

An Alternative Jobs Solution to the Immigration Problem

Arizona Employers for Immigration Reform

www.azeir.org

Assumptions

1. The existing process is inadequate. It is extremely slow (exceeding 18 years) and causes a significant bottleneck and backlog that contributes greatly to the need some feel to enter the country illegally.
2. Immigration of families and family members is already a key part of U.S. law, takes too long and needs to be reformed.
3. The primary reason people enter the U.S. is to find employment, not become citizens.
4. Clearance of foreigners into the United States seeking asylum can take 72 hours. The underlying processes used to perform background checks on these persons could be used to streamline background checks on people coming into the United States to work.
5. Current security-first proposals do little to stem the tide of people crossing wherever possible along the border because they fail to address labor needs.

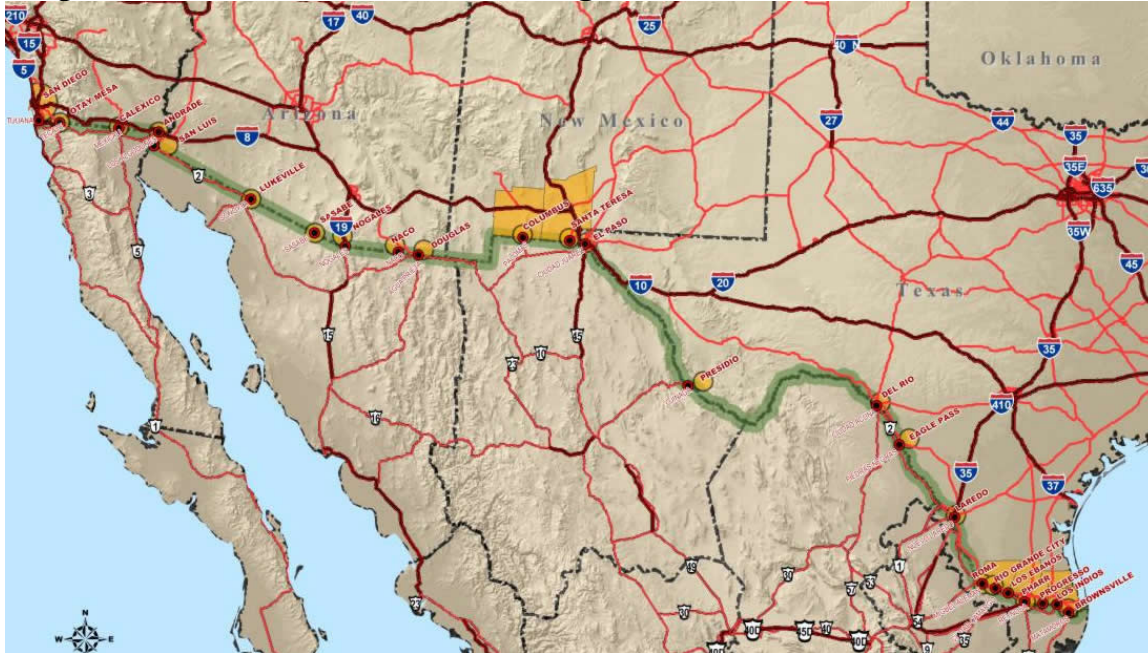
Overview:

1. Create immigration centers on U.S. territory on the border whose purpose is to process foreign citizens looking for work in the U.S.
 - a. Much like Ellis Island, these centers would assign legal social security numbers, issue photo identification cards with “smart chips” that include data such as finger prints, eye scans, and birth information. These cards could be used for basic identification, obtaining drivers licenses, insurance, medical care, and other legal services.
 - b. Those who do not use these centers and cross illegally will be subject to immediate arrest and deportation and permanently prohibited from reentry.
 - c. The centers will match up workers with job requests by U.S. employers only after attempts to find domestic workers are exhausted.
2. Jobs can be listed on a centralized Internet-based system by employers looking for specific skills, regardless of the level of skills desired.
3. The data contained in this system can be used by Congress to set market-based, annual visa limits.
4. Upon application for job-based immigration, each person of employment age entering into the U.S. would pay a US\$2,000-\$3,500 fee for visa application and rapid processing of their application.
 - a. An additional fee could be charged for minor children accompanying their parent(s) or for senior citizens accompanying their own children.
 - b. Expediting fees could ensure documents and clearance could be completed in some time less than 30 days, allowing the government to provide access to labor as industry need it.
 - c. A portion of the fee could be used to provide basic health insurance coverage during the time the immigrant is working in the U.S.

