

Immigration



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Immigration – Talking Points & Takeaways

Americans see immigration as a matter of SECURITY and FAIRNESS. Americans understand that America cannot be safe if we can't protect our border and we don't know who's here. They also worry that illegal immigrants commit crimes and receive social services, but don't pay taxes. Although this last point is not entirely true, these worries are real, and must be addressed with respect.

We need immigration reform that secures the border, cracks down on employees who hire illegal immigrants, and requires illegal immigrants to pay back taxes, learn English, and go to the back of the line. According to multiple polls and focus groups, this immigration message resonates with the vast majority of Americans, as it speaks to Americans' concerns about security and fairness.

The front line is everywhere, not only between Mexico and the US. The 9/11 hijackers entered the US through our airports with passports and visas – some valid, some not. The Millennium Bomber targeting LAX came into the US legally from Canada, while the recent underwear bomber came through our airports. Focusing on the southern border alone is like locking the door and leaving the windows open.

The Arizona law is opposed by our nation's law enforcement. The Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police, Yuma County Sheriff, Mesa Police Chief, and other law enforcement leaders are opposed to the new Arizona law because it will stretch local police forces and hinder law enforcement's ability to obtain critical information on criminals. Comprehensive reform is essential -- local efforts ironically will make Arizona communities less safe.

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Immigration Reform: Front & Center



Failure of Reform in 2006. After a bipartisan attempt to pass comprehensive immigration reform failed in 2006, immigration took a back seat to other pressing political issues.

New Arizona Law. The new law passed in Arizona – which gives the police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being in the country illegally – has brought immigration reform back into the headlines and back into the public debate.

Where's the Public Stand on Immigration? For those who support comprehensive immigration reform and believe the Arizona law is a step in the wrong direction, it's critical to know how the public feels about the issue of immigration if we want to affect the debate.



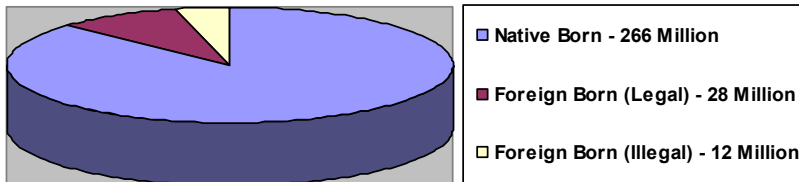
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Immigrants in America: The Facts

Total US population → 307 million

Legal Immigrants → 28 million

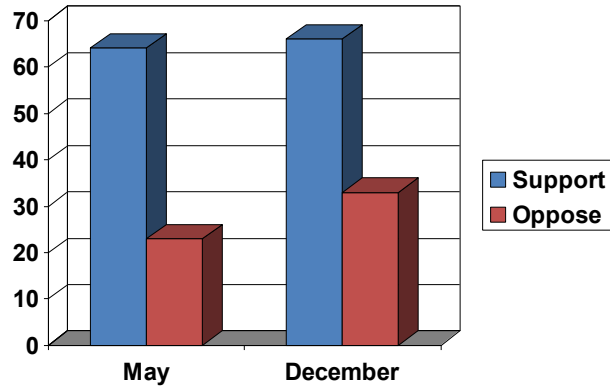
Illegal Immigrants → 12 million



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The Public Supports Reform...

In 2009, 2/3 of the public supported "Comprehensive Immigration Reform"
This is true in national polls, and polls of swing congressional districts



...and the Public Supports the AZ law!

April 29, 2010

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More Americans Favor Than Oppose Arizona Immigration Law

Among those who have heard of law, 51% favor and 39% oppose it

by Jeffrey M. Jones

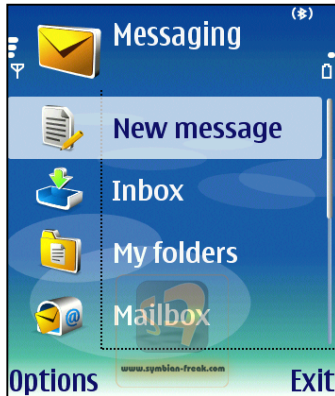
PRINCETON, NJ -- More than three-quarters of Americans have heard about the state of Arizona's new immigration law, and of these, 51% say they favor it and 39% oppose it.

