

IMMIGRATION

What is your vision for how the US government should handle issues around immigration, in terms of both policy and process?

Beth Ellen Adubato

Like most political issues we are currently facing as a country, the topic of immigration now has to be dealt with in a twofold manner. Instead of progressing, we have egregiously regressed. Before we can begin serious reform, we must repair the incalculable damage wrought by this administration's inhumane and illegal treatment of undocumented individuals. Next, we must end the scapegoating of immigrants, who are indeed not committing the vast majority of crime and are certainly not taking "our" houses, jobs, and medical care. We need to make this message crystal clear. These societal changes must be put in place before we can reform the immigration system and expand pathways for those who seek legal status. True criminal justice reform keeps people safer and costs less money. The same can be said for the immigration detention system which costs billions and frequently violates due process. Moving forward, we must provide a way for those who are and have been contributing to our economies and to our neighborhoods, to apply for legal status and citizenship.

Brian Varela

The United States is a country of immigrants, enriched by generations who have fueled our economy and culture; 46% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. But accelerating migration has challenged communities and overwhelmed our immigration courts, where cases can take years, sometimes close to a decade, to resolve. I support the bipartisan Lankford-Murphy border bill, which would have hired 4,300 asylum officers to decide cases in weeks instead of years, added Border Patrol agents, and given the president emergency authority to close the border during surges. The Border Patrol union endorsed it. I also support a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS holders, and essential workers who have built lives here, expanded legal immigration pathways to reduce pressure on the asylum system, and restoring the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program that Trump dismantled. Trump killed the bipartisan bill because he wanted a campaign issue, not a solution.

Trump has repeated and increased the cruelty of his first term, upending communities with the "largest deportation program in American history." He invoked the Alien Enemies Act—an 1798 law last used for WWII internment, to deport people without court review, deployed military forces for immigration enforcement, and even mistakenly deported mothers and fathers due to "administrative error." His approach is also making America less safe: Internal data show that roughly a quarter of FBI agents and large shares of other federal agents have been pulled off work like drug trafficking and child-exploitation cases to help with immigration

enforcement. As a former ICE chief of staff put it: "It's a good time to be an American-born criminal—the fentanyl traffickers, the sex traffickers, they don't quit." I reject funding for inhumane mass deportation or using the military against immigrants. I support comprehensive reform that secures the border through adequate staffing and technology, processes asylum claims quickly and fairly, creates orderly legal pathways, and keeps federal law enforcement focused on the cartels and predators actually threatening our communities.

Megan O'Rourke

The U.S. is in desperate need of comprehensive immigration reform. This includes a transparent visa quota system, more immigration judges, clear timelines for reviewing immigration applications, paths to citizenship for immigrants already in the country without criminal records, and dismantling the ICE detention centers.

Michael Roth

America is a nation of immigrants. My own family sought asylum in the United States in the 1950s after surviving the Holocaust. Like so many others, my family story shows that the difference between an asylum seeker and a person who leads the country's economy out of crisis is just a generation. Trump's immigration policies fly in the face of American values. They are not just inhumane and often unconstitutional, they also crush our economy. Trump's immigration policy will reduce US GDP by more than \$200 billion per year, harm American competitiveness in critical national security sectors like semiconductor and AI development and medicine, and substantially increase the cost of key sectors like housing and construction, farming, and caregiving.

We need comprehensive reform that creates a secure, orderly immigration system that reflects our values and our needs and centers human dignity. We need border security, a clear asylum process, and expanded legal pathways so we can uphold the law while welcoming those who strengthen our country. In Congress, I will fight to:

- Expand legal pathways that match our economy's needs, including visas for service workers in healthcare, construction, agriculture, and caregiving, and advanced technology like AI, semiconductors, medicine, and clean energy so we grow all parts of our economy instead of fueling chaos, labor shortages, and price increases
- Create an earned pathway for legal status for long-term, law-abiding immigrants who hold jobs, pay taxes, and have full participation in civic life
- Secure the border and restore order without cruelty by investing in modern border infrastructure, faster processing, and smart enforcement so the system is lawful and humane
- Protect human dignity and due process, rejecting mass deportation, family separation, and indefinite detention in favor of targeted enforcement focused on serious criminals and traffickers
- Hold employers accountable and stop exploitation, ensuring that immigration reform raises wages for everyone, protects workers, and prevents bad actors from undercutting American labor

- Hold ICE accountable for any illegal actions, right-size funding for immigration enforcement, and require all ICE officers to wear uniforms and clear identification
- Focus immigration enforcement on keeping violent criminals off our streets, not bullying legal immigrants who came for a better life
- Fix the asylum process by making it clear and accessible, hiring more judges to clear the backlog and ensure all legitimate claims are heard urgently as it is their legal and human right
- Defend DACA while working for protections and establishing clear pathways to citizenship for recipients

Rebecca Bennett

We can have a secure border without terrorizing communities and arresting American citizens. We need a pathway to citizenship, especially for Dreamers and those who have served this country, but instead this administration is actively deporting those who risked their lives for the United States.

Tina Shah

We can take border security seriously and have a fair immigration process while also treating those who come to our country with dignity and humanity.

I'm the daughter of immigrants, and I'm proud of my family's story of how we came to be in this country. I know so many others are too. It's what truly makes New Jersey and our United State great – NOT the cruelty and hate we are seeing at the hands of this administration and of ICE.

We need an immigration system that keeps us safe while also being fair and humane and respects the rule of law.