
The Future of the United States and the Acts of Immigration

Immigration: The Future of America

Many of the billionaires, stars, and greatest innovators in American history have been immigrants. These people have left their country to seek a better and brighter future. From ebay founder Pierre Omidyar born to Iranian parents, to Steve Jobs who was the son of a Syrian immigrant fleeing from political unrest in 1952, many of the life changing technologies we use have been developed by immigrants. Creating barriers for immigrants will only hinder America's future as leader of the world. One of the reasons our country is so successful is because of the melting pot of cultures we have. We need immigrants to join the workforce, bring new ideas, and sustain the economy.

Without the current rate of both legal and undocumented immigration, the PEW research center found that the total U.S. workforce would shrink about 18 million by 2035. Not only would that have an impact on overall economic growth, but it would also hurt certain industries that rely heavily on immigrant labor. In 2014, immigrants accounted for 33% of the workforce in the U.S. agriculture industry and 36% of the textile manufacturing industry. The declining number of U.S.-born working-age adults with U.S.-born parents means that they will become a smaller portion of the working-age population.

On January 27, 2017, an executive order was issued banning entry from seven majority Muslim countries (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia) for national security reasons. None of the deadly attackers since 9/11 emigrated or came from a family that emigrated from one of these countries listed. Fifteen of the nineteen attackers came from Saudi Arabia. The rest came from Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. For some reason, these countries were not on the banned list. An Iranian journalist was exiled because of his activity abroad, and has not seen any of his family members in over seven years. The only family member that did not live in Iran was his son, who goes to university in the UK. Because of this travel ban, his son cannot come see him, and he cannot see his son. This man was neither a terrorist or murderer, but merely a victim of this ban. According to an analysis of terrorism immigration risks by the Cato Institute, no person accepted to the United States as a refugee has been implicated in a major fatal terrorist attack since the Refugee Act of 1980 was created. In fact, most of the people involved in major terror attacks have been US-born citizens or permanent legal residents originally from countries not included in the ban.

Contrary to popular belief, immigrants are not a drain on government finances. A study by NAS found that the typical immigrant and his or her offspring will pay about \$80,000 more in taxes during their lifetimes than they collect in government services. Drastically reducing the number of foreigners who enter the United States each year would only weaken our financial stability, while mildly enhancing our security. The tourist industry, would lose millions of foreign visitors, and American universities would lose hundreds of thousands of students if we were to shut the doors on these people.

DACA is a policy that protects nearly 800,000 young people, often called "Dreamers," from deportation and allows them to work legally. These are merely young people with a burning

desire to make a difference in our country. Recipients have to undergo a background check and certify that they had not been convicted of any serious crimes. The Trump administration announced that they would be ending this program. This program has allowed these recipients to get a higher education, and work higher-paying jobs. This translates into more tax revenue, which benefits the economy.

The CATO Institute estimated that it would cost the government \$60 billion in the next decade from reduced tax revenues. Research by the Center for American Progress found that it would result in a loss of more than \$460 billion from the national gross domestic product over a decade. This essentially revokes the opportunity for kids who could otherwise become college graduates and do productive jobs. We can say "Well, they will all just leave the country", but the reality is some won't. These people are very hard to track down, and deporting 800,000 people is going to take a lot of time and resources.

Computer systems need to be upgraded and new technologies should be developed to block the real bad guys with harmful intentions, while preventing delays at the border. More agents need to be posted at ports of entry to thoroughly screen for potential high-risk travelers. Cooperating with our neighbors Canada and Mexico will help ensure that terrorists cannot come across our long land borders. In fact, terrorists seem to prefer the northern border. In December 1999, a terrorist was caught on the northern border with explosives that were going to be used to blow up the Los Angeles International Airport during the millennium celebrations. It would be a national shame if, in the name of security, we closed the door to immigrants who come here to work, save, and build a better life for themselves and their families. Immigrants come here to live the American dream; terrorists come to destroy it.

Some may ask what happens when an immigrant goes to the U.S. embassy and says, "I would like to work in America legally". They get paperwork to fill out and are told to go home to wait. A Forbes investigation found that on average, immigrants have to wait 24 years to get the necessary documentation. If we make legal immigration easier but secure, relax the rules, and issue work permits, illegal immigration would drop. Only one of 50,000 people receive a green card in the lottery each year (Roleff 79). My dad was one of those lucky people. Growing up hearing stories about the difficult time he had immigrating, despite his profession as a medical doctor, has given me a fresh perspective on this issue.

Immigrants co-founded most of Silicon Valley's start-ups. The Patent Office has reported that immigrants invent things at approximately twice the rate of native-born Americans. These are people with the ambition, guts, and determination to leave their home to pursue an American dream. We need to let more of them in. And not just PhD's. Fears about newcomers are not totally unfounded. The Irish, Italians, and other previously unpopular groups are now leaders in America. Irish immigrants had such a bad reputation that in job advertisements businesses posted job notices: "No Irish need apply." Imagine your life without Google searches, cheap Ikea furniture, YouTube, bicycles, blenders, and ATM's. All of these have ties to immigrants. Basketball was created by Canadian-American James Naismith. There are many ways you can help support immigrants. Organizations such as Families for Freedom and Amnesty for America provide help for immigrants in need of aid.