

Trump's Immigration Outline Actually Puts the Horse before the Cart:

It Affirms the Public Interest and Backs it Up with Deterrence and Enforcement

Whatever one might think of Donald Trump, his outline for immigration reform, "Immigration Reform that Will Make America Great Again," is a legitimate plan worthy of serious consideration.

After two recent failed legislative efforts at immigration reform, in which the interests of the American people were glaringly absent, Trump's plan acknowledges that, "Real immigration reform puts the needs of working people first - not wealthy globetrotting donors." As one of the three core principles of immigration reform, the plan states clearly that, "Any immigration plan must improve jobs, wages and security for all Americans."

To safeguard the vital interests of the American people, the plan offers a commonsense combination of deterrence and enforcement.

The three-legged stool of immigration reform - putting the interests of the American people first, removing incentives for people to violate our laws, and enforcing laws against people who do violate them - enjoys broad public support.

The plan protects the interests of the American people:

- Requires employers to hire Americans first.
- Increases the prevailing wage of H-1B guest workers, eliminating the incentives to bypass American workers.
- Encourages the employment of younger and disadvantaged American workers by eliminating the J-1 visa program.
- Restores moderation to our legal immigration system and encourages the hiring of American workers by reducing the number of green cards issued.

The plan would deter illegal aliens from coming here and encourage many who are here to return home:

- Makes E-Verify mandatory for all employers, thereby limiting jobs available to illegal aliens.
- Deters employers from hiring illegal aliens by increasing ICE's manpower and ability to identify and punish businesses that deny Americans job opportunities.
- Defunds sanctuary jurisdictions, imposing real penalties on state and local governments that protect illegal aliens.
- Ends birthright citizenship, ending a flawed interpretation of the 14th Amendment that encourages and rewards illegal immigration.

The plan backs up deterrence with real enforcement:

- It establishes zero tolerance for criminal aliens with special focus on gang members, and imposes real consequences for foreign governments that refuse to accept the return of their citizens.
- Detention for those apprehended entering the U.S. illegally until they are returned home, or establish a valid claim for admission.
- Establishes meaningful penalties for visa overstays.
- Calls for completion of the border security fence.

Irrespective of Donald Trump's success or failure as a presidential candidate, the plan fundamentally changes the discussion on immigration reform. It moves us beyond the failed debate of the past decade that has focused on what we need to do for the people who have broken our laws; how we can satisfy the demands of businesses that want to hire cheaper foreign labor; and empty platitudes about securing the borders.

Every candidate for president and every member of Congress must now explain to the American people why these basic principles should not serve as the basis for true immigration reform.