

Immigration reform essay examples

[Sociology](#), [Immigration](#)



Abstract

Immigration reform refers to the current political debate in the United States involving the ongoing political debates regarding to changes in the current immigration policy of the nation. Obviously, immigration reform is a major issue in America today. As of 2013, it is estimated that there are approximately 11 to 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States and this has become a major political and social concern because continued flow of illegal immigrants is said to have negative implications (Gaynor, 2013). In order to address this issue, this paper will involve a review of recent newspaper article covering the issue with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the topic. In doing so, the paper will review some of the recent events as well as try to illuminate some major issues of contention along the way.

Introduction

With the ever-increasing number of undocumented immigrants, Americans hold different opinions regarding the issue of undocumented immigration. Proponents maintain that illegal immigration is a boost to the U. S. economy through expansion of low-cost labor pool, additional tax revenue, and increased money in circulation. They assert that immigrants add good values, are motivated consistent with the American dream, can take occupations that Americans cannot welcome, and that opposition to immigrations has its roots in racism. On the contrary, opponents of illegal immigration contend that aliens who contravene the U. S. laws by entering into the U. S. without acquiring the proper documents or defaults the time

stipulated in their visas should face deportation and not rewarded with a U. S. citizenship and access to social services, as this would burden the taxpayer (Elliott, 2013). They argue that they maintain that illegal immigrants are criminals, and economic and social burdens to tax-paying, law-abiding citizens.

In the recent weeks, the Republicans have been pondering over the possibility of an immigration reform bill that would give citizenship to the 11 million undocumented immigrants in to the U. S. Illegal immigration has emerged as an issue of major concern because illegal immigrants continue to flock United States. A bipartisan group of Democrats and Republican senators have drafted a bill that they term as “ tough but fair” steps that they hope the Congress could pass, allowing 11 illegal immigrants a chance to eventually become American citizens (Gaynor, 2013). Many illegal immigrants are happy with the proposed bill terming it as the “ the best moment for immigration reforms in years” (Gaynor, 2013). Illegal immigration has become a major social and political issue because of the continued flow of illegal immigrants into American soil. Little has been done to arrest the problem as American border have become more porous in the recent years. To that end, I am in support to the current immigration reform bill introduced this year as the best means of handling the issue. However, as the case with any proposal, it is not perfect and certainly has its flaws. The proposal is a good one, but it needs few changes and clarifications. Starting with the part of the proposal addressing border security, which is still not clear. Currently, the eight Senators working on the bill maintain that illegal immigrants should not get a pathway to citizenship until the U. S.

government took some measures regarding border security. However, the White House has expressed fears because such a decision would cause of delays to eager to become citizens (Shear & Landler, 2013). The proposal says that before immigrants can a pathway to U. S. citizenship, the U. S. must first complete constructing 370 miles of fencing and 200 miles of vehicle barriers (Spagat, Llorca, Sherman, & Skoloff, 2013). This sounds like a great idea, only that there would be no one guarding the border to stop illegal immigrants from entering America as they have always done. q Another challenge to this proposal is that there is simple means of measuring border security. However, with the debate over immigration intensifies, many will try. For example, in 1993, border agents arrested 530, 000 illegal immigrants in San Diego while in 2012, they only arrested 30, 000 (Spagat, Llorca, Sherman, & Skoloff, 2013). U. S. Senator, Marco Rubio who is part of a team working on reform plan said that the U. S. need a permanent solution to border problems, which involves analysis on of the past broken promises to enforce laws that secure American borders (Spagat, Llorca, Sherman, & Skoloff, 2013).

