

The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations



TASK FORCE SERIES



# Keeping the Promise: Immigration Proposals from the Heartland

Report of an Independent Task Force

Jim Edgar, Doris Meissner, and Alejandro Silva  
Cochairs

Sponsored by The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations



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## Foreword

### *Keeping the Promise*

The United States has long been considered a land of promise. From the Mayflower Pilgrims to Somali refugees, people from all corners of the world have come here seeking a new life. They have come for the promise of political and religious tolerance, the promise of opportunities to work and raise families, and the promise of liberty and justice for all. They have built this country from the ground up, shared their ideals, and created one of the world's most vital democracies.

As the lifeblood of U.S. economic and social dynamism, immigration itself is a promise that the country will continue to grow and prosper. Our system for managing immigration also holds a promise for native citizens and immigrants alike—that our laws and practices will embody the values of our nation: democracy, liberty, human rights, respect for the law, and equality under the law.

Today, the United States has reached an important juncture in the realities, perceptions, and policies shaping immigration to this nation. The influx of the largest number of immigrants in our history over recent decades is transforming American society and posing a variety of challenges. Indeed, the swelling numbers of undocumented immigrants, the integration of newly arrived Latinos, and the link between the U.S. immigration system and homeland security has thrust immigration policy into the national spotlight.

The laws and policies that govern who can enter and stay in the United States will affect all aspects of American life in the twenty-first century. It is essential for this nation's future security, prosperity, and harmony that the United States develop a comprehensive and effective set of national immigration policies that advance American values, establish clearly defined goals, and repair the broken elements of present law and policy. It is time to safeguard our future by keeping the promise.

### *The Task Force*

The Task Force on United States Immigration Policy was convened in September 2003 by The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations

(CCFR) to contribute to the national discourse on immigration policy. Cochaired by former Illinois governor Jim Edgar, former U.S. immigration commissioner Doris Meissner, and Chicago business leader Alejandro Silva, the Task Force brought together forty leading figures from the Midwest and beyond to examine the opportunities and challenges of U.S. immigration and develop a set of recommendations on key areas of national policy reform.

The Task Force has brought to its deliberations and proposals the experience and perspectives of the Midwest. Although immigration is traditionally associated with the two coasts, Chicago has historically been a continuous, major gateway and destination for immigrants. Today the Midwest is experiencing significant growth in immigrant arrivals and is dealing with the benefits and challenges of their integration. The Task Force believes that the views from the heartland in this report will be a valuable addition to the national debate.

### *Acknowledgments*

The Chicago Council wishes first to thank the three cochaairs, Jim Edgar, Doris Meissner, and Alejandro Silva, for their leadership of the Task Force. Not only was the topic one of high importance and considerable controversy, but the Task Force was the first in a new series undertaken by the Council. Governor Edgar, Ms. Meissner, and Mr. Silva worked very effectively with each other and with other Task Force members to ensure a wide-ranging investigation of the issues and a consensus report that enjoys strong support from all the participants.

The Council is also deeply grateful to the Task Force members, who brought diversity of views, energy, and integrity to the deliberations. I thank them for their commitment of time, knowledge, and willingness to put forth extra effort to forge consensus on key points.

Special acknowledgment and thanks are due to Deborah Meyers of the Migration Policy Institute for helping to shape the agenda and process of the Task Force, but most of all for her great skill and hard work in artfully crafting a report that is deeply informed, skillfully written, and inclusive of the wide range of views on the Task Force. The Council would also like to thank the Migration Policy Institute

for graciously allowing us to take so much valuable time from the busy schedules of Doris Meissner and Deborah Meyers.

The Council is grateful for the support and guidance of Michael Moskow, president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Edwin Silverman, chief of the Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Services at the Illinois Department of Human Services, and Roberto Suro, director of the Pew Hispanic Center, served as advisors to the report, and we thank them for all the assistance they provided.

Task Force meetings were enhanced by the insights provided by outside sources who gave testimonials on a wide range of topics. We are grateful to Charles Keely, Rob Paral, B. Lindsay Lowell, Brian Perryman, Finis Welch, Mark Krikorian, Dhooleka Raj, Barbara Strack, Jeffrey Passel, John Quattrochi, and Charity Wilson for their time, expertise, and thoughts.

The Council and Task Force cochaairs are grateful for the time and valuable insights provided by U.S., Mexican, and Canadian government officials who met with the Task Force cochaairs during visits to Washington, D.C., Mexico City, and Ottawa. In particular, the Council would like to thank Andrés Rozental and his staff at the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations for the service they provided in arranging meetings with members of the Mexican government. The Council would also like to thank William Sheppitt of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and Ann Charles, the Canadian consul general in Chicago, for their assistance in arranging an extremely informative set of meetings with senior Canadian government officials.

This report would not have been possible without the dedication, skill and energy of several CCFR staff. Most importantly, Christopher Whitney, the Council's director of studies, played the central role from the beginning in shaping the project, recruiting the Task Force cochaairs and members, obtaining funding, organizing the task force process, and managing the creation and production of the report. His contribution to the Task Force was a tour de force that drew high praise from all participants.

In addition, I would like to thank Alya Adamany, who was instrumental in preparing the session briefings and logistics, and Nilou

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Finally, The Chicago Council wishes to express its great appreciation and thanks to the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Motorola Inc., Margot Pritzker, and the Joyce Foundation for the generous support that made the Task Force project and this report possible.

*Marshall M. Bouton*  
President  
The Chicago Council  
on Foreign Relations

## **Executive Summary**

Immigrants long have been part of the American landscape, reflecting our country's values and traditions. During the last decade the Midwest has seen a resurgence of its long-established tradition of immigration. Nine of twelve Midwest states had foreign-born populations that grew faster than the national average during the 1990s. These immigrants are preventing population decline, reinvigorating economic growth, and contributing to cultural diversity.

Unfortunately, most immigration discussions tend to overlook the heartland of the country and our long and continuing experience with immigrants. We in the Midwest believe that immigration here, important in itself, also is a microcosm for what is occurring across the country. We thus believe that our observations, conclusions, and recommendations resonate nationwide.

### **Why Immigration and Why Now?**

#### *Domestic and Global Changes*

Much of the economic, social, and political vitality of the United States can be attributed to the contributions of previous waves of immigrants. Immigration, along with an effective system for managing it, will be even more crucial to the growth, success, and safety of U.S. society in the future for four reasons:

1. *Changing demographics*—an aging population coupled with growth in the numbers and diversity of the foreign-born population, which currently comprises 11.1 percent of the U.S. population
2. *Labor market projections*—an increase in net employment, including many jobs that require only short-term training, and an increase in the percentage of foreign-born in the workforce
3. *Regional integration*—deepening economic ties between the United States, Canada, and Mexico and increased regional and global labor mobility

4. *National security*—features that make the United States attractive to so many motivate others to try to harm it.

### *A Broken System*

At present, the U.S. immigration system is burdened both by policy and implementation challenges. It is barely able to meet the commitments required by law and policy and is ill-prepared to address new challenges and mandates. Agreement that the system is broken may be the only point of consensus among many diverse stakeholders. The Task Force believes that immigration laws and policies are broken in four ways:

1. *There is an increasing disconnect between law and reality that undermines the rule of law, breeds disrespect for American values and institutions, and makes it more difficult to garner domestic support for immigration and advance U.S. values overseas.*
2. *Some immigration policies hamper rather than encourage economic growth, impeding responses to global economic changes and cyclical industry needs.*
3. *Immigration policies have not adequately addressed threats to national security.*
4. *Immigration integration policy is nearly nonexistent, especially at the federal level, leaving state and local governments to absorb the consequences of federally established immigration policy.*

### **Clarifying Policy Goals and Approaches**

The Task Force sees the core goals of U.S. immigration policy as the following:

- To advance fundamental values of democracy, liberty, and human rights at home and abroad
- To promote the rule of law and equality under the law
- To promote economic competitiveness and growth

- To contribute to national security
- To strengthen American communities and families

The Task Force believes that the three existing channels for immigration—family reunification, employment-based immigration, and refugee admissions—can achieve these goals. However, comprehensive reforms, shaped to be consistent with other national priorities and policy initiatives, are necessary to do so. Immigration needs to be a matter of high national priority, central to U.S. prosperity and security in the twenty-first century.

**The Task Force urges the administration to propose and the Congress to pass at the earliest possible date, comprehensive legislation realigning the Immigration and Nationality Act with national needs.**

Without action the contradictions and pressures will only increase, as the undocumented population grows, more people die at the border, families remain separated, processing backlogs increase, workers are exploited, certain industries decry labor shortages, refugees languish in camps overseas, visa applications decline, scientific and medical research is delayed by visa complications, and potential terrorists try to take advantage of systemic vulnerabilities. Only through such legislation can the system regain its integrity and become a tool for responding to changing social, economic, and security realities.

### **The Immigration Landscape**

The United States granted legal permanent resident status to approximately 1.1 million immigrants in 2002. Most were close relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent residents. It also admitted almost 28 million temporary visitors in 2002, ranging from tourists to students to religious workers. The undocumented population is estimated to have reached 9.3 million, with hundreds of thousands entering the United States illegally each year or violating the terms of their visas.

Overall, there is steady growth in permanent immigration, significant growth in illegal immigration, and a decline in both temporary visitors and refugee admissions. Combined with the increasingly diverse origins of today’s immigrants and their settlement in both new

and traditional destinations, these trends pose major implications for the workforce, the educational system, state governments, American communities, and many other components of American society.

## Growing the Economy

Today's economy is highly dependent on immigration, legal and illegal, temporary and permanent. Fourteen percent of the U.S. labor force is foreign-born. Immigrants contributed more than 50 percent of the nation's civilian labor force growth in the 1990s. They are concentrated in the job market at the low and high ends of the spectrum. The National Academy of Sciences has found that immigration "produces net economic gains for domestic residents."

