

“We needed to bring community officials and advocates together to talk and share ideas. The Committee will function as a central clearinghouse of information on what’s working, what’s not and what should be done to make the day laborer situation better. We can’t legislate a much-needed, coherent national immigration policy but we can do what’s in our power to make what’s happening in our own backyard better.”

Board Chair Bill Ryan, commenting on the Committee’s mission to come up with a solution to finding appropriate and safe hiring sites for the day laborer population in Westchester County.

What does your community need to better manage your day laborer population? Please prioritize these needs, indicating your greatest need with # 1 and least greatest need # 4.

- _____ Safe site location
- _____ Building with restroom facilities on the site we have
- _____ Administrator to coordinate hiring
- _____ Involvement of public safety officers
- _____ Go-to person who can mediate pay and labor disputes and problems between day laborer and employer
- _____ We need money to support providing the services above



Members of the Generational, Cultural & Ethnic Diversity Committee, meet to discuss options for day laborers; pictured from left, County Legislators Bernice Spreckman, Vito Pinto, Lois Bronz and Board Chair Bill Ryan.



Westchester County Board of Legislators
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, N.Y. 10601



Bernice Spreckman,
Chair, Generational, Cultural & Ethnic
Diversity Committee
Legislator, 14th District

Vito Pinto
Vice Chair, Generational, Cultural &
Ethnic Diversity Committee
Legislator, 10th District

To: Westchester Municipal Officials and Day Laborer Advocates

From: County Legislators Bernice Spreckman and Vito Pinto

Subject: Survey on day laborers in Westchester County

Date: March 29, 2006

A number of localities in Westchester have by default become the central gathering places where employers go to hire temporary laborers, mostly Hispanic immigrants, many undocumented. While resolving what all acknowledge is a dysfunctional immigration policy is beyond the purview of this committee, what our committee can do and has begun to do is to lead the effort to get the municipalities and advocacy groups on the front lines dealing with the daily day laborer reality to brainstorm solutions.

On February 7, municipal officials gave our committee a status report on the extent of their day laborer population, the attendant problems and how they’re managing those problems. On February 27, we invited community advocates to give us a run down of the problems day laborers themselves confront as they navigate their way through the complexity of a confusing and contradictory immigration policy that leaves them vulnerable to unscrupulous employers, communities that protest their presence while enjoying the benefits of their cheap labor.

To move forward, we need to supplement anecdotal data with hard facts. How many day laborers are we talking about? How many communities have sites but need support to run them? How are the sites organized? Are they safe? Are the day laborers treated fairly and humanely? Once we gather statistics on these kinds of questions, we will have amassed the details we need to complete the picture and move forward with practical and effective solutions.

Whether you have a large day laborer population or none at all, we need to hear from you in order to put together a regional picture of the day laborer population. The information that we gather will put our County in a better position to provide help with everything from developing intermunicipal partnerships to run proper hiring sites to lobbying for help from our state and federal governments.

Thanks for your help in finding a solution to this complex issue.

SURVEY ON DAY LABOR IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY

The following survey was created to help assess the challenges presented by Westchester's day laborer population. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge and return it to the attention of Amanda Modugno, Legislative Aide, Westchester County Board of Legislators, 800 Michaelian Office Building, 148 Martine Avenue, White Plains, New York, 10601 or by fax to Amanda's attention at (914) 995-3884.

For all municipalities/community groups to answer: (Please choose only one)

I represent,

The municipality/town/village/city of _____

The Community Advocacy Group _____ located in _____

Optional: Your name and contact information

Name: _____ Title/Position _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Does your community have a hiring site location where workers and employers meet on a regular basis?

Yes No

If you answered *No*, you do not need to fill out the rest of the survey. Answering this question alone provides important information about where day laborers are geographically concentrated.

Please return this page to the address/fax number above.

We'd welcome any comments, thoughts or suggestions you'd like to make on a separate piece of paper.

If your community does have a hiring site, please go on:

1. Approximately, on average, how many day laborers congregate in your community on a daily basis?

- 0 to 10
 11 to 25
 25 to 50
 over 50

2. Does the site operate year round?

Yes No, it's seasonal (Please circle which seasons...Spring / Summer / Fall / Winter)

3. Where is the site located?

Public Park Street corner Gas station Train station Private parking lot Municipal parking lot

Other (please specify) _____

4. Is the site informal or is it arranged by a group?

Informal Arranged by group (please specify) _____

5. Does the site offer any amenities?

Shelter from inclement weather Free Food Bathroom facilities Parking spaces where employers can park
 Mobile facility where food can be purchased Translators to help communicate Community group liaison

6. Does local law enforcement have to be called in on a regular basis?

Yes No

7. What types of businesses typically hire day laborers? (Check all that apply)

Landscaping Contractor Construction Contractor Painting Contractors Restaurants
 Homeowners looking for help with home improvement project Other _____

SURVEY ON DAY LABOR IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY

8. Are the businesses that hire day laborers based in your town?

Yes No

9. If employers are coming from other towns, please list the towns represented that you have knowledge of:

10. Are some employers coming from out of state? Have you noticed a number of out of state license plates? If so, about what percent of all vehicles are from out of state at your community's hiring site location?

Less than 10% Less than 25% 50% and more

11. If a laborer is hired for a longer term than a day or two by an employer, does that employer...?

Have the day laborer report straight to the employer's business site for the duration of the job
 Continue to pick up the day laborer from the site every day for the duration of the job
 Other (please describe) _____
 Don't Know

12. How do the laborers get to the site?

Public transportation Group Van Carpool

13. What is the prevailing wage paid to day laborers for the following jobs?

Landscaping Contractor (\$_____per hour)
 Construction Contractor (\$_____per hour)
 Painting Contractor (\$_____per hour)
 Homeowners looking for help with home improvement project (\$_____per hour)
 Other (\$_____per hour)

14. Are there programs available to day laborers in your community that teach language, career skills or citizenship?

Yes (please describe the program*and how they are coordinated)

**Please forward any informational materials about these programs distributed to day laborers*

No

15. Do the day laborers in your community have access to legal services?

Yes No

16. If a contractor or a worker has a dispute regarding wages or work performance, is anyone available to intercede to help resolve the dispute?

Yes No

17. If you know, please list what country/countries the day laborers in your community come from:

18. Where do the laborers live while they work in your community? Check all that apply:

Westchester County New York City New Jersey Connecticut
 With relatives Boarding house Legal rental apartment
 Homeless Government shelter Illegal rental apartment

19. How much does a day laborer pay per month to live where he lives? _____

20. If a day laborer is sick or injured on the job, where does he go for medical attention?

Local hospital emergency room Clinic/doctor that donates services Employer pays for medical services

Thank you for completing and returning this survey. If you have any additional comments, please send them along on a separate piece of paper.