

Option 3: Admit the Talent We Need

Every country has the right to promote its national interests. The United States should be no different. U.S. immigration policy should be designed to serve the country's economic and social needs, not to solve the world's problems. The United States cannot afford to admit hundreds of thousands of newcomers every year who will be a burden on society. The United States must ensure that its immigration policy strengthens the economy and, by doing so, improves the livelihoods of U.S. citizens.

Facing a globalizing world, a demanding global marketplace, and the relentless pace of technological change, the United States must implement an immigration policy that boosts its international competitiveness while also protecting the domestic economy. To spur U.S. high-tech industries forward, the United States should open its doors to scientists and engineers from abroad. To help U.S. factories, farms, and service industries hold down costs, the United States should allow a limited number of foreigners to work temporarily in low-wage jobs. Simultaneously, it must discourage undocumented immigration by restricting social services and increasing deportations. The United States should also recognize that it cannot be the savior of the world's growing refugee population. It must instead favor those with the education and skills to help our economy. By forging ahead with a realistic, long-term strategy, immigration policy can work for the United States.

Option 3 is based on the following beliefs

- Strengthening the U.S. economy should be the guiding principle underlying U.S. immigration policy.
- Maintaining the U.S. economy's competitive edge is essential to the well-being of its people.
- Immigrants with knowledge or experience

in high-tech fields bring the most value to the U.S. economy.

- Highly educated immigrants are most likely to assimilate easily and will not require support or social services.

What policies should we pursue?

- Increase the number of immigration visas awarded annually for skilled workers and their families, making the advancement of science and technology the top priority in guiding immigration policy.
- Reduce total annual immigration, including refugees, and make adjustments to reflect economic conditions. (During an economic downturn, the number of immigration visas should be decreased, while during an economic expansion, the number should be increased.)
- Allow a limited number of foreigners to work temporarily in the United States in a guest worker

program for agriculture and other industries facing labor shortages.

- Offer scholarships to international graduate students in science, engineering, and other high-tech fields, provided they will work in the United States for at least five years after graduating.
- Increase border security along the U.S.-Mexico border.
- Deny education, healthcare, and other social services to undocumented immigrants.

From the Record

James Madison, in a Congressional debate on naturalization, 1790

“Those who acquire the rights of citizenship, without adding to the strength or wealth of the community are not the people we are in want of.”

Jack Kemp, former vice presidential candidate and senator, October 24, 1996

“We are going to make sure that America is open to legal immigration because that is the wealth and the talent and the entrepreneurial skills for the twenty-first century.”

President George W. Bush, quoted in the Iowa Gazette, January 6, 2000

“We ought to increase legal immigration for our country’s advantage. The high-tech world we are now dominating is dependent on educated folks, but we’re short...of workers. It is to our nation’s advantage to encourage high-powered, smart people to come into our country.”

Economist Alan Greenspan, paraphrased in the Wall Street Journal, August 18, 2008

“The only sustainable way to increase demand for vacant houses is to spur the formation of new households. Admitting more skilled immigrants, who tend to earn enough to buy homes, would accomplish that while paying other dividends to the U.S. economy.”

Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder and chief executive officer, April 10, 2013

“In a knowledge economy, the most important resources are the talented people we educate and attract to our country. A knowledge economy can scale further, create better jobs and provide a higher quality of living for everyone in our nation.... Why do we offer so few H-1B visas for talented specialists that the supply runs out within days of becoming available each year, even though we know each of these jobs will create two or three more American jobs in return? Why don’t we let entrepreneurs move here when they have what it takes to start companies that will create even more jobs?”

Senator Marco Rubio, during a Republican presidential debate, October 28, 2015

“Today we have a legal immigration system for permanent residency that is largely based on whether you have a relative living here.... [But] we have a very different economy. Our legal immigration system from now on has to be merit-based. It has to be based on what skills you have, what you can contribute economically....”

President Donald J. Trump, in a tweet, January 14, 2018

“I, as President, want people coming into our Country who are going to help us become strong and great again, people coming in through a system based on MERIT....”