**The Task Force recommends that immigration be treated as a critical element of economic policymaking and national productivity. This would entail modifying and adding flexibility to the temporary and permanent employment-based categories in order to adjust to the economic changes of the last decade and be responsive to future trends and social realities. It also would entail ensuring sufficient numbers in the family preferences for those who qualify under the defined categories.**

Lasting immigration reform requires an integrated and comprehensive response. Increased physical security and economic security are not mutually exclusive. The Task Force recommends the following:

- ***An earned legalization approach*** that enables the existing undocumented population to gain legal status in the United States over time, including pathways to citizenship for those who apply and qualify
- ***A properly structured temporary worker program to fill future labor market needs*** and safeguard against abuses and poor administration
- ***A greater focus on strengthening the U.S. economy through facilitation of travel and trade***, including consideration of U.S. VISIT's impact on cross-border communities and businesses

- ***Removal of unnecessary obstacles faced by businesses and workers that limit growth***, including (1) barriers to adjustment to permanent status for qualifying temporary workers, (2) delays in visa issuance for students and workers, and (3) caps on business visas
- ***Vigorous enforcement by federal and state governments of workplace protection and labor laws*** for native-born and immigrant employees alike
- ***Development of innovative job training programs*** to ensure that existing U.S. employees and recent immigrants are trained for high-growth job sectors
- ***Design and adoption of mechanisms that enable employers to comply with the law in their hiring practices***

## Securing the Country

The September 11 attacks irrevocably changed American thinking regarding the link between U.S. immigration policy and homeland security. Immigration policies can no longer be separated from the imperative to secure the homeland. It is possible, however, to secure both the homeland and the rights of immigrants, visitors, and citizens while maintaining the nation's economic and social vitality. The Task Force recommends the following:

- ***The mobilization of immigration measures to support antiterrorism efforts*** through effective border controls, information-sharing and database integration, and aggressive investigation and intelligence-gathering, including international law enforcement cooperation
- ***Rejection of immigration measures that single out groups for differential treatment by nationality, ethnicity, or religion unless called for by specific actionable intelligence. However, extra caution should be used in taking such measures.***
- ***Secure but timely processing of visa applications***, which requires treating visa processing as a specialty occupation and developing strong partnerships with those who sponsor temporary visitors



Congress and the administration need to demonstrate political leadership in the following three areas in particular:

- *Acknowledging that security risks at U.S. borders cannot be completely eliminated without causing significant damage to vital interests and values.*
- *Building adequate protections and safeguards into visa and immigration adjudications* so that public confidence is restored and line officials can do their jobs with assurance and with the support of their superiors
- *Exercising aggressive oversight of immigration legislation and policies to ensure they are effective in combating terrorism.*

### Strengthening Communities

To ensure success for newcomers and the native-born, immigration policy must address the integration of immigrants after their arrival. This is a two-way process involving daily interactions between immigrants and receiving communities as they adapt to each other over time and as newcomers gain the opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of American life. Explicit integration efforts are increasingly important due to the growth in the foreign-born population, their growing dispersal throughout the country, their growing diversity, and their increasing importance to the continued vitality and renewal of the U.S. economy and society.

**The Task Force urges development of a national immigrant integration policy that aims to incorporate new Americans fully into the economic, social, and political fabric of the United States. Moreover, each state should designate a focal point for integration efforts.**

The goals of an integration agenda should be the following:

- To encourage civic participation, including but not limited to naturalization
- To overcome known barriers to full incorporation into society such as limited English skills and health care

- To maximize effectiveness by developing partnerships with state and local governments as well as private sector employers, educational and religious institutions, unions, and community-based organizations
- To strengthen communities through outreach efforts to educate the native-born about immigrants and immigrants about the native-born

### Providing the Necessary Infrastructure

Reforms are only as good as the ability to implement them. At present, enforcement of existing laws and implementation of immigration policies are uneven at best, promised services are not delivered, new mandates receive scant resources, information is not easily shared, and multiple actors, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and state governments, are playing key roles.

**The Task Force recommends that proposals for immigration reform address organizational and implementation capacity as well as policy reforms.**

DHS needs (1) sufficient funding and personnel to accomplish its service and enforcement missions in ways that advance broader policy goals, (2) a structure for coordination with other government agencies (or even state governments) dealing with immigration, and (3) a transparent and coherent approach (and single focal point) for developing and reviewing immigration policies more broadly and resolving interagency disputes.

**The Task Force urges the administration and Congress to work together in finalizing and enacting backlog reduction plans, including adequate appropriations and infrastructure, in order to meet a six-month processing standard.**

The number of pending immigration-related applications has reached 6.2 million. Backlogs undermine credibility in and support for the immigration system. They separate families for years or even decades,

create additional workload and delays in other areas of the system as people wait, and lead to lost business and research opportunities.

## **A Call to Action**

Immigrants are part of this country's national character. They help preserve and advance the values and vitality of American society internally and around the world. They have been a key component of what has made U.S. democracy so resilient over time. Now and in the future, immigration will play a critical role in the United States' ability to adapt to global and domestic changes.

**Presidential leadership is essential for progress in immigration reform. The Task Force urges a bipartisan commitment by the president and the Congress to make immigration reform, including integration strategies, a priority for action in 2005.**

The president's statement of January 7, 2004, proposing a new temporary worker program and recent Congressional initiatives should be a springboard for a wide-ranging and urgent debate leading to comprehensive immigration reform.

## **Task Force Report I. Introduction**

Immigrants have long been part of the American landscape, reflecting our country's values and traditions. As residents of the Midwest, we know that immigrants are much more than historical folklore. They are part of the fabric of our daily lives.

During the last decade, the Midwest has seen a resurgence of its long-established tradition of immigration. Newcomers speaking myriad languages are arriving in growing numbers both in traditional cities of immigration such as Chicago as well as in smaller communities such as Des Moines, Grand Rapids, Kansas City, and Omaha. They are preventing population decline, reinvigorating economic growth, and contributing to cultural diversity. Immigrants comprise a large part of who we are as a country, and they are an integral component of our future. In states large and small, in communities urban and rural, we, as Task Force members and midwesterners, are interacting with immigrants on a daily basis. We are living their opportunities and challenges along with them.

Who are we? We are business owners hiring workers, ethnic leaders helping newcomers navigate the health care system or fight discrimination, union officials protecting worker rights, and economists tracking sector growth or job losses. We are school officials with increasingly diverse student populations, legal scholars focused on equal access and equal protection in the immigration system, advocates for advancing the hopes of the native-born, religious leaders watching our congregations change, and former immigrants and refugees succeeding in our new lives. We are attorneys frustrated by convoluted laws and backlogged applications, researchers studying changing demographics, former government officials concerned with meaningful and politically realistic reforms, journalists observing communities in transition, and professors with foreign-born colleagues and students.

Immigrants are our friends and our neighbors, our bosses, our clients, and our coworkers. They are our role models and our service providers, our parents and our children. At times they seem invisible, and yet permanent and temporary immigrants are found in every part

of our society. Some are crucial to the economy, yet are living on the margins. Others may appear successful, yet feel marooned without the necessary support systems. Some speak fluent English, yet do not possess needed skills. Others possess needed skills, but have limited language proficiency. Most have legal status, joining family members or new employers. Others have overstayed their visas or risked their lives and savings by entering illegally.

Immigration is often discussed as a coastal phenomenon. This mistakenly overlooks the heartland of the country. The Midwest has a long and continuing experience with immigrants dating back two centuries to the arrival of the French in Indiana, the Irish in Illinois, and the Scandinavians in Minnesota. This storied history continued with the arrival of German and Polish immigrants in Milwaukee and Detroit at the turn of the twentieth century and continues today with arrivals of Mexicans and Somalis in Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul. A 2004 Brookings Institution report described Chicago as a “continuous gateway,” a long-established destination for immigrants

**Defining key terms**

Technically, U.S. immigration laws distinguish between “immigrants” (those who intend to remain in the United States permanently) and “nonimmigrants” (those who come temporarily to study, work, or visit). “Undocumented immigrants” are sometimes called “illegal aliens.” Though commonly used, the term “illegal” has no significance under U.S. immigration laws. Individuals may have entered illegally, lacking proper immigration documents (undocumented), or may have overstayed a visa (overstays).

This report uses the word “immigrant” more broadly than the technical definition at times to refer to all persons who come to the United States to settle on a permanent or temporary basis, whether with proper legal authorization or not. “Immigrant” is, in effect, used interchangeably with the term “foreign-born,” which the Census Bureau uses to refer to as anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. This includes naturalized U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents (immigrants), temporary migrants (such as students), humanitarian migrants (such as refugees), and persons illegally present in the United States.

that continues to receive large numbers of new immigrants. In addition, the immigrant populations of nontraditional Midwest destinations such as Iowa and Kansas grew faster than the national average during the 1990s (see Table 1).

These are the reasons why we feel an urgent need, indeed an obligation, to speak out in the national debate on U.S. immigration policy. Immigration is intertwined with countless aspects of American life. We believe that immigration in the Midwest, important in itself, is also a microcosm for what is occurring across the country and that our observations, conclusions, and recommendations resonate nationwide.

**Report Structure**

Chapter II of this report outlines the reasons the Task Force believes immigration reform is urgently needed. Chapter III describes the core goals of U.S. immigration policy as seen by the Task Force. Chapter IV outlines the current immigration landscape. Chapters V, VI, and VII present the Task Force’s analysis and recommendations related to immigration and the economy, homeland security, and integration. Chapter VIII raises some of the implementation and capacity challenges that must be overcome, and Chapter IX highlights necessary steps for moving forward.

