



A Commonsense Approach: Immigration Policy Solutions *Upholding Workers' Rights*

Many Americans are frustrated with our immigration policies. But research and experience show that it's not enough to focus only on the problems with our current policies. We also need to paint a picture of what the country would look like with workable, commonsense policies in place. This document identifies solutions across a spectrum of issues relating to immigrants and immigration, reflecting the importance of addressing the problems with our immigration policies as broadly as possible.

Topline Message:

All Americans have the right to be protected against workplace wage and safety violations, regardless of their immigration status. However, some corporations and employers use workers who do not have immigration status to maintain low wages and poor working conditions. States and localities should enforce wage and hour laws and ensure that all workplaces are safe, healthy, and non-discriminatory.

Solutions:

Protect worker safety and rights

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| What state governments should do: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Allow undocumented individuals who have been exploited by employers to file workers' compensation claims.✓ Enact legislation that provides protections for domestic workers such as wage and hour protections, overtime, and protection from sexual harassment and workplace discrimination.✓ Vacate the convictions of unauthorized individuals caught up in immigration and/or law enforcement raids who are survivors of trafficking. |
| What Congress/ U.S. Senate should do: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Enact legislation that will create a clear roadmap to citizenship for undocumented workers, will include protections for those workers actively engaged in defending labor rights, and will provide equal remedies for all workers subjected to unlawful actions at the workplace.✓ Ratify an international treaty adopted in 2011 that set global standards for the protection of domestic workers' rights. |

Reconsider electronic verification of employment eligibility

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| What Congress should do: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ End E-Verify.✓ Provide rigorous oversight of electronic employment verification systems, which are error-prone and likely to lead to job losses, and enact significant penalties for employers' misuse of such programs.✓ Establish clear complaint and redress procedures for a worker to report an employer's misuse of verification systems.✓ Ensure that any verification system is accurate and workable and part of a broader reform of immigration policy. |
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Enforce labor law protections and giving priority to these protections during workplace enforcement actions

- What the U.S. Dept. of Labor should do:**
- ✓ Enforce wage and overtime protections for domestic workers.
 - ✓ Work closely with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to ensure that the enforcement of labor laws is given priority over immigration enforcement where there are conflicts in ongoing labor disputes or investigations of labor law violations.
- What Congress should do:**
- ✓ Increase the number of work visas for temporary and permanent employment.
 - ✓ Enact the federal Power Act — a stalled bill that seeks to prevent employers from using the threat of deportation and immigration raids to retaliate against employees who press for their rights on the job — and grant relief from deportation to qualified workers.
 - ✓ Repeal employer sanctions and develop policies that provide labor protections to immigrant workers.
 - ✓ End guest worker programs that are used to exploit workers, who are bound to the employers who sponsor them and have no prospect of becoming permanent residents or citizens of the United States.
- What Obama should tell DHS/ICD to do:**
- ✓ Give priority to enforcement of labor laws over immigration enforcement.
 - ✓ Grant deferred action to individuals who are identified as unauthorized in screening workers for employment eligibility during worksite raids.
 - ✓ Screen and enable eligible individuals to apply for S, T, or U visa status victims or witnesses.
 - ✓ End worksite raids, which are expensive and have a disproportionately negative effect on unauthorized workers who are vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation by their employers.

Talking Points

- ▶ Out of many cultures, our country's strength is grounded in our ability to work together as fellow Americans. From those who cook the food that we eat to those who create innovative businesses, new immigrants realize the value of working hard and doing your part.
- ▶ All Americans living here come from diverse backgrounds and many different places; we are united by a deep respect for those who work hard for a living and a shared commitment to the country we all call home. All of these workers deserve a safe work environment, decent wages, and protection from exploitation. And they have the right to stick together, to make sure they get a fair shake in exchange for hard work.

Examples of Social Media



Opportunity Agenda @oppagenda 20 Mar
Protect worker safety and rights, regardless of #immigration status! #labor



The Opportunity Agenda shared a link.
March 20
People around the world have moved here throughout history to work hard in order to make life better for the next generation, and the constant revitalization of the American spirit - bringing new energy, new cultures, and new ideas here - that makes us strong as a country. All workers deserve protection from exploitation, a fair wage, a safe workplace. Workers have a right to stick together to protect themselves.