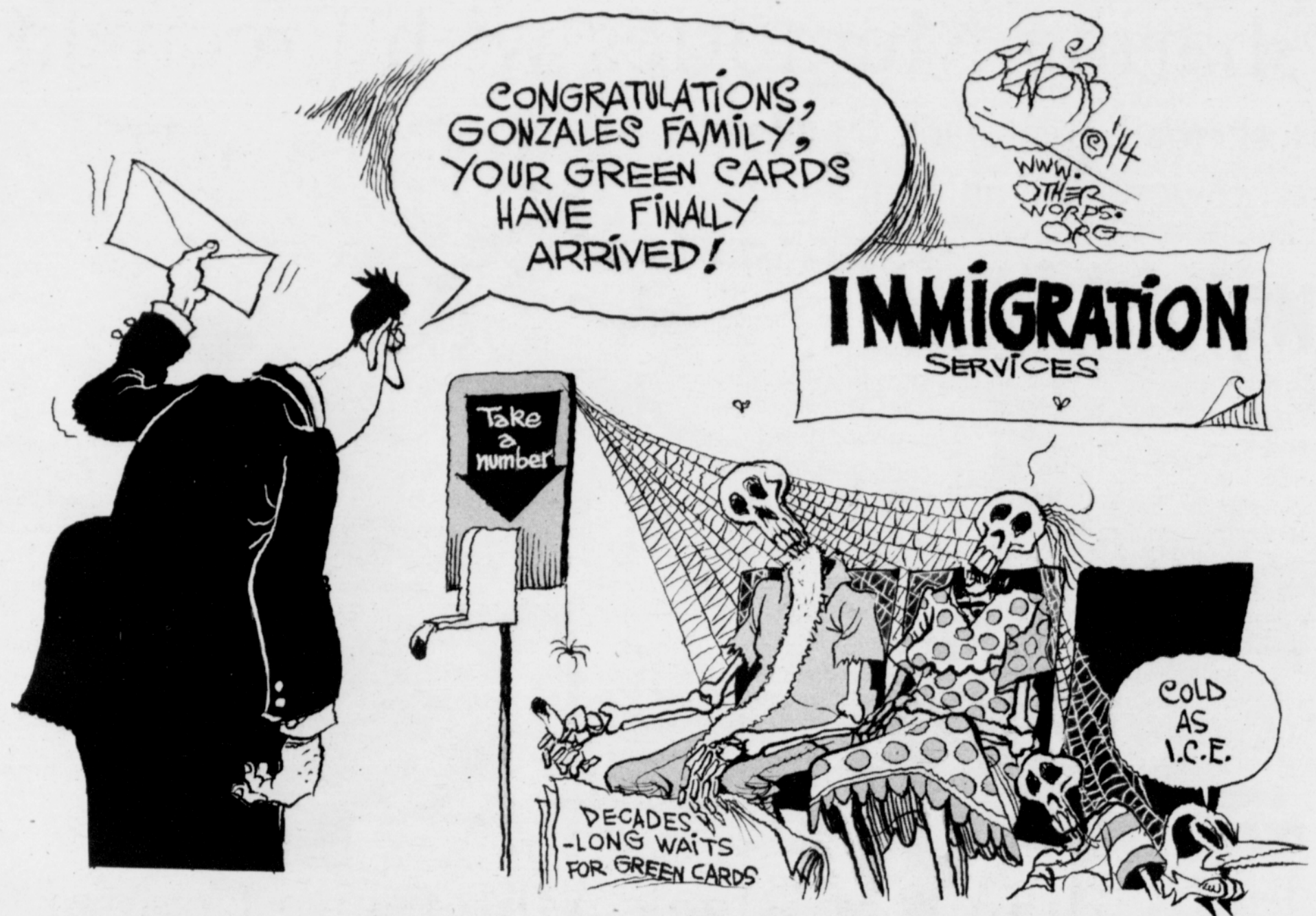
Throw Pillows (With  
Other Services): \$5.00

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- Area & Oriental Rug  
Cleaning
- Auto/Boat/RV Cleaning
- Deodorizing & Pet  
Odor Treatment
- Spot & Stain  
Removal Service
- Scotchguard Protection
- Minor Water Damage  
Services

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# OPINION



## Standing in Line is a Myth for Most of Us

### Our broken immigration system

BY DIANA ANAHI  
TORRES-  
VALVERDE



In a bustling room at the Third Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque, N. M., a group of white and Latino parishioners gathered for a workshop on immigration. They wanted to learn more about the issue.

Julio Alvarez, a Mexican immigrant, was there to answer their questions. "Why can't immigrants just wait in line and move here legally? Isn't there a process to do that?" one parishioner asked. "The truth is," Alvarez replied, "standing in line is a myth for the majority of us."

Alvarez's personal experience with our nation's immigration system illustrates this harsh reality.

Mexico's weak economy pushed Alvarez out of his country in 1996. "When I decided to immigrate to Albuquerque, New Mexico, I had 5 pesos — or less than a dollar — in my pocket and a family to feed," he recounts.

Upon his arrival, Alvarez's

U.S.-citizen brother sponsored his petition for U.S. residency. As allowed by federal law, he included his wife, Myrna, and their school-age son, Edgar, in his application. He hoped that all of them could eventually reside in the United States legally.

That was 16 years ago.

Since then, Alvarez has established a successful automotive repair shop, bought a home, and saved enough money to send his child to college. But our broken immigration system has left him standing in that immigration "line." And a recent Supreme Court decision just made things worse.

It takes the Citizenship and Immigration Services agency an average of seven years to grant immigrants green cards. Due to the structure of the immigration system that imposes a per-country cap, the wait now lasts more than two decades for Mexican immigrants.

As long as the petitioners' dependent children don't come of age during that period, they remain eligible for green cards. If those children turn 21 before the family reaches the front of that proverbial line, a Supreme Court majority recently ruled, those young immigrants "age out." They lose their place in the

immigration line where they may have stood for most of their young lives.

That's a brutal reality for the Alvarez family.

Julio Alvarez has waited 16 years for his green card. He probably needs to wait two more years — or even longer. Meanwhile, Edgar will turn 21 and lose his place in the line he has waited on for more than half his life.

If Edgar, an engineering student at the University of New Mexico, applies for his own green card, he'll be in his 40s before he gets to the front of the line. Tens of thousands of people face this Orwellian predicament.

The new ruling makes congressional action even more urgent. But House Majority Leader Eric Cantor's stunning defeat to David Brat in his recent primary means that the already stagnated immigration reform debate may hit a dead end on Capitol Hill. According to conventional wisdom that ignores the prevailing views in that Virginia House district, anti-immigrant fervor helped Cantor's tea party challenger pull off a surprise win against a candidate who outspent him 40:1.

This is bad news for Edgar Alvarez, who will turn 21 later

this year.

After he reaches that milestone and graduates college, he may be forced to move to Mexico, a country he barely knows.

If Edgar wants to stay here he has limited options: He can marry a U.S. citizen or resident. Or he can find an employer to sponsor his green card. Few employers make this commitment because it's a costly and time-consuming process.

If Edgar can't find a path to shedding his undocumented status, his New Mexican community will feel the loss. The young man engages in local politics and campus life. He pays taxes, mentors younger boys who are aspiring engineers, and works as a public health advocate.

How can the United States turn its back on the more than 560,000 talented, young adults that are in a situation similar to his?

Our nation can certainly do better than that.

*Diana Anahi Torres-Valverde is the New Mexico Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC. The author changed the name of the church and the names of the members of the "Alvarez family" in this commentary at their request.*