**Table 1. Foreign-Born Population in Midwest States**

	Number of foreign-born (FB) 2000	FB as % of total population 2000	% change in number of FB 1990-2000
U.S.	31,107,889	11.1%	57.4%
Illinois	1,529,058	12.3%	60.6%
Indiana	186,534	3.1%	97.9%
Iowa	91,085	3.1%	110.3%
Kansas	134,735	5.0%	114.4%
Michigan	523,589	5.3%	47.3%
Minnesota	260,463	5.3%	130.4%
Missouri	151,196	2.7%	80.8%
Nebraska	74,638	4.4%	164.7%
North Dakota	12,114	1.9%	29.0%
Ohio	339,279	3.0%	30.7%
South Dakota	13,495	1.8%	74.6%
Wisconsin	193,751	3.6%	59.4%

Source: Census 2000. Prepared by Rob Paral for the Illinois Department of Human Services.



Immigrant arrivals in the Midwest during the last decade accounted for 21 percent of regional population growth, with Michigan and Illinois receiving the largest absolute numbers of new immigrants.

This leads to the second demographic change: an increase in the foreign-born population. The foreign-born population grew by 57.4 percent in the 1990s to 31.1 million. According to the Census Bureau, the foreign-born comprised nearly 11.1 percent of the total U.S. population in 2000, compared to 7.9 percent just ten years earlier. During the 20th century, the percentage of immigrants ranged from a high of 14.7 percent in 1910 to a low of 4.7 percent in 1970.

Recent Census Bureau figures estimate that the number of Latinos and Asians in the United States will triple by 2050, with Latinos becoming 24.4 percent of the population and Asians growing to 8 percent. (Forty percent of Latinos and more than 60 percent of Asians are foreign-born.) Thirteen states nationwide, including the heartland states of Nebraska and Minnesota, experienced more than double the average national growth rate for the immigrant population during the 1990s. These states are considered new or reemerging destinations, as immigrants diversify their areas of settlement. Figure 1 shows how immigrant population growth has spread across the country.

### *Labor Market Projections*

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that there will be 56.3 million job openings between 2002 and 2012, thirty-five million for net replacement needs and 21.3 million reflecting net employment growth. This will mean a total of 165.3 million jobs, an increase of 15 percent. (The number of jobs can exceed the number of employed persons since some employed persons hold more than one job. BLS does not project the number of unfilled jobs.) The net growth will be concentrated in professional occupations and the service sector, the two extremes of the labor market (see Table 1 in Appendix A). Six of the ten occupations with the largest projected job growth require only short-term, on-the-job training (see Table 2 in Appendix A). During this same ten-year period, the labor force is projected to increase by 17.4 million (12 percent) to a total of 162.3 million. Future labor force growth will be affected by the aging population, among other factors.

Some of the job growth will be met by the continued entry of immigrants to the workforce. BLS projects that the number of Hispanic or Latino workers will account for more than one-third of total labor force growth by 2012, increasing their share of the labor force. Already, between the 1990 and 2000 Census, the foreign-born in the labor market grew by 76 percent, compared to only 11 percent for the native-born. Fourteen percent of the U.S. labor force now is foreign-born. In the Chicago metro area, more than 90 percent of the labor force growth in the 1990s was due to immigration.

Other highly developed countries are facing similar projections. Canadian labor market growth is expected to be fully dependent on immigrants within just ten years. Contraction of the working age population in Western Europe and Japan is expected within two decades.

### *Regional Integration*

The U.S. economy is integrated deeply with that of other countries. Growth in trade between the United States and Canada and the United States and Mexico has doubled and tripled, respectively, since NAFTA came into force in 1994. Free trade agreements are also in place with more distant nations such as Australia and Chile. Canada is the lead foreign market for thirty-nine U.S. states, including many in the Midwest, making trade more than simply a border state phenomenon. Canada and Mexico are the two largest trading partners of Illinois, for instance, accounting for 40 percent of state exports. Ohio and Indiana send approximately half of their exports to Canada.

Global integration has increased so greatly over the past decade that companies now seek locations worldwide for manufacturing plants or customer support centers. As business expands its reach and aims to be globally competitive, so too will its labor force, following the available jobs. Labor mobility already is a component of free-trade agreements. NAFTA visas allowed entry to nearly 72,000 Canadians and almost 2,000 Mexicans in Fiscal Year (FY) 2002. Up to 1,400 Chilean and 5,400 Singaporean professionals are allowed entry in the most recent agreements. Such mobility seems increasingly likely and necessary in the future, either through formal mechanisms such as the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas or informally through the simple laws of supply and demand.

## National Security

In this new global era, the same features that make the United States so attractive also motivate some to try to harm it. Moreover, increased global mobility means that some individuals have tried, and will continue to try, to abuse immigration mechanisms for the purposes of terrorism. Security always has been a preeminent concern in U.S. immigration law. In fact, immigration responsibilities were transferred to the Department of Justice from the Labor Department by President Roosevelt in 1940 as a wartime national security measure. The nexus between immigration policy and domestic security, although not new, has now gained critical significance and requires urgent attention as the nation grapples with the implications of the September 11 terrorist attacks and their aftermath.

The security of the homeland has refocused attention on immigration policy and become a powerful factor in efforts to reform it. Preventing individuals who seek to harm the United States from gaining access through the immigration system adds an additional imperative to the traditional balancing act of immigration policy. As Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Tom Ridge testified in April 2004 before the House Judiciary Committee:

“We are committed to building a program that enhances the integrity of our immigration system by catching the few and expediting the many; the United States is leading the way in this new era—keeping our doors open and our nation secure.”

Beyond specific measures aimed at stopping terrorists, a well-functioning and just immigration system itself forms an important line of defense against terrorism by facilitating the development of vibrant, successfully integrated immigrant communities that serve as antidotes to hatred.

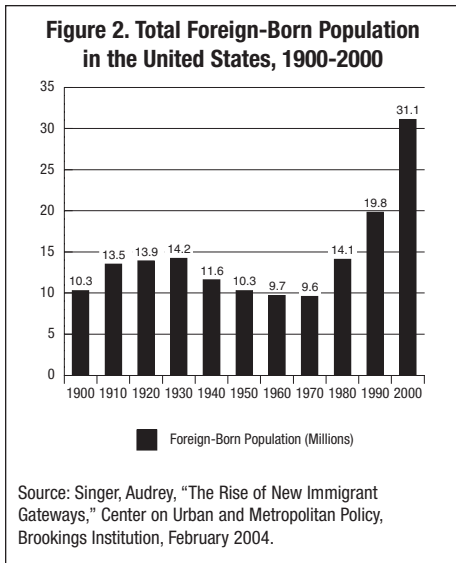
## A Broken System

The U.S. immigration system today is collapsing under its own weight. It barely meets the national commitments set out in law and

policy and is ill-prepared to address new challenges and mandates. The system simultaneously is burdened by policy and implementation challenges. These include a complex law that lacks a mechanism to adjust to changing human and economic realities; that is not equipped to balance competing family, economic, and security concerns or humanitarian imperatives; and that many are violating. It also must cope with massive demand, inefficient processes, and insufficient resources. At times it seems the only point of agreement among immigration stakeholders is that the system is not working to meet any of their needs or any reasonable measures of good public policy.

The Task Force believes that U.S. immigration laws and policies are broken in four primary ways:

1. **There is an increasing disconnect between law and reality.** This is the first and perhaps the most serious problem. This disconnect undermines the rule of law and breeds disrespect for American values and institutions. It also makes more difficult the tasks of garnering domestic support for immigration and advancing values of humanitarian protection and equality under the law domestically and overseas.
2. **Some immigration policies are hampering rather than encouraging economic growth.** This impedes responses to global economic changes and cyclical industry needs.
3. **Immigration policies and procedures have not adequately addressed threats to national security.** This was tragically illustrated by the September 11 attacks.
4. **Immigrant integration policy is nearly nonexistent, especially at the federal level.** Moreover, it lacks the necessary connections to immigration policy. While immigration policy is an exclusively federal domain, state and local governments absorb the consequences of those decisions. They face issues such as whether the children of the undocumented can qualify for in-state tuition and whether the undocumented should be eligible for drivers' licenses.



Such on-the-ground realities, combined with the economic and demographic trends described earlier (see Figure 2 for growing numbers of foreign-born), demand a reaction sooner rather than later. Without action, the contradictions and pressures will only increase. Moreover, the visible signs and outcomes of these failures are pointing in the wrong direction. The undocumented population is growing despite heightened border enforcement, processing backlogs are increasing, certain industries are decrying labor shortages, border crossings remain unpredictable, refugees languish in camps overseas, databases are not yet integrated, and visa applications are declining.

As President Bush said in his January 7, 2004, announcement on immigration reform:

“As a nation that values immigration, and depends on immigration, we should have immigration laws that work and make us proud. Yet today we do not.... Our nation needs an immigration system that serves the American economy and reflects the American Dream.”

**Political Context**

When the Task Force was convened in the summer of 2003, fundamental immigration reform was not on the national agenda. President Bush had promised to improve immigration services and enforcement in the 2000 presidential campaign and in his 2001 discussions with Mexico’s President Fox, but the September 11 attacks overrode any

existing momentum on immigration reform. Immigration had become a “third-rail” issue like Social Security or Medicare—one of major national significance affecting the lives of citizens on a daily basis, yet viewed as too large, complex, and politically volatile to tackle.

The political environment has now changed. On January 7, 2004, President Bush proposed creating a new temporary worker program prior to a meeting with President Fox in Mexico. President Bush’s proposal added momentum to bipartisan legislative initiatives introduced in 2003. These included, among others, a bill by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Larry Craig (R-ID) on agricultural workers, by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) on educational opportunities for undocumented students, and by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Congressmen Jim Kolbe (R-AZ) and Jeff Flake (R-AZ) that address conditions along the Arizona border and the challenge of the growing undocumented population. Also in the fall of 2003, immigrant workers and their supporters traveled across the country calling attention to their cause in an Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, culminating with rallies in Washington, D.C., and New York.

Within days of President Bush’s January proposal, Senators Tom Daschle (D-SD) and Chuck Hagel (R-NE) introduced a more comprehensive bipartisan bill covering earned adjustment, temporary workers, and backlog reduction, among other elements that had been in the works for months. A Democratic proposal covering family reunification and backlog reduction, earned legalization, and an enhanced temporary worker program was introduced in May 2004 by Senator Kennedy and Congressmen Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), Robert Menendez (D-NJ), John Conyers (D-MI), and Neil Abercrombie (D-HI). Demonstrating the importance of immigration issues in the heartland, key roles are being played by Midwest legislators in these proposals.

