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OPINION

Earning an Immigration Red Card

Stalling reform further alienates Latino voters

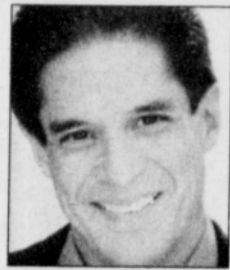
BY RAUL A. REYES
Rep. Luis

Gutierrez, D-Ill., used a World Cup analogy to castigate his Republican colleagues for blocking immigration reform. "Leave the field, too many flagrant offenses and unfair attacks. You're out," Gutierrez said. "Hit the showers. It's the red card."

(In case you're not into soccer: Referees bestow red cards on players they deem guilty of misconduct warranting expulsion from the field. These infractions leave a team down a player and at a big disadvantage.)

President Barack Obama has no choice but to take executive action on immigration, Gutierrez added. He's right. Yet Republicans shouldn't celebrate the defeat of immigration reform, even if Obama made it a top priority.

Not only have GOP lawmakers



responded disgracefully to the child migrant crisis along the border, they're setting themselves up for a demographic slap in the face in 2016—courtesy of Latino voters.

The Republican response to the current crisis on the border has been long on rhetoric, short on solutions. For example, Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., holds Obama "personally responsible" for "incentivizing" children to come to the United States through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA). The program grants undocumented youth relief from deportation, but it's not comprehensive. The Obama administration is deporting undocumented immigrants at record levels, and its deferred action policy doesn't apply to recent arrivals.

Republican lawmakers aren't letting the facts interfere with their grandstanding.

Consider the thousands of unaccompanied minors who this summer overwhelmed the Border Patrol in South Texas. U.S.

government officials believe that these kids were making the dangerous journey north because traffickers have promised them that they could stay here, and because their home countries are awash in violence.

Yet this crisis actually makes the case for reform. Had the House passed the immigration bill that the Senate approved last year, it could have cleared up confusion about our immigration policy. Moreover, the Senate bill included additional money for Border Patrol agents and for more fencing. These beefed-up security provisions were called the "border surge."

In response, House Republicans sat on their hands. So, the only "border surge" we're experiencing today is one of desperate children fleeing Central America.

The fact that Republicans have seized on the child migrant crisis as their latest excuse for not passing immigration reform is as unconscionable as it is disingenuous. The UN High Commissioner on Refugees estimates that about 60 percent of

these children may be eligible for humanitarian status. These kids shouldn't be used to score political points—they deserve humane treatment and compassion.

The GOP's other excuses for not dealing with immigration fall flat too. They range from the budget sequester to the Boston Marathon bombing to Syria to not trusting Obama.

The bad news for Republicans is that the GOP is firmly saddled with the blame for killing immigration reform since 2007. That's bound to cost them in the 2016 general elections and could boost the Democrats' prospects in the 2014 midterms.

A June survey by Latino Decisions found that 74 percent of Latinos said they would view Republicans less favorably if reform didn't pass, significantly diminishing their chances of re-taking the White House.

True, not all Republicans oppose immigration reform. Senators John McCain, R-Ariz., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., both worked with their colleagues across the aisle to craft the Sen-

ate immigration bill, only to have their voices drowned out by House hardliners.

And just because reform has died legislatively doesn't mean nothing can be done. Obama has said that he would take executive action on deportations once there was no chance of reform passing Congress. Pro-immigrant measures continue to pass at the state level, with 11 states allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses and New York considering a "state citizenship" plan for undocumented workers.

Meanwhile, immigration activists will soon turn their attention to voter registration and to helping elect candidates pledging to back new immigration laws. Immigration reform may be dead in Congress for now, but change will come.

House Republicans have squandered a historic opportunity. They should be ashamed of their deliberate inaction on immigration and unsurprised when they face the consequences at the polls.

Raul A. Reyes is an attorney and columnist in New York City.

Ferguson is a Critical Reminder for All Cities

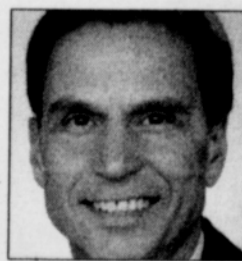
Trust is a perishable commodity

BY MICHAEL REESE

As we watch the tragic events in Ferguson unfold, there are some powerful themes that have come to the forefront and

have emerged as critical reminders for all cities and law enforcement agencies across America.

The importance of building



greater trust between police officers and the people we serve is paramount; particularly among those communities whose relationship and history with the Police Bureau has sometimes been strained. Trust is a perishable commodity; it's something we must work on every day.

At the Portland Police Bureau, we have had a lot of conversations recently about building legitimacy for the work we do in protecting the public. These unfortunate circumstances in Missouri help make

clear to me, and hopefully to everyone in our community, that creating a police-community relationship built on trust is our most important obligation.

A law enforcement agency must mirror the community in which it serves. In Portland, we continue to increase diversity as we hire new police officers. We are committed to building strong partnerships with community members and agencies that assist us in serving and protecting the people of Portland.

Police use of force and the policies and training that accom-

pany it need to be continually reviewed and improved upon. The Portland Police Bureau has made significant changes to our use of force policies and training aimed at reducing use of force and improving de-escalation tactics. Our use of force numbers have declined over the last four years, and all uses of physical force are investigated by a supervisor. Citizen complaints also have decreased.

Finally, communication, including listening, remains the key to better understanding. When we have an officer-involved shoot-

ing or high-profile incident, we are committed to transparency.

There is no daylight between our values as an organization and the values and expectations the community has for their police officers. This is important to all of us. Our Portland Police Officers go out every day committed to doing their very best to serve and protect our community. As an agency, we pledge to continue to develop and enhance our services to match our community's expectations.

Michael Reese is Portland's Chief of Police.

The Portland Observer Established 1970

USPS 959-680

4747 NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR 97211

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