Another proposal in the immigration reform bill is to offer probationary legal status to immigrants who have registered with the U. S. government, pay a fine, or any tax arrears (Gaynor, 2013). In order to apply for permanent residency, immigrants must learn English, continue paying taxes, and show history of working in the U. S. Nevertheless, the proposal, which is still underway also seeks to ensure that foreigners temporarily staying in the U. S. to return home when their visas expire (Gaynor, 2013). However, as Gaynor puts it, activists are still cautious about the new developments

because the details of the bill are not clear. While commenting on Fox News, conservative pundit Charles Krauthammer maintained that, the bipartisan immigration reform plan would not allow undocumented immigrants to be eligible to apply for green card (Fabian, 2013). According to a recent report published by Calorlines, the current immigration reforms could exclude many undocumented immigrants, based on past Congressional reform blueprints (Garza, 2013). The report predicts that more than half of undocumented immigrants might not be able to afford the penalty, and 40, 000 lesbians and gay couples could also fail the eligibility test under the Defense of Marriage Act. Additionally, if President Obama administration agrees to deport as many immigrants as it happened in 2012, 400, 000 immigrants may face deportation before even applying for a green card (Calabresi, 2013).

Some also maintain that Obama plans to overhaul the specifics of immigration legislation (Shear & Landler, 2013). Republicans believe that the president is pushing for quick action and a range of changes that extends beyond what they believe would be acceptable if they are to support immigration reform legislation that allows path to citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants. The president's political advisers maintain that the Republicans are eager to embrace broader immigration amendments as a means of improving their electoral appeal among Hispanic voters. Even though some of Obama's aides maintain that the president is open to some negotiations over the hurdles in the immigration amendments he presented in Las Vegas, senior administration official maintains that it will not be hard to push through Obama's immigration priorities. These officials believe so because Republicans would not readily reject the bill championed by a

president who is popular among Hispanic population whom they covet. Several issues remained unattended as the process of immigration reforms is concerned. Some of the outstanding issues include a deal on guest-worker program reached by the AFL-CIO and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce as the Congress took recess. In addition, policy makers had not arrived at a conclusion in regard to an agreement with agricultural workers, who would receive qualify as citizenship through a different route compared to other illegal immigrants in the country (Kaplan, 2013). This will leave people who do not fall in these categories to pursue a range of options to achieve the legal status as stipulated under the various pathways offered by the current immigration system. This may serve to satisfy a Republican imperative that large majority of undocumented immigrants have no special means of attaining citizenship. A 27-year old illegal immigrant agricultural worker from Mexico, Juana Garcia expressed confidence in the immigration reforms that could remove the fear of deportation (Gaynor, 2013). However, she expressed her discontent with the conditions set in the new bill that would require all immigrants to learn English. She maintains that it would be easy to pay fines and tax overdue, but it would be hard for many immigrants to time or childcare to attend English classes. The way forward to the immigration reform would require balance and informed decision on what will go with both parties.

Another key issue appearing in the immigration reform revolves around the young immigrants. Last summer, President Obama gave temporary reprieve from deportation to qualifying children who came into the U. S. under the care of their parents (Garza, 2013). With the immigration reform, this group

would be exempted from t undergo the same specifications required for one to qualify for the U. S. citizenship. However, the reform outline does not clearly present how this group would be treated. The proposed bill is also expected to include mechanism of keeping and attracting workers in the field of technology, science, mathematics, and engineering. This would target students pursuing their education in the U. S. where they earn their advanced degrees and are high-tech workers in America. Big corporations in the U. S. have been lobbying for many years for the federal government to consider giving such provisions.

The stakeholders in the reform process may take several initiatives including granting amnesty to illegal immigrants. Throughout America’s history, immigration developments have granted many different opportunities to millions of immigrants into the U. S. Beginning in 1790 with the Neutralization Act, which allowed any alien who is a free white person to become American citizen, immigration has existed even before that time. Many reviews and revisions have been made throughout history targeting this great controversy by passing acts, including quota systems restricting immigration. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, an act that restricted immigrants from entering the U. S. However, the first amnesty ever passed by the House led to the passage of Immigration and Immigration Control Act that allowed millions of undocumented immigrants to receive green cards, which they could use some years later to receive the U. S. citizenship. This marked the beginning of amnesty and many more could come in the future with the current immigration reforms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is no consensus in the U. S. to grant permanent residence to illegal immigrants. An alternative to the Congress is to register those working in the U. S. illegally and issue them with temporary work permits. This could prove daunting but it can be made easier by collaborating with employers.

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