These ideas were proposed in an environment in which immigration was one component of a broader debate about security, economic competitiveness, and integration of the increasingly diverse population (as described in growing detail by 2000 Census data). Not surprisingly, the debate has also heated up because it is an election year. Immigrants may be a swing vote in key electoral states. Additionally, by the end of 2003, the Department of Homeland Security had begun to view the large undocumented population and

the vast market in human trafficking and fraudulent documents it creates as security concerns. There is growing recognition that the credibility gap between immigration law and realities on the ground has become untenable.

The Task Force welcomes these developments and the opportunities for debate and real reform that have been opened up in this climate. The president has laid the groundwork for future immigration reforms and appears to hold a genuine interest in changing immigration policy based on his experiences as the governor of a border state. As he stated on January 7:

“As a Texan, I have known many immigrant families, mainly from Mexico, and I have seen what they add to our country. They bring to America the values of faith in God, love of family, hard work, and self-reliance—the values that made us a great nation to begin with.”

### **III. Clarifying Policy Goals and Approaches**

U.S. immigration policy is governed primarily by the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act. It defines three categories under which immigrants may enter the United States: (1) family reunification, (2) employment-based immigration, and (3) refugee admissions. Although modified many times, the basic architecture of the system has changed little despite a world that has undergone dramatic change in the past half century. New global and domestic realities combined with the aftermath of September 11 have resulted in an immigration system that has grown ever more dysfunctional. Any effort at policy reform must begin with a reexamination and clarification of the goals of U.S. immigration policy.

Why is it important to the United States to reunify citizens and legal permanent residents with their close family members abroad? What does the nation hope to gain by importing foreign labor or welcoming international tourists and students? What are the reasons for resettling refugees? National leaders have been remiss in not stating, explicitly and often, the goals and rationales of the U.S. immigration system. They, along with the American public, have avoided a constructive and comprehensive debate on the issues.

**The Task Force sees the core goals of U.S. immigration policy as the following:**

- To advance fundamental values of democracy, liberty, and human rights at home and abroad
- To promote the rule of law and equality under the law
- To promote economic competitiveness and growth
- To contribute to national security
- To strengthen American communities and families

The Task Force endorses these goals and affirms them to be the critical foundations upon which to elaborate policy and build the machinery necessary to implement it. Moreover, the Task Force believes that the three existing channels for immigration—family reunification, employment-based immigration, and refugee admissions—can achieve those goals. Family reunification has long been



the centerpiece of U.S. immigration policy, accounting for more than 60 percent of permanent immigration. Family-based immigration not only reflects important societal values, but also facilitates immigrant integration by providing help to newcomers from more established immigrants and by acting as a private safety net for immigrants on the bottom rungs of the mobility ladder.

Whether entering for family, economic, or humanitarian reasons, the majority of immigrants work, strengthening entrepreneurship and making other valuable contributions to the economy. Their presence also serves as a source of continuing vitality and renewal of America’s culture, democracy, and openness to the world. The Task Force is not recommending wholesale change to these three basic components of immigration. However, significant reforms are necessary to fix the broken elements in the immigration system and achieve more fully the goals set forth above.

**The Task Force calls for the United States to make immigration a matter of high national priority central to U.S. prosperity and security in the 21st century.**

Changing domestic and global realities, including the largest influx in absolute numbers of immigrants in U.S. history, global economic integration, and the events of September 11, 2001, require proactive and comprehensive efforts to reform the nation’s immigration system. To

**Arab and Mexican immigrants change face of Detroit**

Arab and Mexican immigrants have contributed greatly to the changing face of Detroit. The American Arab Chamber of Commerce estimates that there are 4,000 to 5,000 Arab American–owned businesses in the metropolitan Detroit area. During the 1990s the Arab-American population in metropolitan Detroit increased 56 percent to approximately 92,000. Recent Mexican immigrants have contributed to the revitalization of the historically blue-collar neighborhood of Southwest Detroit, which had suffered a great decline during the last forty years. Two community development corporations and two business improvement districts have helped boost the economy by providing facade improvement assistance, community events and festivals, and a graffiti control initiative. Between 1995 and 2000, seventy-five new businesses opened, many established businesses expanded, and median property values increased 150 percent.

date, the nation has been satisfied with *laissez-faire* or reactive policies rather than systematic approaches.

The United States would certainly not be the first of the world’s three major immigrant-receiving countries (the United States, Canada, and Australia) to review its laws and systems. Canada, for instance, whose population is 18 percent foreign-born, overhauled its basic 1976 Immigration Act, which had also been amended many times, by passing the 2002 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. It was designed to better respond to current realities and research findings and to more effectively meet national objectives. Australia, whose population is 25 percent foreign-born, reviews immigration levels regularly, engages in long-term strategic planning, and develops annual plans to meet its designated goals.

The idea is *not* to replicate any particular component of another country’s system, but to gain a better understanding of innovative programs and alternative processes for developing, implementing, and reviewing priorities.

**The Task Force recommends increased attention to the ways in which immigration policy intersects with other national priorities.**

Immigration policy has received both too little and too much attention. Insufficient consideration has been given to correlating immigration policies with other major policy initiatives such as education or welfare reform. This is the case even though the large and growing immigrant student population will affect the ultimate success or failure of national educational policy and even though many of the welfare reform policies have already disproportionately affected immigrants.

Similarly, newly revised visitor policies will need to be scrutinized for their impact on perceptions of the United States abroad and on the country’s ability to maintain global economic competitiveness by attracting the best talent. A significant portion of the antiterrorism policies developed in the immediate aftermath of September 11 were in the realm of immigration policy and particularly affected temporary visitors and foreign-born communities in the United States.

Many of the factors, including immigration policy, that contributed to September 11, are being scrutinized by the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, also known as the 9-11 Commission. The Commission noted in April 2004 that some immigration measures taken in the name of security have proven ineffective.

Though the vast majority of immigrants and temporary visitors pose no security threat to the United States—and those who do are unlikely to be identified through the immigration system alone—the country requires a different kind of immigration system than existed before September 11 in order to protect the security of the nation. The United States needs to move toward a “smarter” immigration system that focuses on those who may actually pose a security risk and move away from targeting people based solely on nationality, ethnicity, or religion.

**The Task Force urges the administration to propose and the Congress to pass at the earliest possible date, comprehensive legislation realigning the Immigration and Nationality Act with national needs in an era of global opportunities and new challenges.**

At present, the Task Force finds a major gap between law and reality, a gap that is undermining the national commitment to the rule of law as well as the credibility of the immigration system. The gap between the reality and the laws on the books is about more than simply the presence of a large undocumented population. It is a gap that tells U.S. citizens that in principle reuniting with their siblings is a priority but in practice requires them to wait an average of ten years to do so (twice as long for Filipinos). It is a gap that in principle precludes employers from hiring undocumented workers but punishes few for doing so, enriching human traffickers and those who make fraudulent documents.

It is a gap that grants qualified individuals asylum but requires them to wait years in a quasi-limbo until they can gain legal permanent status due to arbitrarily low adjustment numbers. It is a gap that espouses neutrality as to the nationality of immigrants but in reality favors certain nationalities through special statutory provisions such

as the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, the transitional diversity visas for Irish in the Immigration Act of 1990, and the Lautenberg Amendment to the 1990 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act (it presumed refugee eligibility for Soviet Jews, Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians, and others).

And most pervasively, it is a gap that has encouraged people to circumvent the system to meet their needs, whether that means attempting illegal entry instead of waiting years to join one’s spouse, hiring an undocumented worker rather than petitioning for a temporary one, or applying for multiple temporary visas while waiting for the permanent one. Some of these shortfalls could be addressed purely through resource allocations, but for the most part, the problems are much more complex.

When many otherwise law-abiding individuals are breaking the law because legal mechanisms are insufficient or delayed, when there is little fear of retribution for doing so, and when many who are eligible to become fully incorporated into society are not doing so, then, as a country based on the rule of law, policymakers and the American public must revisit whether the laws themselves make sense. Only by realigning immigration laws and policies can the system regain its integrity and also become a tool for responding to changing social, economic, and security realities. While some of the challenges are not new, the combination of security challenges, economic imperatives, and the growing credibility gap differentiate this period from others and argue urgently for change.

## IV. The Immigration Landscape

The U.S. immigration system encompasses myriad functions, including adjudicating applications for permanent immigrants, inspecting and admitting permanent and temporary applicants at ports-of-entry, and naturalizing eligible immigrants for citizenship. Immigration agencies also monitor U.S. borders, apprehend illegal crossers, investigate smuggling and trafficking rings, and deport criminal aliens. With the creation of the Department of Homeland Security in March 2003, the immigration responsibilities of the Immigration and Naturalization Service were moved into three DHS bureaus: the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

### Means of entry

#### *Permanent Immigration*

The United States approved legal permanent resident status (green cards) for approximately 1.1 million immigrants in 2002. One-third were new arrivals and two-thirds were adjusting from a temporary status. Nearly 64 percent were joining family members (close relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent residents). Other significant flows derive from permanent employment-based immigration (16 percent) and refugee/asylee adjustments (12 percent) as well as diversity and other visas (5 percent). The level of new arrivals over the last decade has been relatively consistent, with the fluctuation in overall numbers (ranging from a low of 650,000 to more than 1.1 million) attributable to processing delays in adjustments.

Within the permanent immigration system, the refugee resettlement program has represented an enduring commitment by the United States to be a safe haven for those fleeing persecution. It has also provided a moral high ground for the United States as it advocated democracy, liberty, and human rights worldwide and encouraged other countries to share in this humanitarian tradition of protection.

