

## Trump's Extreme Vision for Immigration



Kylie Murdock, Policy Advisor

President Biden's support for the bipartisan border security deal shows he's serious about restoring order at the border and fixing our legal immigration system. Trump, on the other hand, told Republicans to vote "no" on the bill—not because he disagreed with the substance but because he said he doesn't want to give the Biden Administration and Democrats "a win." Republicans obliged because, apparently, most of them would also rather use the border as a political talking point than solve the problem. Donald Trump and Republicans aren't serious about fixing our border, and the extreme immigration platform they're running on proves this point.

### Militarizing the Border

Trump is proposing several radical, costly, and ineffective changes to our border policy. He wants to spend billions on a border wall and send the military to patrol our border (and maybe even invade Mexico). He wants to deport undocumented immigrants by the millions by sending Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) into communities to round up families and send people who have lived here for many years to mass deportation camps. Some didn't think it was possible, but his immigration agenda this time around is far more radical than his first term.

Trump wants to bring back some of the "biggest hits" from his first term:

- **Build the costly Trump border wall.** In 2016, Trump promised he was going to build a wall on our southern border, and that Mexico was going to pay for it. He failed to deliver on this campaign promise during his time in office, but the \$15 billion border wall is once again a part of his immigration platform. This border wall is costly, wasteful, and ineffective at keeping undocumented immigrants out of the country or keeping us safe.
- **Reinstate Remain in Mexico.** Remain in Mexico was a policy under Trump that required asylum seekers to wait in Mexico, usually in tent camps near the border, until their court date, which could often be several months or even years away. As a result of their vulnerability, asylum seekers were subjected to extreme violence, including kidnapping, extortion, and rape. In addition to the violence it caused, it also can't be done because Mexico has rejected the idea three times. We can't force another country to take in asylum seekers that have reached the United States, and Mexico has made clear it has no interest in housing people while they wait for their US cases to proceed.

In addition to these awful re-runs, Trump also has some new, disturbing ideas:

- **Return unaccompanied children to their home country.** Trump wants to send unaccompanied children back to their country of origin all alone. This is incredibly dangerous and inhumane, not to mention blatantly illegal.
- **Send ICE into communities to deport millions of undocumented immigrants.** Trump has promised to launch "the largest domestic deportation operation in American history." He wants to use Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), federal agents, and the National Guard to go into communities and round up undocumented immigrants. He says his administration would build mass deportation camps to hold undocumented immigrants until he could deport them on military planes. This plan is highly impractical, as ICE doesn't have anywhere close to the personnel or resources needed to pull off deportation at this scale. The most deportations his administration carried out during his first term was 267,258 in 2019, nowhere near the millions he's promising now. While his mass deportation plan is impractical, and legally questionable, at its core, it's cruel. There are millions of undocumented immigrants who have lived and worked in our country for many years, raised their children here, and contributed all along the way to their communities. Trump would have us deport them all.

- **Close the border to asylum seekers.** According to international and US law, people who are fleeing persecution have a right to seek asylum in the United States, including if they present themselves at the border. But Trump wants to use Title 42 to expel asylum seekers from the country for alleged public health reasons, claiming they carry severe strains of the flu, tuberculosis, scabies, and other respiratory illnesses. This is categorically false—migrants are not bringing diseases to our country. The Heritage Foundation, Trump's de facto think tank, has also proposed creating an authority to close the border to asylum seekers whenever Trump deems it necessary, which he would likely do for his whole term. This would violate both international and US law.
- **Militarize the border.** Trump wants to move thousands of troops that are currently protecting our country abroad to the southern border to detain and deport undocumented immigrants. Some in his party have even proposed invading Mexico and shooting undocumented immigrants in the legs to stop them from entering the country.

## Gutting Legal Pathways

Trump doesn't just want less illegal immigration; he wants less immigration, period. If reelected, Trump has promised to gut legal pathways into the United States (which would have the practical effect of increasing illegal immigration). He has also pledged to end several longstanding, popular programs, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and all refugee resettlement programs. He even wants to challenge the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution and undo America's promise of birthright citizenship.

Trump wants to reinstate some of his old policies gutting legal immigration:

- **Suspend refugee resettlement.** Trump has committed to ending refugee resettlement if he retakes office, going a step further than his approach during his first term where he cut refugee resettlement by 80%. The world is seeing historic levels of displacement, with more than 30 million refugees and growing. Now is not the time for the United States to abandon our moral imperative to help refugees who are facing persecution and violence in their home countries.
- **Ban people from Muslim-majority countries from traveling to the United States.** One of Trump's most controversial policies during his previous administration was his Muslim Ban, and he's promised to expand it if he's reelected. Trump says he would ban immigrants from Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, all countries with large Muslim populations facing major humanitarian crises. Trump's Muslim Ban 2.0 is not only discriminatory and cruel, it's also likely illegal.

Trump also has some ideas that would take his anti-legal-immigrant agenda even further:

- **End Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).** Trump wants to end DACA, a program that allows undocumented people (Dreamers) who were brought to the United States as children to learn and work in the country they were raised in without fear of deportation. DACA has allowed more than 800,000 young people earn an education and become doctors, teachers, business owners, and more. They've spent nearly their entire lives in our country and built families and careers in our communities. If Trump ends DACA, current and future Dreamers would be denied work authorization and lose protection from deportation, putting them at risk of being sent alone to a country they've never known as home.
- **Revoke Temporary Protected Status (TPS).** Temporary Protected Status (TPS) has been around since World War II and has been used by both Democratic and Republican Presidents to provide short-term relief in the face of disasters. It allows people fleeing crises in their home country to live and work in the United States temporarily, usually for a few years. TPS designation does not guarantee a legal pathway to US citizenship, though some TPS designees may qualify through other pathways like asylum. TPS has recently been granted to people from Venezuela, Cuba, Haiti, Afghanistan, and other countries facing humanitarian crises. Revoking TPS would mean hundreds of thousands of people who have lived in the United States for years could be forced to leave. Trump tried it in his first term and has vowed to do it during a second.
- **End birthright citizenship for children born in the United States to undocumented immigrants.** According to the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution, all people born in the United States are citizens of this country, no matter their parents' national origin or citizenship status. Trump plans to sign an executive order barring the children of undocumented immigrants born in the US from citizenship. This move would spit in the face of the Constitution and our core values, which have at their heart the principle that any person born here is an American, no matter where their family came from.

## Conclusion

Trump's immigration plans are extreme, cruel, and illegal. He wants to militarize the border and gut legal pathways into the United States. On the other hand, President Biden wants to restore order at the border and decrease illegal immigration by expanding ways for people to come here legally. One plan would destroy our immigration system. The other would fix it. Voters want common sense solutions to the crisis at our border, and that's exactly what President Biden is offering.

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