Based on what you know or have read about the new Arizona immigration law, do you favor or oppose it?

	Favor	Oppose	Not heard of/ No opinion
All Americans	39%	30%	31%
Heard of the law ^	51%	39%	11%

^ Based on national adults who say they have heard or read "a great deal, a fair amount, or not much about a new immigration law that was just passed in the state of Arizona"

Conflicting polls show that the immigration debate is up for grabs.

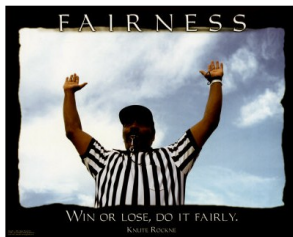


Expressing Support for “Comprehensive Immigration Reform” isn’t enough. Americans react positively to the notion of comprehensive reform, but have also reacted positively to the Arizona law. That means we have to work harder to make our case.

How do Americans feel about immigration? To make a persuasive case for reform that can stand up to its critics, we need to understand how Americans feel about illegal immigration.

The Message Matters. Some messages that advocate reform resonate with the public, some do not. We need to understand which is which if we wish to craft a winning argument.

Americans see Immigration as a matter of...



FAIRNESS. Americans see immigration as a fairness issue. Many believe that illegal immigrants pay no taxes, yet benefit from a wide array of social services. This is seen as unfair to hardworking Americans, businesses that play by the rules, and legal immigrants.



SECURITY. Americans also see immigration as a security issue. And they’re correct. If we can’t secure our borders and know who’s in our country, we can’t be safe. To be a credible messenger on immigration and keep America strong, you must show that you take the matter of security seriously.



Why do voters say they're concerned with illegal immigration? It's mostly about fairness.

"Because they don't pay taxes, but they get services"	50%
"Because they broke the law"	20%
"Because they're taking jobs away from Americans"	17%
"Because they don't speak English and threaten our culture"	8%

Immigration Reform is also about Security



"A nation can't be secure if its borders aren't secure. In the wake of September 11th, it's unbelievable that we've lost control over who is in our country and where they are."

74% Favorability Rating

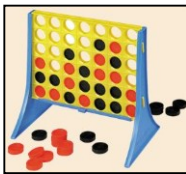
"The first and most important job of government is to protect its people, and you can't protect your people if you can't protect your borders."

72% Favorability Rating

Putting it all together...



Immigration Reform – A Winning Message



- 1.) Secure the border
- 2.) Crack down on employers who hire illegal immigrants
- 3.) REQUIRE all illegal immigrants to register with the government
- 4.) REQUIRE a fine, back taxes, English, a job, and going to back of the line

Immigration Reform – How the Message Works

Secure the border. People are worried about our porous borders, and the possibility of criminals and terrorists coming in. They want to know you're concerned, too.

Crack down on employers who hire illegal immigrants. There is no sympathy for employers who hire illegal workers – it's unfair to everyone.



REQUIRE all illegal immigrants to register with the government. Knowing who is in our country is the only way to get control of this problem. But: be aware that this is a difficult policy -- many immigrants fear all governments, and don't trust that they won't be deported.

REQUIRE all illegal immigrants to pay a fine or back taxes, work, learn English, and go to back of the line. People realize deportation won't work. But people who break the law shouldn't go unpunished, so these policies balance that desire for some punishment and fairness.

NOTE: Say "REQUIRE" on these points. It drives up support.

Final Notes on General Messaging



Explain "Comprehensive Immigration Reform." Don't just say "comprehensive immigration reform" – explain what you mean. Support for "comprehensive immigration reform" jumps from about 65% to more than 80% if you first articulate the four-point message from the previous slide.

Explain, *then* a call to action. You can't say "Act Now, Don't Wait" until you've explained your support for comprehensive immigration reform, and explained what it means.

Make the case in terms of practical solutions and bipartisanship. People want concrete, practical solutions - not politics. If you do link immigration reform to President Obama or Democrats, you **MUST** first explain what you mean by "comprehensive reform."

Immigration Reform – What NOT To Say



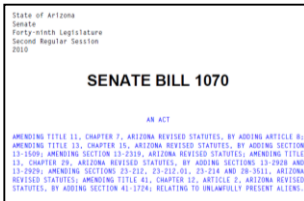
“Undocumented Migrant” or any euphemism other than “illegal immigrant.” These euphemisms smack of political correctness and anger people. Using words like “undocumented” actually drags down support for reform - and for everything else you say.