The commitment to resettle refugees was formalized by the Refugee Act of 1980, and the United States accepts the greatest num-

#### **Hmong settle in Minnesota**

The Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul are home to approximately 60,000 Hmong immigrants, making it the largest urban concentration of Hmong anywhere in the United States. The Hmong, who largely arrived in the United States as refugees following the Vietnam War, comprise the fastest-growing segment of Minnesota's population. Their numbers are expected to increase, as 15,000 more have recently been granted refugee status. This poses significant integration challenges for state and local governments. Many of the Hmong have faced great difficulty in learning English and becoming self-sufficient. Thirty-three percent of the state's Hmong live below the federal poverty line, compared to an average of 8 percent of the state's total population.

ber of refugees for resettlement in the world. Admissions have ranged from a high of more than 200,000 in 1980 to a low of 27,029 in FY 2002, the first full fiscal year following the September 11 attacks. This was a drastic drop from just one year earlier, when more than 68,000 were resettled.

Immigration to the United States resembles an hourglass. Immigrants are concentrated both at the high and low end of education and skills. Appendix B provides an overview of the family and employment-based categories. To summarize, the family category allows U.S. citizens to sponsor unlimited numbers of their immediate relatives (spouses, unmarried minor children, and parents) as well as limited numbers of unmarried adult children, married adult children, and brothers and sisters. Legal permanent residents may sponsor their spouses, minor children, and unmarried adult children.

Preferences in the employment-based category are given to workers (and their dependents) with extraordinary ability or to outstanding professors and researchers as well as to professionals with advanced degrees or those of exceptional ability. Additional employment-based visas are allocated for skilled labor, unskilled labor, special immigrants, and investors.

#### *Temporary Immigration*

The United States also admitted almost twenty-eight million temporary visitors (“nonimmigrants”) in 2002, in dozens of categories ranging from tourists to students to religious workers. The vast majority

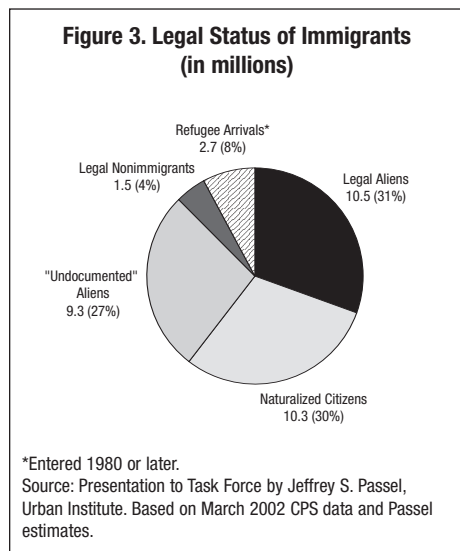
(87 percent) of these nonimmigrants entered on temporary business and pleasure visas. Other significant categories include temporary workers and trainees, students, and transit aliens (approximately 2 percent each).

The 2002 admission figures represented a 15 percent decline from 2001. The State Department reports a decline of more than 30 percent in visa applications since September 11, ending a decade-long upward trend. This is probably attributable to a combination of the slowing economy and post-September 11 restrictions and fears.

### Illegal Immigration

An additional and significant annual inflow of migrants into the United States is comprised of undocumented immigrants. Approximately 60 percent of the undocumented enter without inspection across the land borders, while approximately 40 percent overstay, or violate, the conditions of their temporary visas. This flow was estimated at an average 250,000 per year during the early 1990s. More recent estimates have placed the undocumented flow during the late 1990s at well over 500,000 and perhaps as high as 800,000, approximating levels of legal immigration during that same time.

Based on the March 2002 Current Population Survey, the Urban Institute recently estimated that the total undocumented population in the United States has reached 9.3 million. This is nearly 30 percent of the total foreign-born population. Women comprise 41 percent of the undocumented population. Three million children who are U.S. citizens have parents who are undocumented, and another 1.6 million children are themselves undocumented.



Overall, twelve million people are living in families in which at least one person (the head of the family or a spouse) is undocumented. Figure 3 shows the legal status of the foreign-born population in the United States, including the 9.3 million undocumented.

### Visa Issuance

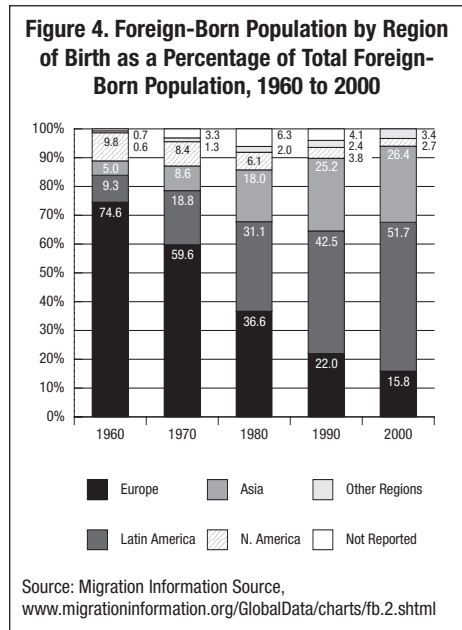
Prior to entering the United States, all permanent immigrants and most temporary immigrants must be issued a visa by the State Department. The State Department adjudicated 7.1 million nonimmigrant visas in 2003, issuing 4.9 million of them. This represents a 15 percent decline from the 5.8 million nonimmigrant visas issued in FY 2002, paralleling the 15 percent decline in applications received during that same year. Between FY 2001 and 2003, however, visa issuances have declined 36 percent.

Visitors from 27 countries (primarily in Western Europe) are not required to have visas to enter the United States if they are coming for fewer than ninety days as tourists or for certain other purposes, such as attending a business meeting. These thirteen million individuals account for nearly half of all temporary admissions to the United States. Canadians also are eligible to enter the United States visa free for up to six months for similar purposes. Mexicans who reside in border communities are eligible for a biometric laser visa valid for visits up to seventy-two hours within twenty-five miles of the border, instead of needing a visa for each crossing.

### Countries of Origin

Immigrants from particular areas have historically taken turns in dominating immigrant flows into the United States. Immigrants from Italy, Russia, and Austria-Hungary comprised more than 60 percent of the immigrant flow from 1901 to 1910. Canadians, Italians, Germans, and Mexicans accounted for approximately half of all immigrants during the 1920s. During the 1980s and 1990s, Mexico, the Philippines, and the Dominican Republic were strongly represented in the immigrant flow. Figure 4 shows the changing composition of the foreign-born population by region of birth from 1960 to 2000.

Reasons for these flows are historical (following wars or revolutions), legislative (consequences of earlier legislative and policy decisions), geographic (proximity to the United States), and value-based (allowing immigrants to bring their dependents with them and later sponsor other family members). For instance, military actions in the Philippines and in Vietnam created ties that led to decades of Filipino and Vietnamese immigration. Irish immigrants date back to the Irish famine. Mexican immigration expanded as a result of attempts to fill labor shortages during World War II. Asian immigration increased after 1965 legislation removed the national origins quotas that barred their entry for more than half a century. Cuban and Soviet refugees reflected U.S. Cold War policies. So who are today's immigrants?



Irish immigrants date back to the Irish famine. Mexican immigration expanded as a result of attempts to fill labor shortages during World War II. Asian immigration increased after 1965

legislation removed the national origins quotas that barred their entry for more than half a century. Cuban and Soviet refugees reflected U.S. Cold War policies. So who are today's immigrants?

*Permanent Immigrants*

According to the Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 38 percent of those who acquired legal permanent resident status in 2002 originated in North America, including Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean, and Central America. Another 32 percent arrived from Asia, 16 percent from Europe, 7 percent from South America, and 6 percent from Africa. Mexico alone accounts for 20 percent of all legal permanent immigrants (almost 220,000 in FY 2002), with India, China, the Philippines, and Vietnam distantly rounding out the top five (6.7 percent, 5.8 percent, 4.8 percent, and 3.2 percent, respectively).

The composition of permanent immigrants is diversifying, however, to include countries such as Colombia, Ethiopia, and Ukraine. In

**Bosnians settle in Missouri**

Bosnian refugees first started arriving in the United States in large numbers in the early 1990s in response to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. More than 30,000 Bosnians settled in St. Louis as a result of government resettlement efforts, good job opportunities, and the low cost of living. This group, which represents the second largest Bosnian community nationwide and approximately 10 percent of the city's total population, has helped revitalize neighborhoods and contribute to demographic diversity and entrepreneurial development. The presence of so many refugees and other recent immigrants who have limited English proficiency and often require trauma assistance has, however, proven challenging for the city and community-based organizations.

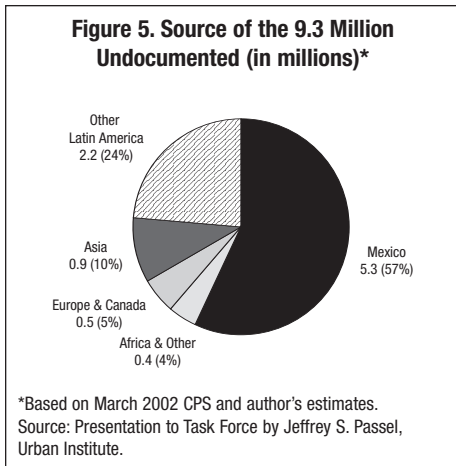
addition, immigrants are settling in a variety of new cities. In particular, they are moving to communities in the West and Southeast as well as the Midwest, while still settling at steady rates in cities with long-established traditions of immigration such as New York and Chicago. Over time, the largest groups of resettled refugees have included Vietnamese, Hmong, Cubans, and Soviet Jews. More recently, the United States has resettled Bosnians, Somalis, Sudanese, Liberians, Iranians, Iraqis, and Afghans. Most refugees settle in just fifteen states, with the greatest numbers in 2002 going to California, Washington, New York, and Florida.

