



Ten Ways to Deal with Illegal Immigration

The issue of illegal immigration is a multi-faceted problem that has become a focal point in the United States in the last year. Emotions run high on both sides of this debate, but most agree that this is a problem that should be addressed. In finding a solution, Americans must be humane and compassionate. Most of these illegal immigrants are good people who have risked everything to come to America in hopes of finding a better way of life for their families. But finding a solution that is compassionate does not necessitate that we abandon the rule of law. Our solution must be fair, reasonable, and consistent with our laws. Whilst many proposals have been put forth, few have gained traction.

There are ten ways to move forward with this issue. Most initiatives put forth focus on making it more difficult for illegal immigrants to enter America. What remains is dealing with the estimated twelve million illegals who are already here. Not only would it be logistically impossible to find and deport all the illegals currently in the U.S., such a movement would set a dangerously destabilizing moral precedent. Suspicious Americans could begin witch hunts to turn in people suspected of being illegal based solely on ethnicity. Rather, additional measures should focus on disincentives to being illegal and outside the system, thus encouraging illegal aliens to begin the process of either obtaining guest worker status or citizenship.

First, securing the border is an important psychological step in the public eye. A border fence is impractical and will not stop illegal immigrants from Mexico entering the country. A technologically sophisticated virtual border fence using cameras, radar, and unmanned aerial drones is an efficient and practical way of monitoring the U.S.-Mexico border. This alone, however, is not enough and should be considered a tool in assisting border patrols in guarding the border. An increase in the physical presence of border patrols including volunteer minutemen and National Guard Reservists will help make illegal border crossing much more difficult.

Second, we cannot allow endless numbers of immigrants (from any country) to enter the United States each year. Presuming we can control access to the U.S. through border security policies, we must institute a quota on the number of immigrants allowed to enter our country each year based on country of origin, number of applicants

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from that country, the U.S.'s relation with that country, etc. If we allow uncontrolled immigration to our country, our system and our resources will ultimately be overwhelmed.

Third, there must be a more stringent visa system that allows identification of potential threats and tracking of those allowed to enter. Whilst the visa application system is already complex, we must include background checks and cross references with the applicant's country of origin, law enforcement agencies such as the FBI, and intelligence agencies such as CIA to determine if the applicant is a potential threat. This would be facilitated through the use of biometrics submitted upon application and checked upon arrival in the United States. Technological advances have made biometrics more efficient thus facilitating the tracking of visa holders here in America.

Fourth, it is clear that Americans oppose amnesty for illegal aliens already in America—as well they should. Nor should the illegals here be given priority status on the path to citizenship. Just as getting here should be difficult, the path to citizenship should be equally difficult. An expansion of the guest worker programme would provide a means for America to capitalize on the illegal aliens working here in America without giving the benefits of citizenship. Much resentment stems from illegal workers here taking jobs but not paying their share of taxes. American animosity may be lessened if there were a perception that these illegals were paying their fair share of the financial burden. Thus, a guest worker programme where illegals pay high initial fines for entering illegally and not paying taxes and ongoing higher taxes would generate funds to defray the public sector costs such as education, medical treatment, etc. or could be used to help the soon-to-be insolvent Social Security Trust.

Fifth, we should offer expedited citizenship to those who wish to immigrate here in exchange for five years of honourable military service. Upon honourable discharge, they are granted citizenship but receive no benefits from the military unless they continue service for an additional full tour of duty. This service to our country shows the commitment to America that many doubt immigrants have currently. Or, in lieu of military service, immigrants can participate in a national ethanol refinery building initiative. If ethanol is truly the fuel of the future as many suggest, this is an effective means to build energy independence by transitioning from



oil to ethanol with the capacity to ensure ample supply to satisfy Americans' insatiable thirst for energy.

Sixth, all immigrants, either illegal or on guest worker status, who commit felonies should immediately be deported and barred from re-entry. If their country of origin will not take them and honour the convictions set forth by our courts, the criminal should be deported to a facility such as Guantanamo Bay. Violent criminals would automatically be deported to Guantanamo or a similar penal colony. In the event the country of origin will not honor a conviction from our courts, the cost of incarcerating the prisoner here should be billed to the illegal's home government. In addition, we could begin to capitalize on this source of "free" labor. These criminals could be put to hard work on public works projects for the benefit of our citizens. But under no circumstances should we be weak on punishing those illegals who commit crimes here against Americans. Nor should American taxpayers bear the financial burden of sustaining criminals in our prisons without some benefit.

Seventh, illegal immigrants and their families should be restricted from public services that are funded by the taxpayers. Whilst their citizenship is pending or they are on guest worker status, they should be required to pay for public education for their children, for example. In addition, if they have children while in this country, the children are not automatically citizens of the United States. The children cannot be citizens until their parents legally become citizens. Most Americans rightly object to granting citizenship to children born in America of illegal parents simply because they were born on American soil. This would tend to address concerns of Americans that illegal aliens receive free public services at the expense of taxpayers.

Eighth, the government must levy substantial fines on employers who utilize illegal immigrant labour. Business shares the burden of this problem. Businesses who utilize illegal alien labour and pay for their services in cash encourage more immigrants to sneak across our borders. Strict fines punish businesses and discourage the use of illegal alien labourers. If there are no jobs for illegals, there is an incentive to legally apply for guest worker status.

Ninth, despite vociferous protests from the ACLU and similar organizations, America needs to move towards a national identification card that incorporates biometric technologies.



National ID cards, when integrated into an identification database, provide an effective way of determining the legal status of a job applicant. In addition, a national ID card system would help improve border control and identification of illegals whose guest worker status had expired.

Finally, most Americans resent that many illegal workers in the U.S. are paid in cash and, thus, avoid paying taxes on their earnings. Adopting a national sales tax in lieu of income taxes would help overcome tax avoidance by illegals and citizens alike. A consumption tax, then, levels the financial playing field in that those who spend the most pay the most. As all illegals must purchase goods to survive, none would be able to avoid their tax liability.

To be sure, there may be other options for dealing with the immigration problem—though these may be more controversial such as annexing Mexico, repealing NAFTA, or placing sanctions against Mexico until that government helps address border security. What we know is that there is no one solution. The solution to this problem must address many aspects of the complex challenges posed by illegal immigration. Whatever solutions arise, we must remain fair and balanced. America has a rich history of immigration by peoples searching for a better way of life. We have always been a lighthouse for lost immigrants seeking the shores of freedom, and we have always welcomed those who follow the appropriate channels to become citizens. But immigration of recent years has overwhelmed our system and the American public. America welcomes immigrants but, just as those in the past, new immigrants must follow the rules to get here.