



Immigration

How we talk about it, what to do about it, and where we're going with it.

Topline:

Texas Democrats believe diversity is our strength. Immigrants contribute to our economy, their communities, and pay taxes. They're teachers, first responders, service members, and innovators working towards the American Dream. Texans deserve real solutions to the immigration debate, not fear-mongering and divisive politics that tear families apart.

Supporting Messaging:

Texas is a vibrant state of immigrants. We value those who come from different countries and cultures. Immigrants have added to the prosperity and resilience of this great country and we believe in fostering strong relationships with all nations including our neighbor, Mexico, whom we share a vibrant community with. We understand that viewing immigrants through a lens of fear and prejudice only hurts our nation and state. We recognize that a fair, equitable, and comprehensive immigration system makes our country stronger.

The Problem:

Republicans have stood in the way of any reasonable solution to a broken immigration system. They're using immigrant youth as political pawns and bargaining chips to advance racist, anti-immigrant policies. They've been treating our border communities like war zone, all as a cynical ploy to energize the darkest elements of their radical base.

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Trump is tearing immigrant families apart. These children are escaping abuse, violence, and trauma, only to be subjected to more trauma on Texas soil from Trump's racist and anti-immigrant policies. Simply put, none of this should ever occur in the world, much less the United States of America.

Trump is discharging immigrant military service members before they qualify for U.S. citizenship. New reports have shown Trump's anti-immigrant policies have continued to escalate. [Immigrant service members who are protecting our country from terrorism are being abruptly discharged.](#)

In a move not seen since the Red Scare, [Trump is even launching a denaturalization taskforce to review if may have lied in order to get citizenship.](#) The administration says it could be denaturalizing potentially a few thousand people.

Years ago, virtually everyone believed immigrants were critical to our nation's success, the only question was how exactly to fix our broken system and outdated laws. **Today, Trump Republicans are questioning immigration all together, advocating for massive cuts in the number of immigrants entering our country, and peddling racist policies that pick winners and losers.**

Texas Republicans have been leading the charge against immigrant families and real solutions. Greg Abbott and Dan Patrick passed the show-me-your-papers bill, SB 4, which increases racial profiling and breaks trust between communities and law enforcement. Ken Paxton is defending SB4 in court and sued to destroy deportation protections for DACA and DAPA recipients. While net migration is at an all-time low, Republicans continue to feed their base the "crisis at the border" myth, resulting in \$800 million dollars of your state taxpayer money going to border security instead of your neighborhood school.

A border wall harms our environment and does nothing for immigration

In 2013, 40 percent of undocumented immigrants were people [who flew to the U.S. and overstayed their visas](#) - and no wall can fix this issue. The wall is simply a disastrous way to send a message that says "you are not welcome here," which is a complete contradiction of the values we express on the Statue of Liberty. The only way to thoughtfully address the issue is with comprehensive immigration reform.

The Solution:

Immigrants make invaluable contributions to this nation and they should continue to have the opportunity to do so. While DACA is a lifeline for thousands of hardworking undocumented immigrants who call Texas home, it is not enough. There are millions of immigrants who are still living in the shadows waiting on a permanent solution. We need a just and fair comprehensive immigration reform solution that includes an earned path to citizenship for law-abiding immigrants and their children, keeps families together, protects DREAMers, and provides workforce solutions for businesses.

Real lives are at stake in this debate. We must tell our immigration stories and honor our legacy as a nation of immigrants.

Immigration in Texas by the numbers:

- **One in six Texas residents is an immigrant**, while 15 percent of residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent.
- As of 2015, 4.7 million immigrants comprised 17 percent of the population.
- [Over a third of all immigrants in Texas are naturalized U.S. citizens.](#)
- [There are 124,000 DACA recipients living in Texas](#)
- There are 559,000 *potential* DAPA (Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents) recipients in Texas.
- 834,000 of Texas children have 1 or more immigrant parent that are not US citizens
- There are approximately 1,464,000 undocumented immigrants in Texas

Message Box

<p>Us on Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We must find a permanent solution with a pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients and other law-abiding immigrants ● We have to honor our legacy and keep families together ● Immigrants make invaluable contributions to our economy, communities and society ● A wall is not a solution, it's a symbolic way to tell other that they are not welcome ● Net migration is at an all time low ● What we need is comprehensive immigration reform 	<p>Them on Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We need to put hard working Americans first and stop giving out handouts to “illegal immigrants” ● “Illegal immigrants” are taking our jobs and hurting our economy and committing violent crimes. ● We have a duty to uphold our Constitution and secure our borders ● “Illegals” are infiltrating our southern border and we need the border wall to deal with this crisis ● Until the wall gets built, we need need all the resources we can get to deal with the crisis at the border.
<p>Us on Them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Republicans have stood in the way of any real, sensible progress on our immigration challenges ● Republicans exploit the lives of immigrant youth as a bargaining chip for hardline, racist, anti-immigrant policies ● Mass deportations and the militarization of our border terrorizes our communities and tears families apart ● Walls are not a solution to our broken immigration system ● E-verify is an expensive, unfair and 	<p>Them on Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Democrats favor open and unsecured borders ● Immigrants are violent criminals that are endangering our communities thanks to Democratic sanctuary city policies ● “Illegal” immigrants have no regards for our laws and want amnesty ● Amnesty for “illegal immigrants” will only lead to chain migration ● “Illegal” immigrants are here to receive handouts from Democrats ● Democrats are just trying to legalize a new wave of voters

<p>ineffective regulation on businesses with the purpose of targeting people of color, costing thousands of US Citizens their jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need all employers to participate in programs like E-Verify to crack down on the crisis of “illegal immigrants” stealing American jobs
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Polling:

- [A recent Quinnipiac poll identified immigration as one of the top 3 important issues for Texas voters.](#)
- **78% of American voters support giving Dreamers the chance to stay permanently in America**, including 73% of Trump voters.
- [64 percent of Texans](#) said unauthorized immigrants “should be allowed to stay in the U.S. and eventually apply for citizenship.”
- [Roughly two-thirds of Texas voters do not think unauthorized immigrants “take jobs” from Americans](#), and that they aren’t more likely to commit crimes.
- [57%](#) of Texans do not support family separation at the border.
- **83% of Democratic voters oppose the separation of parents and children at the border, only 46% of independents and 35% of Republicans were opposed.**