

## Option 1: Open the United States to the World

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From its earliest days, the United States has been a land of opportunity for people outside U.S. borders. Each wave of immigrants has contributed to the United States' greatness and has enriched society. Today, people, ideas, and goods travel the globe at a pace unseen before. Instead of relying on rigid notions of borders and old ideas about a singular "American" identity, the United States should embrace the opportunities that globalization and multiculturalism present. The borders should be open to new immigrants and refugees, whatever their religion, language, race, or ethnicity. By welcoming a diverse group of people to its shores, the United States both enriches its culture and benefits from the skills and experiences that immigrants bring.

The latest generations of immigrants and refugees include the most resourceful people from a rich variety of cultures and regions. Even those lacking a formal education are driven to improve their lives with their unshakable work ethic. They recognize that the United States rewards hard work and ambition like no other country in the world. As the country that accepts the largest number of immigrants, the United States has an advantage against its top economic rivals. Immigrants put the United States in touch with the tastes and preferences of consumers worldwide and give U.S. companies a competitive edge in their ability to reach an international audience. In the long term, the talents, drive, and dreams of immigrants and refugees will benefit all people in the United States.

### Option 1 is based on the following beliefs

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- The United States' strength lies in its diversity—particularly in the hard work, innovative ideas, and cultural contributions of immigrants and refugees.

- Immigration does not threaten U.S. national security. Increasing immigration, especially from war-torn areas, could improve U.S. security by providing safety, work, and a chance at a stable life for immigrants, deterring them from instead looking

to terrorist organizations that claim to provide this stability.

- Immigrants contribute to the U.S. economy.
- The way that detained undocumented people are treated in the United States today is wrong.
- History shows that people of all races, religions, and cultures become valuable members of U.S. society.

### What policies should we pursue?

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- Prioritize family reunification and ensure that families are not separated during the immigration process.

- Admit more refugees by opening our doors to people worldwide who have a legitimate fear of persecution or violence.

- Adjust immigration laws to permit greater immigration from countries, such as China and Mexico, that have been the victims of unfair restrictions in the past.

- Provide immigrants with more opportunities, job training, and English-language instruction to speed their adjustment to U.S. life.

- Ensure that everyone in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, has access to education, basic healthcare, and other essential services.

- Make the process of naturalization more efficient so that undocumented immigrants, including children and youth, may be recognized and rewarded for their contributions to U.S. society.

## From the Record

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*George Washington, in a letter to Reverend Francis Adrian Vanderkemp, May 28, 1788*

“I had always hoped that this land might become a safe and agreeable asylum to the virtuous and persecuted part of mankind, to whatever nation they might belong.”

*Emma Lazarus, “The New Colossus,” a poem at the Statue of Liberty, 1883*

“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

*Lyndon B. Johnson, upon signing the 1965 immigration act, October 3, 1965*

“The land flourished because it was fed from so many sources—because it was nourished by so many cultures and traditions and peoples.”

*Mary Bray Pipher, psychologist and author, in The Middle of Everywhere: The World’s Refugees Come to Our Town, 2002*

“People come here penniless but not cultureless. They bring us gifts. We can synthesize the best of our traditions with the best of theirs. We can teach and learn from each other to produce a better America.”

*Jose Antonio Vargas, an undocumented journalist and activist, in the New York Times, June 22, 2011*

“I decided then that I could never give anyone reason to doubt I was an American. I convinced myself that if I worked enough, if I achieved enough, I would be rewarded with citizenship.... I’ve tried.... On the surface, I’ve created a good life. I’ve lived the American dream. But I am still an undocumented immigrant.... This is my home. Yet even though I think of myself as an American and consider America my country, my country doesn’t think of me as one of its own.”

*Dillon Burroughs, Evangelical Christian U.S. author, January 4, 2016*

“God’s love for others does not stop at the border; neither should ours.”

*Jean Montrevil, an activist, who was deported from the United States to Haiti after living in the country for more than thirty years, in a January 2018 interview*

“I have volunteered, and I work and take care of my kids. I pay taxes every year. I did everything right. Everything they asked me to do, I have done it. So why target me now?”