*Temporary Immigrants*

A few nationalities also tend to dominate temporary arrivals. The largest numbers of nonimmigrants admitted in 2002 originated in Europe (38 percent), in particular the U.K. and Germany (15.4 percent and 5 percent, respectively). Asian countries, including Japan, China, Korea, and India, comprised 25 percent of the nonimmigrant flow. They are particularly visible as high-tech workers and foreign students. The third largest region is North America (23 percent), with Mexicans comprising 15 percent of all legal temporary visitors.

*Undocumented Immigrants*

Mexico is the single largest country of origin for the undocumented population (see Figure 5). Mexican nationals comprise about 57 per-



cent (5.3 million) of the total, according to Urban Institute estimates using 2002 data. Individuals from other Latin American, Asian, and European countries as well as Canada account for most of the remainder. Undocumented immigrants tend to be concentrated in the six long-standing immigrant-receiving states: California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois,

and New Jersey. Their numbers are growing most rapidly in the Southeast and Midwest.

### A Growing Challenge

Overall, the picture that emerges is that of steady growth in permanent immigration, significant growth in illegal immigration, and a decline in both temporary visitors and refugee admissions. Combined with the increasingly diverse origins of today's immigrants and their settlement in both new and traditional destinations, these trends have major implications for the workforce, the educational system, state governments, American communities, and many other components of American society.

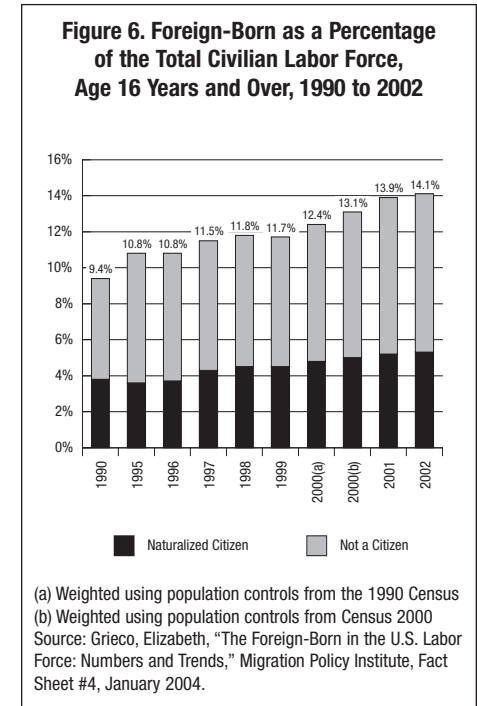
## V. Growing the Economy

Today's economy is highly dependent on immigration, legal and illegal, temporary and permanent. It relies on the labor of those who arrived under employment-based categories as well as those who arrived under family reunification or humanitarian categories. The U.S. labor force totaled approximately 140 million workers in 2000, of which twenty million, or 14 percent, were foreign-born (see Figure 6). This compares to only nine percent just ten years earlier and 11 percent of the total population. The well-respected National Academy of Sciences panel on the demographic, economic, and fiscal consequences of immigration concluded in 1997 that overall, immigration "produces net economic gains for domestic residents," though it is only one component of the massive and complex U.S. economy.

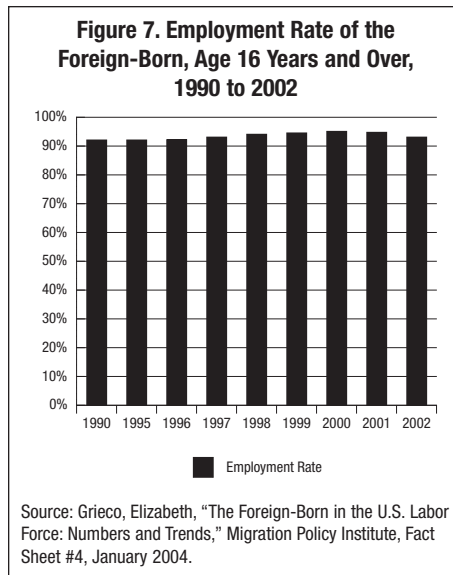
Demographic trends and labor market projections foreshadow increasing economic dependency on immigrant labor. A 2002 Northeastern University study directly attributed the strong economic growth and job creation during the 1990s at least in part to high levels of both legal and illegal immigration. Without new immigrants the U.S. labor force would have grown only five percent, rather than 11.5 percent, during the 1990s.

The fourteen million new immigrants who arrived in the United States during the last decade had the following characteristics:

- Represented more than 40 percent of the net growth in the U.S. resident population



- Contributed more than 50 percent of the nation’s civilian labor force growth (meaning one in two new workers was a new immigrant, the highest figure ever recorded)
- Accounted for 85 percent of the labor force growth in Illinois
- Prevented labor force declines in the Northeast
- Repopulated rural towns in the Midwest



Immigrants participate in the labor force at a rate similar to that of the native-born population, with new immigrant men participating at very high rates. Overall, the employment rate for the foreign-born population (age 16 or over) since 1990 has been 92 percent or higher (see Figure 7). Overall, thirty percent of new immigrant labor force participants lacked a high school degree, but nearly as many had earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, explaining their concentration in the job market at the low and high ends of the spectrum (see Table 2). Immigrants accounted for 20 percent of low-wage workers, 50 percent of research and development workers, and 25 percent of nurses and doctors.

In particular, according to March 2002 Current Population Survey data, 23 percent

Educational Attainment	All Workers	
	Foreign-Born	Native
Less than 9th grade	18%	1%
9th to 12th grade	12	7
High school diploma	25	32
Some college	17	31
Bachelor’s or higher	28	29

Source: Capps, Randy, et. al., "A Profile of the Low-Wage Immigrant Workforce," Urban Institute, Immigration Studies Program, Immigrant Families and Perspectives Brief No. 4, November 2003.

of foreign-born employed workers engaged in managerial and professional occupations; 21 percent in technical, sales, and administrative support operations; 21 percent in service occupations, 18 percent as operators, fabricators, and laborers; 13 percent in precision production, craft, and repair; and only 4 percent in farming, forestry, and fishing. Although only 4 percent of immigrants work in farming, fishing, and forestry, they represent 37 percent of all workers in that category. Similarly, immigrants are highly represented among private household workers (42 percent), machine operators (22 percent), and service employees (23 percent) nationwide.

**The Task Force recommends that immigration be treated as a critical element of economic policymaking and national productivity. This would entail modifying and adding flexibility to the temporary and permanent employment-based categories in order to adjust to the economic changes of the last decade and be responsive to future trends and social realities. It also would entail ensuring sufficient numbers in the family preferences for those who qualify under the defined categories.**

The mechanisms of the U.S. immigration system are out of touch with current realities and unable to adjust to economic and demographic trends. This is illustrated most overtly by the presence of an estimated 9.3 million undocumented persons. Of this figure, approximately six million (and almost all the men) are working. The fact that undocumented workers continue to gain entry and employment despite a decade of heightened border enforcement demonstrates, among other things, a mismatch between domestic demand and supply. Their presence also suggests the need for a legal means to fill that gap, as an illegal population also reflects insufficient and/or untimely legal means of entry for those who are eligible as well as the strength of existing social networks.

Another way in which the system fails to meet economic needs is the difficulty U.S. businesses, research institutions, and other employers face in attracting the best talent and filling available jobs in a timely manner. Moreover, processes and programs that were put in place to protect the interests of domestic workers such as labor certification and employer sanctions, are considered by many to be ineffective.

In addition, the marked decline in visa applications since September 11 mentioned earlier reflects perceptions overseas about the United States' willingness to welcome tourists, students, and new immigrants. The Task Force believes the market must be allowed to work. The system must be allowed to respond to economic changes and adjust to current and future labor demand. Barriers to economic growth must be removed, while steps are also taken to obviate harm to domestic workers and address security concerns.

### **Economic Growth and Competitiveness**

Even in the post-September 11 environment, increased physical security and economic security are not mutually exclusive. Both are vital, and both can be preserved. Indeed, one of the primary missions of the Department of Homeland Security as stated in its enacting legislation (the Homeland Security Act of 2002) is to "ensure that the overall economic security of the United States is not diminished by efforts, activities, and programs aimed at securing the homeland." Economic decline and isolation would have many negative consequences for American society. Immigration will continue to be crucial to economic and labor force growth and to helping the United States remain globally competitive and attractive to entrepreneurs, researchers, students, and others.

One of the key lessons learned from the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) is that not addressing the demand for foreign workers and a legal means of entry will doom reforms to failure. The demographic changes, regional integration, and workforce projections described in Chapter II, combined with entrenched migration networks, limited channels of legal permanent and temporary entry, and basic laws of supply (of workers) and demand (by U.S. employers) portend continued migration flows to supplement the U.S. workforce, irrespective of other policy changes.

#### *The Undocumented*

**The Task Force supports an earned legalization approach that enables the existing undocumented population to gain legal status**

**in the United States over time. Earned legalization ultimately should provide pathways to permanent residency and citizenship for those who qualify and apply.**

For economic, security, social, and public policy reasons, there are no real alternatives. The issue of the undocumented must be resolved because it (1) undermines the rule of law and the immigration system generally; (2) exposes workers to exploitation, limits economic growth, and may harm the wages of legal workers; (3) separates families and ignores social realities, making integration more difficult; and (4) complicates the security situation by having a large pool of unknown individuals, diverting scarce enforcement resources and creating smuggling and fraudulent document industries that can be exploited.

The U.S. government lacks sufficient resources and political support to deport nearly ten million people. (Reduction of processing backlogs might reduce the numbers by as much as a million or two since some, indeed, meet eligibility requirements.) Their deportation would wreak economic havoc in certain industries and communities as well as negatively impact many U.S. citizens (including children) through deportation of guardians, economic providers, or close family members. Continuing to avoid the issue will only exacerbate the challenges and postpone solutions.

Earned legalization would include an incremental process for regularization of status, whereby those who can prove they have been working, paying taxes, have community/family connections, some English language skills, and are not a safety or security risk first become eligible for a legal work permit. After a designated period of time, individuals again would have to meet predetermined security, employment, and language criteria to become eligible for legal permanent resident status (green cards).