“Illegal immigrants do jobs Americans don’t want.” The public doesn’t buy this, and they don’t want to hear it, even where it may be true. The truth does not always resonate as good messaging!

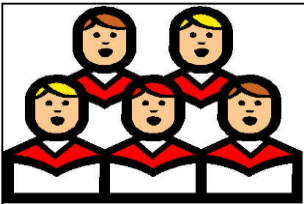
“Illegal immigrants actually pay billions in taxes, yet receive few benefits.” In many ways, this is true, and it’s tempting as an answer to the taxes/fairness concerns. But people don’t believe it. If you say it, persuadable voters will write you off and you lose potential supporters.

“They may be illegal, but they’re working long hours for little pay...” Appeals to compassion are good for the choir, but not the fencer-sitters. Men, in particular, are not swayed by appeals to compassion or humanity.

What About Arizona?



Guess who’s against the new law? The Police. The Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police, Yuma County Sheriff, Mesa Police Chief, and other law enforcement leaders are opposed to the new Arizona law because S.B. 1070 will stretch local police forces and hinder law enforcement’s ability to obtain critical information on criminals, which make Arizona communities less safe.



Lead with the crime case if you’re not talking to the choir. Supporters of the new law claim it’s about stopping crime. So if you launch into an argument about civil liberties or due process before saying “this law makes our communities less safe,” you risk having your whole argument fall on deaf ears. So if you’re speaking to an audience that’s worried about crime, let them know what law enforcement really thinks about the law.

Comprehensive Immigration Reform is a National Security Issue. It's really about keeping America safe – not messaging.



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Job #1 is to secure America's borders – all of them. The 9/11 hijackers entered the US through our airports with passports and visas – some valid, some not. The Millennium Bomber targeting LAX came into the US legally from Canada, while the recent underwear bomber came through our airports. Securing our borders is not just about Mexico.



The front line is everywhere, not only between Mexico and the US. Focusing on the Southern border is like locking the doors and leaving the windows open. We need comprehensive reform for security across all our borders.



Border Patrol agents are the tip of the spear – and they're part of a bigger team. We've got to invest in the people and technology who process visa requests, monitor databases, and flag intelligence agencies when something looks fishy. Security starts when someone requests a visa or when someone's name is put on a watchlist – not when they get to the border.

Give our Border Patrol agents the tools they need. You can put a thousand cops on the street, but if you don't give them guns and squad cars, they can't do their jobs. Our agents need resources such as unmanned aerial vehicles and infrared cameras that can watch the border and relay information.

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We won't be safe if we don't know who's here. Our first security priority is to know who is in our country. We need to get people out of the shadows and into the light of the law. If the price is unbearable, no one will come forward. If the price is a fair punishment – work, learn English, pay taxes – and an opportunity to make an honest life in America, we can be confident they'll step up.

Let's not have great expectations about deportation. Rounding up every illegal immigrant in America would be like picking up 12 million grains of rice spread across a beach. It is immensely costly, unfeasible, and would keep our law enforcement tied up. We'd rather work on practical, pragmatic solutions to keep America safe, not impossible, impractical schemes.



Immigrants have language & cultural skills our military and intelligence services need. Our enemies speak difficult languages. If we want to know what they're up to, if we want to capture and kill them, we've got to know what they're saying. Hiring native speakers of those languages is the best way to make that happen.

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The best and brightest belong in America. Countries like China and India are graduating hundreds of thousands of engineers and scientists. We should be competing for that brain power, and that can't happen if we don't have a visa system that works.

America's immigrants help drive America's innovation. Of the many Americans who won Nobel Prizes in the 20th century, half of them were immigrants or the children of immigrants. A quarter of new engineering and technology companies in the US have been founded by immigrants. That makes immigration a source of pride and prosperity for all of us. There's no way we can let everyone have a piece of the pie. What we can do, is have a better system that admits those immigrants who can help make the pie bigger for everyone.



America is a force for good in the world. Welcoming refugees is one reason why. We open our arms to refugees who flee violence, war, and poverty. Why? Because Americans believe in the dignity of every human being, and that's what makes people around the world believe in America.

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