5. These funds would be used to cover the costs of operating the centers and for a transportation voucher to defray costs of traveling from the border to their job and back when their visa expires.
 - a. If the 6,000 person-per-day illegal crossing figures published by FAIR and CIS are correct, then this program would generate \$4.3-\$7.6 billion per year in revenue for the Border Patrol and Department of Homeland Security to operate these centers.
6. Employers would be required to provide information to the government on where these people will be working, for how long, at what wage, and other relevant data that would allow the government to track the workers while in the U.S.
7. Workers would be permitted to change jobs, but a single form would have to be filed with Immigration using a modified W-4 signed by both worker, current and future employer as to the change in employment.
8. Center construction costs could be about \$150-\$200 million each or less (similar to prison construction costs). Compare these costs to the tens of billions for fences, prisons, staff and high-tech equipment and you can see the savings for the taxpayer.
 - a. These centers would create thousands of jobs on the border for U.S. citizens that can be paid for by the fees collected from those entering the country.
9. The cost of building three prisons in California is approximately \$1.5 billion. Previous bills sponsored by Senator Kyl says government spends about \$25 billion and former Congressman Hayworth claims the government spends \$30 billion on prisons to hold illegal aliens. If you use basic prison construction costs (closer to \$80 million) the price for building two entry centers near Tucson and Yuma would be \$160 million, which would save taxpayers billions of dollars. If you put ten of these along the U.S./Mexico border, the cost would be \$800 million for an annual saving to the taxpayer of \$44,200,000,000.
10. These centers would stimulate economic development along both sides of the border and will create thousands of jobs in the food, hospitality and transportation industries.
11. According to data from the Mexican Migration Project, 85% of undocumented immigrants would prefer to return home. This means full citizenship may not be desired and the issuance of work permits could address much of the problem.
12. Those who wish to return to their homeland can do so. However, to return to the U.S. to work, they must obtain a job offer prior to reentry (see above) and enter through one of the border immigration centers or other legal ports of entry with the proper documentation.
13. Workers who can prove they have been employed in the United States and can provide a legal address (with no threat of penalty to the property owner or the employer) are eligible to apply for legal *work* (not permanent) *status* at a local Immigration office provided they pay an additional application fee of \$2,500 plus an additional penalty for each year they have been in the country with an undocumented status.
14. Entry of families would be consistent with current laws regarding any immigrants entering the U.S. legally. This process and law is well formed and implementation of this plan should not require major changes although processing times should be reduced.
15. The number of entry visas would be based on real employment needs and not an arbitrary figure that hasn't changed in a decade. Having artificially low quotas does little to address the real issue, which is the need for labor and contributes to the current problem.
16. Establish significant fines for business who continue to hire undocumented workers, such as \$10,000 per instance or 200% of the employees wages, whichever is higher with escalation as multiples for additional instances.

17. Those here already could obtain legal status (though not automatic citizenship) by participating in the new program and paying a fee or fine based on the amount of time they have been in the country without proper documentation.

Map of U.S. Mexico Border Crossing Locations



Benefits of this solution

1. Provides a practical means for immigrants to enter the country legally.
2. Matches workers to jobs *prior* to entering the country, as current law prescribes.
3. Provides ability for employers to let the government know specifically what jobs are available and at what wage level.
4. Uses existing entry points along public highways thereby reducing the need for job seekers to cross in dangerous parts of the border, saving lives.
5. Eliminates the criminal aspect of immigration by allowing them to enter through the “front door.”
6. Supports family-centric immigration policies already in place.
7. Uses existing laws, existing forms, existing processes to handle immigration applications.
8. Reduces workload and injury risk of border patrol agents and state law enforcement.
9. Self-funding in that costs are paid by entry fees and not the taxpayer.
10. Much less expensive than other plans that do little to address labor needs of the country.
11. Fees are less than those paid to coyotes, but are similar to employer sponsorship fees currently being collected by the U.S. Government.
12. Puts the coyotes out of human smuggling business, taking their ill-gotten gains and giving them to Uncle Sam.
13. Increases security because the Border Patrol is now free to focus on people who are trying to sneak in to do us harm, smuggle drugs and arms to and from the U.S.
14. Is a much more humane means of controlling borders and does not treat or label people coming here to work as criminals.