



Gutierrez, Quigley call for immigration reforms to cover gay couples

By Kevin Wayne

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CHICAGO, IL -- On Monday, congressmen from Chicago and Colorado called for the inclusion of binational same-sex couples in immigration reform legislation.

Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-Chicago), who's been pushing hard for immigration legislation, was joined today by Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Chicago) and openly-gay Rep. Jared Polis (D-Boulder, CO) during a press conference at the [Center on Halsted](#).

Gutierrez's Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009 (CIR ASAP), which is supported by 98 members of Congress, currently does not include any LGBT provisions. But Gutierrez says that should change.

"Our efforts to fix our broken immigration system and protect basic civil rights are not truly comprehensive if we exclude same-sex couples," Gutierrez said.

Current immigration law allows a system for sponsoring wives and husbands for visas, but same-sex partners of different nationalities have no legal standing to live together in the United States, which is one of the many differences between the rights of married people and same-sex couples.

"The beauty of America is that somewhere in each of our lineages, someone made the choice to come here, to a country built on fairness and justice," said Rep. Quigley. "We must continue to honor that tradition not just for some, but for all families."

Also participating in today's press conferences were members of Chicago's LGBT community and individuals who would benefit from the legislation.

"We applaud U.S. Representatives Gutierrez, Quigley, and Polis for stepping up to ensure that 40,000 binational same-sex couples would not have to live in fear of being torn apart by discriminatory laws," said [Equality Illinois](#) CEO Bernard Cherkasov.

Nearly 150 were in attendance at the event which was open to the public.

Photography and additional reporting provided by Jay Shaff.