To be effective, earned legalization must protect basic labor rights, aim for the greatest possible participation, and be combined with other reforms such as expanding temporary and permanent legal means of entry, reviewing and enhancing interior enforcement policies, and increasing bilateral cooperation with countries of origin.



**Midwest meatpackers depend on immigrant workers**

The meatpacking industry, one of the primary providers of jobs for many smaller Midwestern towns, has changed dramatically in the last two decades. Meatpacking plants were once staffed by highly paid, unionized employees. Today, these plants largely use low-paid, nonunion, and increasingly immigrant workers. The share of Latino workers in meatpacking rose nationally to about 35 percent in 2000 from 15 percent in 1990.

This transformation has particularly been felt in states such as Iowa and Nebraska, where Latino workers, a combination of documented and undocumented immigrants, often comprise more than 75 percent of the workforce in the largest plants. Schuyler, Nebraska, is an example of how immigrants are contributing to population and economic growth in small midwestern meatpacking towns. Due to a recent influx of immigrants, Schuyler's population grew from 4,000 to 5,300 in the 1990s, helping to reinvigorate the town and a meatpacking plant that was threatening to leave just a few years earlier.

- Visa portability to reduce employer control and visas of sufficient duration to allow adjustment of status prior to its expiration for those interested and eligible under defined criteria
- Employer accountability in terms of meeting program requirements
- Restoration of circularity to allow travel home and future program eligibility
- Incentives for return
- Cooperation with the primary sending countries in selection and border management
- Timeliness and avoidance of artificial numerical limits to encourage program use by employers and workers
- Pilot projects that test innovative ideas such as targeting particular industries or allowing states to petition for workers to address very low unemployment

*Temporary Worker Programs*

**The Task Force believes that a properly structured temporary worker program is necessary to fill future labor market needs. It must be carefully designed and implemented to safeguard against the abuses and poor administration that have arisen in previous temporary worker programs.**

The Task Force urges the Congress to carefully review the president's proposal as a basis for further discussion and future legislation. Such a program alone, however, is insufficient to address the issue of undocumented migration and future flows. It must be combined with policies that address the undocumented population as well as changes to the permanent legal immigration system. Lasting immigration reform requires an integrated and comprehensive response. To better meet business and worker needs, a temporary worker program should include key elements such as the following:

- Application of all existing U.S. labor laws, education regarding labor rights, and use of the program only for industries that have true labor shortages and comply with labor laws

*International Travel and Trade*

**The Task Force recommends a greater focus in U.S. immigration policy on strengthening the U.S. economy through facilitation of travel and trade.**

Foreign visitors to the United States, whether they are tourists visiting Disneyland, students studying at an American university, patients receiving medical treatment, or businesspeople assessing and purchasing American made products or attending training sessions, make a substantial contribution to the U.S. economy each year.

For instance, the U.S. travel industry calculates that forty-two million foreign visitors spend more than \$80 billion per year in the United States. Moreover, one in every eight Americans is employed in the travel and trade industry, making it crucial to the U.S. economy as a whole. Yet between 2001 and 2002, as discussed earlier, the number of nonimmigrants arriving in the United States declined significantly.

American businesses (and companies worldwide) have become so global that they are highly dependent on the ability to move key executive personnel around the world (including into the United States) as well as to employ the most qualified individuals from around the world in a timely manner. The L-1 visa, for instance, has fostered for-

eign investment in the United States by allowing foreign companies to bring key personnel to open and operate U.S. businesses. But this visa has also been abused by some employers who have used it to displace U.S. workers.

To clarify the purpose of this visa category, the Task Force supports a narrowly tailored refinement of the law to prohibit displacement of U.S. workers, while permitting the economy and U.S. workers and employers to benefit from foreign companies' investment in the United States.

**The Task Force also believes the administration should give additional consideration to the impact of the new U.S. VISIT entry-exit program (U.S. Visitor Information Status and Indicator Technology) on cross-border communities and businesses.**

Companies that span international borders depend on effectively regulated, smart borders. They require timely, predictable crossings of their goods and people in order to meet their obligations and expand the growth and viability of their businesses.

The United States also depends on the reliability of these crossings, as Canada and Mexico are this country's two largest trading partners. Seventy percent of the value of freight carried between the United States and Canada and more than 80 percent of the value of freight carried between the United States and Mexico travel by truck across U.S. land borders. Moreover, there are more than 358 million entries into the United States at these land borders annually, as students travel to classes, workers cross the border for their jobs, and local residents visit family members or take advantage of sporting events, restaurants, and vacation spots in the other country.

Considerations for U.S. VISIT include extending the deadlines for land-border implementation, if necessary, to better meet the program's goals in ways that maximize technology and minimize impacts on cross-border traffic. Technology is a necessary and integral part of any solution at the border. Though not a panacea, prescreened, low-risk traveler programs should be expanded and adequately funded. Their usage relies upon expanded physical infrastructure—at admittedly considerable cost—to increase the number of dedicated traffic lanes and inspector booths to speed clearance apart from other traffic.

Technology-based programs should be tested and evaluated through pilot programs under actual operating conditions at the borders before full implementation is recommended.

### *Entrepreneurship*

**Federal and state governments should copy successful models and support immigrant entrepreneurs through expanded financial training and other forms of support that advance economic growth.**

In the Silicon Valley, for instance, immigrants account almost for 30 percent of the technology businesses. In Chicago, 26th Street, West Lawrence, Chinatown, and Devon Avenue and Argyle Street are vivid illustrations of thriving microeconomies that contribute to the city's tax base.

The growth has occurred with little or no intervention by government. Immigrant businesses often employ tax-paying, non-English speaking staff that might not find a niche in the mainstream labor market and often serve ethnic enclaves and African-American neighborhoods. The Illinois Refugee Program, for instance, has created a revolving savings and credit association. Other useful support to achieve even greater growth might include providing loan guarantees or facilitating the purchase of health care insurance by immigrant-owned and other small businesses that employ immigrant workers.

### *Facilitating Access to Talent*

**The Task Force recommends removing unnecessary obstacles faced by businesses and workers that limit growth, in particular 1) barriers to adjustment to permanent status for qualifying temporary workers, 2) delays in visa issuance for students and workers, and 3) caps on business visas.**

In 2002 nearly two-thirds of those who became legal permanent residents already were physically present in the United States and adjusted their status. This highlights the intersection between the permanent

**United States is losing foreign students**

American schools depend on foreign students to teach classes, fill labs, and provide financial support. Almost 600,000 foreign students contribute nearly \$13 billion annually to U.S. educational institutions and the domestic economy. In the Midwest, approximately 130,000 foreign students bring \$2.9 billion annually into the regional economy. The State Department, however, is issuing fewer student visas: 474,000 in 2003 compared to 560,000 in 2001.

According to a Council of Graduate Schools study, fall 2004 foreign graduate school applications have declined by 32 percent compared to the previous year. A separate GAO study indicates that the current waiting period for student visas ranges from nine weeks to six months, making it very difficult for many students who have been accepted to enroll in American schools. Some are turning to educational opportunities in other countries.

and temporary systems. With the exception of a few categories, however, immigration law has placed barriers between the permanent and temporary categories. This is out of touch with the reality of economic life and is no longer in the nation's best interests.

First, the United States should be encouraging conversion of status for students graduating with advanced degrees. For example, almost 30 percent of all individuals earning doctorates in science and engineering are foreign-born. With employment-based immigrants accounting for only 16 percent of all legal immigrants each year, a significant portion of highly skilled immigrants arrive initially with a temporary status such as a high-tech worker or student and later adjust to permanency through employer sponsorship or marriage to a U.S. citizen. Alternatively, others arrive as the dependent (spouse) of a principal applicant in an employment or family-based category.

Second, fields such as science and technology are globally competitive and require international collaboration. At the same time, there is a paucity of U.S. students studying science and engineering. Yet a 2004 report by the General Accounting Office found an unnecessarily slow and cumbersome visa process for science students and scholars. The University of Michigan reports that international graduate student applications are down 27 percent. International students alone spend nearly \$13 billion in the United States annually in addition to their academic and cultural contributions.

While security checks and other safety procedures are necessary in today's world, it is important not to alienate desired talent or to burden their sponsoring universities and institutions unnecessarily. If potential students and visitors feel unwelcome in the United States, are confused by the new requirements, or fear their consular interview, the United States will cease to be the destination of choice for the best and brightest. This harms not only individuals but also the economic and intellectual energy of the United States. Moreover, it has a deleterious effect on this nation's role in the world.

Third, eligibility for a business visa should be based solely upon the applicant's credentials and not be limited by caps on the program, as is the case now. Arbitrary caps that are inflexible, not related to the labor market, and politically manipulated often fail to meet legitimate employer and economic needs and contribute to needless additional processing and backlogs. For example, those who are made to wait for permanent employment-based visas end up filing for an extension of their temporary work visa. Eliminating caps would more accurately address market requirements and eliminate bureaucratic oversight in a labor certification process that is widely viewed as time-intensive and ineffective at meeting worker needs. Removal of caps for business visas should not take away from the totals dedicated to family reunification, diversity, and humanitarian purposes.

**Protecting Workers from Harm**

Immigration has many beneficial effects on the U.S. economy. Yet the Task Force is also cognizant of the adverse economic effects that immigration can have on some groups and individuals in the native population and, indeed, on other recent immigrants, particularly at the lower-end of the workforce spectrum. Recent immigrants can be particularly vulnerable members of the workforce, suffering disproportionate numbers of occupational injuries and violations of workplace laws. For these reasons, the Task Force's recommended changes to immigration policy need to be accompanied by vigorous enforcement of federal and state labor laws in the United States.

### *Workplace Protections*

**The Task Force recommends that the federal government and state governments vigorously enforce workplace protection and labor laws equally for native-born and immigrant employees.**

Enforcement of domestic labor laws protects both the native-born and immigrant workforce. Congress should ensure that the Labor Department and other federal agencies have adequate funding to enforce existing worker protection laws, and states should adequately fund their analogue state agencies.

