

**Hearing on S.744, The Border Security, Economic Opportunity,
and Immigration Modernization Act**

April 22, 2013

Senator Leahy

Questions for the Record for Brad Smith

Q. The Uniting American Families Act (UAFAs) would allow American citizens who are in long term committed relationships, or are married, to sponsor their foreign partners or spouse for green cards under the family immigration system, just as heterosexual married couples are currently allowed to do under the law. I have championed this proposal since 2003, when I first introduced the legislation. This year, I welcomed Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) as an original cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation.

a. Does Microsoft have a position on the Uniting American Families Act?

Yes, Microsoft supports the Uniting American Families Act and sent a formal letter of support on June 27, 2011. A copy of the letter is attached.

b. Why do you believe that UAFAs is important to American companies?

As an innovation leader, our most critical asset is the brainpower of the people in our workforce. Our talented employees are the key to our competitive strength, our ability to generate new ideas and products, and our ongoing capacity to create new jobs in the American economy.

Currently, same-sex permanent partners of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents cannot access similar benefits extended to married couples which impose a tremendous hardship on a number of our employees as well as the individuals we seek to recruit. These highly talented individuals are forced to choose between abandoning successful careers and established lives in the U.S. or living indefinitely in separate countries. Neither is a choice that makes sense and UAFAs would change this outdated barrier.