

## ABOUT BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION...

### OVERVIEW:

Democrats and Republicans agree the processes, systems, and laws in place to handle the unprecedented levels of migrants arriving at the U.S. southern border need to be addressed. The difference though, is President Biden wants to fix immigration. Former President Trump wants to use the border crisis as a 2024 presidential election talking point.



Biden and Trump fundamentally view immigrants differently. Trump dehumanizes those seeking refuge by claiming “This is like a military invasion. Drugs, criminals, gang members, and terrorists are pouring into our country at record levels.... They’re taking over our cities”. Trump recently stated that “I don’t know if you call them people. In some cases they’re not people, in my opinion.” Biden, on the other hand, states – “I will not demonize immigrants, 'saying they are poisoning the blood of our country,'” referring to comments made by Trump.

### BIPARTISAN SENATE BORDER SECURITY BILL:

Biden’s administration and a bipartisan group of Senators negotiated a bill to enhance border security, giving Republicans most of what they wanted. The Republican Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, called the bill "dead on arrival" after Trump said to kill it. Trump doesn’t want to give Biden a “win” before the 2024 presidential election.



Biden acknowledges that the immigration system has been broken for too long, and wants to improve border security and target criminals – not families, while strengthening the U.S. economy. Although not perfect, Biden believes this bill “ will make our country safer, make our border more secure, treat people fairly and humanely while preserving legal immigration, consistent with our values as a nation".

Biden supports the \$118 billion *Emergency National Security Supplemental Appropriations Act*. Trump does not. This bill includes: 1) Building more border barriers, 2) Expanding detention facilities, 3) Hiring more ICE and Border Patrol agents, asylum officers, and immigration judges, 4) More funding for interdicting fentanyl and human trafficking, 5) Creating an expedited authority to remove migrants who don't qualify for asylum, 6) Creating a presidential authority to allow officials to deport migrants during spikes in illegal immigration, and 7) Providing aid for Ukraine (\$60 billion), Israel (\$14 billion), and Indo-Pacific nations (\$4.83 billion). Unfortunately, the Republicans tied border security to aid for Ukraine, Israel, and the Indo-Pacific nations and aid to these nations is in limbo.

### “CATCH AND RELEASE”:

This bill toughens asylum requirements – it examines claimants' criminal history and whether they could have resettled in another country on the way to the U.S. It fast tracks asylum eligibility determinations which would reduce the backlog more quickly. This, in turn, would virtually end the “catch and release” policy where migrants are released into the U.S. pending asylum hearings, which currently takes an average of four years.

### “REMAIN IN MEXICO”:

This bill doesn’t reinstitute Trump’s *Migrant Protection Protocols* (MPP) (aka “Remain in Mexico” program). The MPP sent asylum seekers apprehended at the southern U.S. border back to wait in Mexico while their cases were processed in court. The MPP was widely criticized, with many policymakers and migrant rights activists arguing it worsened human trafficking, forced migrants into dangerous and overcrowded shelters in Mexico, and violated U.S. and international laws (i.e., knowingly returning asylum seekers to unsafe conditions). The Supreme Court ruled in 2022 the White House had the authority to end the controversial policy, which Biden did. Republicans want to reinstate the “Remain in Mexico” policy.

### **DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA):**

This bill doesn't provide amnesty for DACA individuals. The DACA program protects "Dreamers" from deportation - those brought to the U.S. as children (under 16 y/o) and who've resided continuously in the U.S. since June 15, 2007. They can work lawfully for at least two years, so long as they have no significant criminal record and have graduated high school/college or have an equivalent degree. DACA doesn't give permanent legal status and requires renewal every two years. Biden is committed to DACA. Trump tried to end DACA, but the Supreme Court ruled his attempt as unlawful.

- DACA recipients add \$2.1B to Social Security and Medicare yearly.
- DACA recipients (and young undocumented immigrants immediately eligible for DACA) add an estimated \$1.7B yearly in state and local taxes (including personal income, sales, & property taxes).
- Codifying DACA into law and enrolling all eligible immigrants would increase estimated state and local revenue by nearly \$815M.
- Repealing DACA would reduce estimated state and local revenues by nearly \$700M (due to a loss of legal status and work authorization).

### **IMMIGRANTS - CRITICAL TO ECONOMIC GROWTH:**

Migrants come to the U.S. for many reasons -- work, school, family, and safety. The U.S. doesn't have enough people to fill the 9.5M jobs currently open. Immigrants typically take the hardest-to-fill positions. Immigrants, including undocumented, make significant sales, income, and property tax contributions. The U.S. population will shrink without increased immigration.



Immigrants, including undocumented, make significant tax contributions including sales, income, and property taxes. In 2021 alone, these households contributed \$30.8 billion in total taxes, including \$18.6 billion in federal income taxes and \$12.2 billion in state and local taxes. These contributions play a vital role in the funding and sustainability of America's public services and programs. Undocumented immigrants quietly pay billions into Social Security without receiving benefits.

### **BIDEN'S BORDER SECURITY & IMMIGRATION ACTIONS:**

Biden took over 120 actions to address immigration issues, including:

- conducted more "returns and removals" than any full year since 2015
- coordinated with Mexico to increase enforcement and achieved the significant reduction in Southern Texas migration noted early in 2024
- implemented CHNV (Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans) Program that allows acceptance of 30,000 vetted, sponsored migrants from these countries into the U.S.; the program also includes a 'return to Mexico' agreement to return 30,000 migrants per month back to Mexico. A 44% reduction in illegal entries from these countries has been achieved since program inception
- wants to rebuild the refugee program (Trump reduced the refugee ceiling to a record low of 15,000)

### **TRUMP'S BORDER SECURITY & IMMIGRATION ACTIONS:**

Trump had a zero-tolerance policy where adults who entered the U.S. from the southern border were prosecuted for illegal entry. Since children can't be imprisoned with parents and other family members, young kids were taken into federal custody. This resulted in over 3,000 children being separated from their families. Family separations resulted in logistical and humanitarian problems culminating in multiple lawsuits. If Trump is re-elected, he would:

- conduct the largest deportation operation in U.S. history
- end birthright citizenship for the children of unauthorized immigrants and end the DACA program
- impose an ideological test on visa applicants/block communists, Marxists, or socialists from entering the U.S.
- reimpose and expand a Muslim ban to restrict arrivals from certain Middle Eastern and African countries
- reimpose strict limits on refugees and terminate resettlement programs
- enforce "a merit-based immigration system that protects American labor and promotes American values"
- continue construction of the wall

To be clear -- migrants have a legal right, enshrined in U.S. and international law, to seek asylum in the U.S. Republicans often use incendiary rhetoric referring to migrants' arrival at the border as an "invasion". It is not. An invasion is defined as "the entry of a country by a public enemy, making war" or "invading the U.S. with an armed force". Migrants are not a public enemy, making war, or using military force to take over the U.S.