

Statement in Support of Immigrants and U.S. immigration

Immigrants are hard-working. Immigrants are hard-working men and women who migrate with their children to build safe and economically secure lives. Many flee from their home countries because of the security and economic conditions they experience without relief from their governments. U.S. law (and international treaties the U.S. has signed) allow asylum-seekers to live and work here legally as they wait for their final asylum determination which is made by a federal judge in a U.S. immigration court.

Immigrants (and unauthorized immigrants) commit fewer crimes than native-born citizens. The National Institute of Justice reports that unauthorized residents commit less crimes than the general immigrant population – and immigrants commit less crimes than native-born citizens. A study that analyzed violent crimes in Texas between 2012 and 2018 showed that the rate of violent felony crimes for unauthorized residents was about half of that of native-born citizens. The government's own statistics (Department of Homeland Security) and reported by the CATO Institute show that 88% of the fentanyl seizures take place at the Ports of Entry and are not associated with unauthorized migrants in any way. U.S. Customs and Border Protection reports that only 1.1% of all apprehensions at the southern border (17,000 out of 1.1 million) have a prior, criminal conviction.

Immigrants create businesses which create jobs for native-born Americans. A report by the National Bureau of Economic Research states that immigrants (who represent 14-15% of the US population) create over 20% of the new businesses. These businesses hire native-born Americans. The American Immigration Council reports that 46% of all Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants or their children.

Unauthorized Immigrants contribute to our Social Services. Unauthorized workers make up 4.5% of the U.S. workforce and include many “essential worker” sectors of our economy including agriculture, health care, elder care, construction, landscaping. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy reports that unauthorized workers annually contribute \$59 Billion in federal taxes and \$37 Billion in state and local taxes. In addition, these unauthorized workers make annual contributions to both Social Security (\$25.7 Billion) and Medicare (\$6 Billion) while being ineligible to receive either of these benefits.

More immigrants are needed to maintain our economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that there are currently over 7 million open jobs in the U.S. The U.S. birth rate (1.7 births per female) is below the replacement rate (2.1 births per female) which means our economy will shrink without the infusion of additional workers. The U.S. historically issued about 1 million family, work and humanitarian visas per year that provide pathways to citizenship. Most advanced economies (Europe, Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, etc) are making proactive plans to attract and retain foreign workers in all sectors of their economy to mitigate against shrinking population trends.