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For Immediate Release

## Mazzoli to Open Immigration Symposium

Though it was formed as a nation of immigrants, the U.S. today experiences a flow of immigrants that has furthered stoked the tension between newcomers and those whose ancestors arrived earlier. Some argue that recent migration threatens our national identity, puts unacceptable strain on our schools and social services, and enhances the threat of terrorism. Others insist that new immigrants create a more diverse and vibrant society.

This intense national debate will be examined as the Center for Free Inquiry at Hanover College presents “Immigration and American National Identity,” a seven-session symposium to be held March 7 and March 12-14. All events are open to the public and free of charge.

“Immigration and American National Identity” will open Tuesday, March 7, with a special presentation at the Frasier Arms Museum in Louisville, Ky. Former Kentucky congressman Romano “Ron” Mazzoli and Omar Ayyash, the Director of International Affairs for the Metro Louisville government, will discuss “The Importance of Immigration for America” at 7 p.m.

Mazzoli was elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 1967 and served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1970 to 1995. He co-sponsored the landmark 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. Ayyash, a native of Amman, Jordan, worked at Kentucky World Trade Center before joining Louisville’s metro government.

The on-campus presentations for “Immigration and American National Identity,” will be held Sunday, March 12, and Monday, March 13.

Richard Alba, professor of sociology and public policy at the University of Albany in New York, will discuss “Assimilation: The American Pattern,” March 12, at 4 p.m. in Fitzgibbon Recital Hall, Lynn Center for Fine Arts. Ruben Navarrette, columnist and editorial board member of *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, will present “Decoding the Immigration Debate: Why a Nation of Immigrants Doesn’t Like Immigrants,” at 8 p.m.

Speakers will convene at 1:30 p.m., Monday, March 13, for a roundtable discussion. The session will be held in the board room of the J. Graham Brown Campus Center and will give attendees an opportunity to engage in lively discussion with all four participants.

Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, will examine “Mass Immigration vs. Modern Society” in the afternoon session, which begins at 4 p.m. Kathleen Newland, director and cofounder of the Migration Policy Institute, will discuss “Refugee Resettlement in the United States: Expressing American Values,” at 8 p.m. Both presentations will be held in Fitzgibbon Recital Hall.

“Immigration and American National Identity” will conclude Tuesday, March 14, with participants participating in a talk radio show on WFPL in Louisville, KY.

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Founded in 1997, The Center for Free Inquiry® is an interdisciplinary institute of Hanover College; it is dedicated to exploring fundamental and enduring issues of human social and spiritual life through the lens of the liberal arts. CFI addresses itself to a broad public and seeks to advance knowledge and shape public debate through lectures, symposia, and publications. For more information about CFI and its programs, call 812-866-6848 or email [cfi@hanover.edu](mailto:cfi@hanover.edu). Visit CFI on the web at [cfi.hanover.edu](http://cfi.hanover.edu).

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