

7 Seven Principles of True Comprehensive Immigration Reform

It is critical to distinguish the reform that the public seeks from the deceptive package of measures that the immigration lobby is peddling. We feel it time the nation's largest immigration reform organization speak out about "true comprehensive immigration reform."

The evidence that illegal immigration and mass immigration are harming our country is overwhelming and irrefutable. Congestion, environment, crime, health care, education — the costs are too high for the American family to continue to bear.

Since immigration burst on the scene as a major national issue some 20 years ago, the term "reform" has been associated with those who believe that large-scale illegal immigration is a serious problem and overall levels of immigration need to be reduced. We've been educating the public for the last 25 years on the need for true and comprehensive reform, so when it comes to defining "reform", we've written the book on it. Opponents of these reforms claimed that a problem did not exist and therefore reform was unnecessary.

Recently the political winds have shifted. As opponents of reform learned that the majority of the public were "pro-reform", they changed their tune and have tried to wrap their defense of unchecked illegal immigration and record levels of legal immigration as being "reform measures" when, in fact, they are measures that will "deform" our already broken system.

True comprehensive immigration reform, as FAIR — the nation's largest immigration reform organization — and the overwhelming majority of Americans believe it to be, must adhere to this set of immutable principles:

First Principle: Cut the Numbers

Any level of illegal immigration is unacceptable, and current legal immigrant admissions of about one million persons each year are entirely too many.

Any measure that increases either illegal or legal immigration violates this principle. Immigration is a discretionary public policy. Its primary purpose, since our founding, is to advance the interests and security of the nation.

Second Principle: No Amnesty or Mass Guest-Worker Program

The 1986 amnesty was a failure; rather than reducing illegal immigration, it led to an increase. Any new amnesty measure will further weaken respect for our immigration law. Therefore, all amnesty measures must be defeated.

Laws against illegal immigration must be enforced, if they are going to act as a deterrent. Redefining illegal aliens as "guest-workers" or anything else is just that: a redefinition that attempts to hide the fact it is an amnesty, not reform.

Third Principle: Protect Wages and Standards of Living

Immigration policy should not be permitted to undermine opportunities for America's poor and vulnerable citizens to improve their working conditions and wages. The need for guest workers must be determined by objective indicators that a shortage of workers exists, i.e., extreme wage inflation in a particular sector of the labor market.

The current system accepts self-serving attestations of employers who seek lower labor costs as protections of American workers. True reform requires an objective test of labor shortage demonstrated by rising wages to attract more American workers.

Fourth Principle: Major Upgrade in Interior Enforcement, Led by Strong Employers Penalties

Employers who knowingly employ unauthorized workers are the magnet that attracts illegal entry into the U.S. These employers are complicit in the illegal alien cartel activity of smuggling, trafficking, harboring, and employing and must be punished. We must reform the current system by enforcing employer sanctions and fully punishing employers who break the laws of this country. These punishments will be fines, jailing for repeat offenders, and loss of corporate charters. Employers who knowingly or unknowingly employ illegal workers must be weaned off of their growing use of such workers by assuring a level playing field for all employers and demonstrating effective enforcement actions against employers who continue to exploit illegal workers. No U.S. industry has jobs in which there are no American workers. If illegal workers are decreased over time, wages offered will rise to attract back more American workers. Real shortages, as noted above, can be met with short-term temporary foreign workers.

The Basic Pilot Employment Verification program must be made mandatory and at no extra cost to employers.

Effective immigration enforcement on the border and the interior of the country requires that staffing, equipment, detention facilities, and removal capabilities be adequate to fully meet current needs. The measures needed to identify and remove illegal aliens will also remove the ability of potential terrorists to operate freely in our country as they plot the next catastrophic attack on our people.

Fifth Principle: Stop Special Interest Asylum Abuse

Reforming the refugee and asylum system means returning to the original purpose and definition of the program: “any person who... is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion....”

America must honor its responsibilities to protect people who are fleeing true political persecution as defined by U.S. and international law. Efforts to expand those definitions to include all forms of “social persecution” invite massive fraud and endanger the security of this nation. Similarly, treating aliens illegally residing in the country the same as foreigners on legal visitor visas for purposes of the Temporary Protected Status designation is illogical and a form of amnesty that must be ended.

Sixth Principle: Immigration Time Out

We must restore moderation to legal immigration. Beginning with the recommendations of the Jordan Commission in 1995, we need to restrict immigration to the minimum consistent with stabilizing the U.S. population.

Overall immigration must be reduced to balance out-migration, i.e., about 300,000 per year while still permitting nuclear family reunification and a narrowly focused refugee resettlement program. A moratorium on all other immigration should be immediately adopted pending true comprehensive immigration reform. We should abolish the extended relation preferences.

Seventh Principle: Equal Under the Law

There should be no favoritism toward or discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, or nationality.

All admission of immigrants should come within a single, stable ceiling which is periodically reviewed on the basis of a reasoned, explicit goal of achieving population stability. We should abolish special preferences such as the Cuban Adjustment Act.

Help Protect “Immigration Reform”
www.fairus.org