

## Building Well-Being in Our Communities is Vital to Our Shared Prosperity

Human service organizations support a practical approach to immigration policy because we share a common mission: to help *everyone* reach their full potential so that we can all contribute to our community in meaningful ways. Because no one can build well-being on their own, the human service sector helps everyone access and utilize the elements and materials essential for social, emotional, physical, and financial well-being. Human services provide opportunities for young people to play and learn, programs for families to become financially stable, and places that foster social connections in later life. Like the framing of a house, human services provide the support structure for people to contribute to our communities in different ways and allow everyone to flourish together.

## Immigration Helps Our Economy Grow with Shared Prosperity

One of the fundamental principles of American life is to make sure our country is prosperous so that everyone can thrive. This requires harnessing everyone's unique skills and energy to grow our economy and contribute to our communities. Immigration is wind in our country's sails—providing the labor, skills, and ideas that help push us forward. Without reasonable and comprehensive changes to our immigration system, we are limiting our country's growth by preventing people living in the United States from contributing fully to our society. Helping immigrants reach their full potential will empower our communities to grow and help us succeed as a nation.

## Federal Immigration Policy Can Increase Our Shared Prosperity

We need common-sense policy solutions based on careful consideration. Providing legal status to immigrants who are already in our country will make our society more diverse, enriching social, cultural, and civic life as well as boosting the economy. Recent changes to immigration policies, including ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and an increasing reliance on detention and deportation practices that separate families, undermine the foundation of well-being in communities across the country. Young people are [particularly susceptible](#) to the consequences of these policy choices. Exposure to the prolonged, toxic levels of stress that are associated with the uncertainty about their futures and the prospect of being separated from their families, friends, and communities disrupts physical, cognitive, and emotional development and weakens the structures that support long-term well-being.

Federal immigration policies should lay out reasonable steps to meet this objective instead of turning to extreme policies that are impractical and will not lead to long-term solutions. Pragmatic changes to our immigration system will help everyone have better access to schools and colleges, health and safety systems, community infrastructure, and other public goods, including human services. With this access, we can create the shared prosperity that will foster everyone's ability to meaningfully contribute to our communities now and in the future.

## Federal Immigration Policy Should:

- Create opportunities for undocumented immigrants of all ages to gain legal status and contribute to American prosperity. When people have the opportunity to reach their full potential, they enrich America's culture and economy.

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1101 14th Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-347-2080  
policy@nassembly.org  
www.nationalassembly.org

- Protect undocumented youth who currently live in the United States by reopening new enrollment for DACA and establishing a [better system](#) for gaining legal status by enacting the [Dream Act of 2017](#).
- Preserve existing visa programs so they continue to align with the demands of our economy by mobilizing the most diverse labor, skills, and ideas. This includes protecting the due process rights of temporary visitors, workers, and students who come to the U.S. legally.
- Safeguard the family reunification system. Family is the foundation of a strong nation, and sponsorship of immediate relatives allows families to stay together while seeking opportunity in this country.
- Reform the detention system to better protect immigrants' humanity and provide swift and fair adjudications. Our country presently detains [more than](#) 400,000 immigrants for some period of time in a given year, many of whom have committed no offense and are [arrested](#) only for lack of legal status. Detention and deportation should be reserved as a last resort because our communities are best equipped to build well-being when families are permitted to remain together and contribute to our society.
- Not qualify protections for [Dreamers](#) with irresponsible policy trade-offs. For example, policymakers should not accept any promise to provide legal status for Dreamers if those protections only come at the expense of a multi-billion dollar unworkable border "wall," curtailing legal immigrants from sponsoring their parents, adult children, or siblings, and scaling back the diversity visa program. The debate about border security and the visa program should be decoupled from Dreamers' ability to gain legal status.

### Take Action

Policymakers play a critical role in making sure everyone has access to the resources and systems they need to build and maintain well-being. This includes common-sense solutions to immigration policy, which will lead to a larger labor force, higher productivity and investment, stronger technology, more tourism, and increased growth in the hospitality, agriculture, and housing industries.

We ask you to publicly:

- **Support the Dream Act of 2017** ([S. 1615/H.R. 3440](#)) which will provide lawful status and a clear path to citizenship to certain immigrant youth and young adults who came to the United States as children, including recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.
- **Oppose** bills like the [SECURE and SUCCEED Act](#), and any other provisions that would change the visa system, take away due process rights of people here legally, or divert federal investments to irresponsible border security measures at the expense of programs that build and maintain everyone's well-being.
- **Oppose** any executive order that would [change policies](#) for legal immigrant families who rely on federal support programs and are seeking permanent status in the United States.

These talking points implement FrameWorks Institute's research on [immigration](#) and [human services](#).