



EWP/062309/IWD

## Widow Penalty Victims React to Napolitano Reprieve!

*"For hundreds of unlucky immigrants, the death of a wife or husband has been quickly followed by an order to leave the country. It's called the "widow penalty," a tragic quirk in federal law that unfairly punishes recently married immigrants whose citizen spouses die before their green-card paperwork is processed." – **New York Times Editorial, April 28, 2009.***

Widows of American citizens and their children will come together with family and advocates on **June 23, 2009 (International Widows Day<sup>1</sup>)** in Washington, D.C. to comment on Janet Napolitano's temporary reprieve for widows, and the lack of a permanent solution.

### **News Conference**

**WHEN:** June 23, 2009, Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. EST  
**WHERE:** U.S. Capitol, Russell Park (or SR-188 in case of rain)  
**WHO:** News conference to feature remarks from:  
Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL), Bill Sponsor S.815  
Congressman Jim McGovern (D-MA), Bill Sponsor H.R. 1870  
Diana Engstrom, widow penalty victim  
Ron and Cindy Engstrom, Diana Engstrom's in-laws  
Maria Diaz-Ruiz, widow penalty victim  
Brent Renison, pro bono counsel, SSAD

*"Just last week, the new head of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, suspended all action to deport these widows for two years. The administration supports legislation to make it clear that widows and widowers who didn't get their paperwork completed before their American spouse died, should still be allowed to remain in the U.S." – **CBS News 60 Minutes, June 14, 2009.***

### **Come hear what widows and their families think about the "Napolitano Solution."**

Legislation to End the Widow Penalty, S. 815 / H.R. 1870 would allow surviving spouses of American citizens the chance to show their marriages were legitimate, and put an end to automatic denials under current agency practice. More information at <http://www.ssad.org>  
Contact: [info@ssad.org](mailto:info@ssad.org) (press inquiries will be promptly returned via blackberry).

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<sup>1</sup> International Widows Day (IWD), June 23, was first announced in 2005 by Cherie Blair, wife of Tony Blair, a mother of four, and also a human rights lawyer. "Widows and their children are entitled to human dignity. It is not just a huge physical challenge across the world but it is also an issue which has been overlooked for decades. - Cherie Blair"