

Stages of policy making: immigration policy



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Five Stages of Policy-Making Process

An on-going policy issue that is at the forefront of diverse opinions in Congress is the Immigration Policy issue. Immigration influx began during the Second World War, which led to the need of having policies to regulate the influx. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act set the guiding principles of immigration in the United States. The five stages of the Immigration Policymaking are explained below (Migration Information Source, 2013).

1. Identify Policy Objective

According to McCabe (2010), the major issue that has led to the need for immigration policies is the illegal immigration and large influx of immigrants from Mexico in search for better wages. Illegal immigrants enter US using fraudulent documents, overstaying visa durations and illegally crossing land borders. Illegal immigration continues to date due to the economic upward growth in the agricultural and construction sector that demands for semi-skilled labour.

Secondly, the issue of terrorism is largely affected by immigration. The 9/11 attack led to the formation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2003. They have the mandate of overseeing entry of people and goods at entry points, enforcing the customs and immigration requirements in the USA. Additionally, the DHS adjudicates the immigration benefits applications like visa, asylum and naturalization (Migration Information Source, 2013).

America is also the leading countries of refugees, providing the protection for political and religious victims. They provide refugee resettlement and asylum which has been a conflicting issue in the Immigration Bill (McCabe, 2010).

2. Policy Formation

Russell (2012) indicates that the most convenient way of immigrating is employment-based and family-based channels. Family-based immigration has no numerical restrictions, but there must be sponsoring of a relative for approval. Employment-based immigrations are aimed to uphold the nation's economic demands. It is limited to 140, 000 visas annually. Employment-based green cards are available for workers, mainly sponsored by their employers.

Secondly, many immigrants are legalised through the method of the diversity visa lottery. The numbers of people who are naturalized are restricted by per country limits and numerical ceilings. According to the Immigration Bill, refugees are granted all humanitarian help in a foreign country and are resettled in the US. The Congress and the president set the refugee admission ceiling yearly.

Noncitizens residing in the US for studies, work or tourism, are eligible for the non-immigrant status. This status has restrictive terms and conditions related to duration of stay. The majority of non-immigrants are tourists and students. The increase in student visas has been led by a rise in students from China (Russell, 2012).

3. Adopting The Best Solution

Notably, the Obama administration enacted the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program in 2012 (Russell, 2012). The program protected young illegal immigrants from being deported and forced to work. However, this program applied only to those who came to USA as children, received education, and pose no threat to security. Policies such as the Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and No Child Left Behind Act were enacted to safeguard the interests of the immigrants and their smoother integration (Russell, 2012).

The Congress is continuing in ensuring the rights of immigrants are upheld because of the immense effect the immigrants have on elections. The Latino voting population was 12 million, which consisted of ten Percent of the total voting population. The Democrats and Republicans are pushing for immigration reforms so as to win the allegiance of minority groups (Migration Information Source, 2013).

4. Implementing

Immigration, integration is one aspect of immigration policies that is highly underfunded and only target small groups. Hospitals, churches, schools and other groups have taken center stage to initiate the integration of immigrants through English classes, health clinics and training of the immigrants.

The government is ensuring illegal immigration reduces through enforcing stricter measures in visa screening, border patrol, employment enforcement. Also, there are removal and deportation of criminals who have violated immigration regulations. Additionally, these measures are focused mainly on

the US-Mexican Border. The government has invested billions in infrastructure, technology and personnel for the Border Patrol (Russell, 2012).

5. Evaluating Policy Directives

The refugee admission number is flexible and is subject to review annually by the president and the Congress. The Federal government is sensitive to changing political and religious situations in other countries and seek to enhance democracy to all people. Programs such as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program are an indication of the measures taken by the Federal government in evaluating the rights and restrictions of immigrants (Migration Information Source, 2013).

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