Enforcement agencies should, moreover, focus their resources on protecting the most vulnerable members of the workforce, including employees in low-wage and particularly dangerous industries, where many immigrants are employed. At the same time, employers and unions should attempt to ensure that workers are aware of applicable labor laws and their rights, including the right to join a union. Listings often are not posted in public areas of workplaces or are written only in English in areas with large numbers of immigrant workers.

### *Job Training*

**The Task Force recommends that Congress, in reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act, develop innovative job training programs to ensure that existing U.S. employees and recent immigrants are trained for high-growth job sectors.**

If immigration is not to harm existing employees, it is necessary that opportunities be available for them to be trained for jobs in high-growth job sectors such as nursing. Moreover, policymakers should develop job training programs for recent immigrants and other disadvantaged workers to assist them in moving from low-wage jobs to other career paths. In this regard, Congress should consider a more effective program to replace the recently expired H-1B job training program for domestic workers, which was funded through a \$1,000 fee for each H-1B application.

### *Employer Sanctions*

Another way in which domestic workers are supposed to be protected is by sanctioning employers that hire undocumented workers. Such penalties were designed to deter such hiring practices. Employer sanctions, as currently constituted, have not been an effective deterrent to hiring undocumented workers. Their enforcement was downgraded as a priority during the 1990s. The easy availability of fraudulent documents has undermined the employment verification process, and employers fear charges of discrimination if they ask too many questions. Yet from the perspective of the rule of law and basic equity, prohibitions against hiring undocumented workers should be retained in a way that positively promote employer accountability.

**The Task Force recommends design and adoption of mechanisms that enable employers to comply with the law in their hiring practices.**

The vast majority of employers want to comply with the law. They need an efficient, reliable way to do so. Having such a system might also make it easier to find those employers who deliberately are hiring undocumented workers.

The government should examine the feasibility of establishing a free, online database that matches employee names with valid Social Security numbers at the time of employment. In addition to being mandatory, free, and reliable, such a verification scheme would need to take into account privacy concerns. A necessary precursor would involve addressing the accuracy of existing databases, currently a significant problem.

## VI. Securing the Country

Nineteen individuals who perpetrated the deadliest terrorist incident ever on American soil entered the United States by taking advantage of the immigration system. For these reasons, and despite the fact that the vast majority of foreign visitors pose no security risk to the United States, the September 11 attacks irrevocably changed American thinking about the link between U.S. immigration policy and homeland security.

The Task Force recognizes that now, and for the foreseeable future, security issues permeate all components of the U.S. immigration system. Whether it is the admissions process for temporary visitors and permanent residents, border management, refugee resettlement, or the rights bestowed on nonnationals while in the country, immigration policies no longer can be separated from the imperative of securing the homeland. As CIA Director George Tenet stated in testimony to the 9-11 Commission:

“As a country, you must be relentless on offense, but you must have a defense that links visa measures, border security, infrastructure protection, and domestic warnings in a way that increases security, closes gaps, and serves a society that demands high levels of both safety and freedom.”

### Managing Multiple Interests

#### *Clarity of Purpose*

**The Task Force recommends that immigration measures be mobilized to support antiterrorism efforts through effective border controls, information-sharing and database integration, and aggressive investigation and intelligence-gathering, including international law enforcement cooperation.**

Over the past two years, there have been substantial efforts to improve this nation’s ability to identify and address domestic and internation-

al security threats. Gaps remain, however, in intra- and interagency cooperation and in how data is collected and used to define threats. Successfully generating timely information will require integrated government data systems that contain biometric identifiers, immigration and law enforcement records, and intelligence information.

DHS agencies, the Justice Department, and the intelligence agencies now collectively form the “front line” against terrorism. They must focus on preventing attacks rather than investigating after the fact and will have to overcome long-standing cultural differences to do so successfully. Moreover, because homeland security today begins overseas with intelligence cooperation and the visa screening process in U.S. consulates, it requires the active cooperation of U.S. allies and partners. To encourage good will, the government could, for instance, dedicate resources to help partner countries implement newly required biometric technologies.

#### *Protecting U.S. Interests and Values*

**The Task Force rejects immigration measures that single out groups for differential treatment by nationality, ethnicity, or religion unless called for by specific actionable intelligence. However, extra caution should be used in taking such measures.**

Information is not intelligence. Information-gathering must be strategic and effectively implemented. Too many uncoordinated efforts at information-gathering and overly aggressive action by individual agents or agencies can be counterproductive. It can prevent action on the information gathered and disrupt the lives of innocent individuals, as illustrated in the now-ended Special Registration program. In addition, privacy protections must be systematically incorporated into these enhanced security measures and databases.

Regrettably, the United States has at times in history used immigration laws to wrongly target some of the foreign-born. The country should not repeat these bitter experiences. At a time of large and steady levels of immigration, when treatment of the foreign-born domestically echoes abroad, the United States cannot afford to undermine its ability to advocate and carry out foreign policies that call for treating all people fairly.

Agencies such as the FBI, CIA, and DHS need to use legal methods and targeted policies and techniques based on intelligence and credible threat assessments. Some indiscriminate measures targeting immigrants in the name of national security have been ineffective in detecting terrorist activity in the United States, wasteful of limited law enforcement resources, and alienating to members of the very ethnic, religious, and national groups whose good will constitutes one of this country's best defenses against terrorism.

### *Visa Issuance*

**The Task Force calls for secure but timely processing of visa applications. This requires treating visa processing as a specialty occupation and developing strong partnerships with employers; educational, scientific, and cultural institutions; and others who sponsor temporary visitors to the United States.**

Consular officers, newly understood to be the first layer of the U.S. border, must be integrated more deeply into the law enforcement community. This would facilitate the training of expert senior consular staff, of whom there are few, and help these officials gain electronic access to visa application information, criminal histories, and other sensitive intelligence information.

Secondarily, delays, unpredictability, and lack of standardization are having a negative impact not only on U.S. businesses and universities, but also on U.S. foreign policy. The war of ideas and public opinion is an important component of the war on terrorism. Each negative experience at a consulate and each potential applicant who does not even apply represents a lost opportunity for the United States to gain another informal ambassador who is exposed American values and traditions and shares with friends, family, and colleagues his/her experiences and impressions about the United States. The government should improve and expand its partnerships with those who sponsor temporary visitors to the United States, including universities and employers, to achieve the joint objectives of facilitation and security.

## **Political Leadership**

### *Public Education*

**Congress and the administration need to acknowledge that security risks at U.S. borders cannot be completely eliminated without causing significant damage to vital interests and values.**

Homeland security and protection of national values and well-being are not mutually exclusive. It is possible to secure both the homeland and the rights of immigrants, visitors, and citizens while maintaining the nation's economic and social vitality. A bipartisan commitment to making America safe through realistic and effective approaches is necessary.

Setting unattainable deadlines, implementing symbolic measures, or overselling immigration control programs for their antiterrorist benefits is not responsible policymaking. It creates expectations that cannot be met or that will be met only in the most cursory ways, with negative consequences following later. Instead, officials must better educate the American public about the realities of the terrorist threat and the need to achieve both security and openness.

### *Empowering Decision Making*

**The Task Force urges senior officials to take all necessary steps to build adequate protections and safeguards into visa and immigration adjudications so that public confidence is restored and line officials can do their jobs with assurance and with the support of their superiors.**

Thankfully, the United States has not experienced any additional terrorist attacks, in large part due to the work of dedicated government employees in DHS and other agencies as well as greater domestic and international information sharing. Yet realistically, the American public understands that another attack is possible, despite best efforts.

A culture of "no" has permeated many immigration and consular offices, as officials understandably are fearful of granting the next ter-

rorist entry into the United States. This has hampered the processing of legitimate applications systemwide, delaying visas, family reunification, refugee resettlement, naturalization, and many other functions. As long as officials follow designated criteria laid out by the law and their superiors, they should be able to use their best judgments and do their jobs, confident of support from their superiors.

#### *Legislative Review*

### **The Task Force urges Congress to exercise aggressive oversight of immigration legislation and policies to ensure they are effective in combating terrorism.**

Nearly three years after September 11, it is time to consider lessons learned and measure the effectiveness of often hasty legislative changes.

For instance, some of the deadlines mandated by the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act (EBSVERA) have not been met or have been implemented incompletely and need to be addressed. Additional steps are required to decrease document fraud through use of biometric identifiers and to purchase the machines necessary to read the laser visa/Mexican Border Crossing Cards, particularly now that those users will be exempt from U.S. VISIT requirements.

State and local police need access, in a way that avoids making police responsible for enforcing immigration law, to substantive threat information and databases that contain immigration, law enforcement, and intelligence information in order to identify plausible threats. Finally, per the legislative language, the Task Force believes the concept of a North American safety perimeter as a long-term vision should be further explored.

The idea behind this is to move toward a virtual border, in cooperation with Canada and Mexico, by pushing the immigration and customs functions away from the physical border itself. Such an approach would rely heavily on intelligence, advance information, and shared efforts and resources at points of departure to have greater confidence in who is entering the continent. This would better protect U.S. security while facilitating movement within North America.

## **VII. Strengthening Communities**

To ensure success for newcomers and the native-born alike, immigration policy must be about more than simply who enters and how. It also must address their integration after arrival. The Task Force defines integration as a two-way process involving daily interactions between immigrants and receiving communities as they adapt to each other over time and as newcomers gain the opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of American life.

Some components of integration can be measured in a straightforward manner such as linguistic ability, educational and employment achievement, homeownership, and participation in neighborhood associations or religious institutions. At a deeper level it means a life-long process that involves a feeling of belonging and being accepted as well as a commitment to the values and ideals of American society, i.e. *e pluribus unum* (out of many, one). The United States, alone among the traditional countries of immigration such as Australia and Canada, lacks a major national effort focusing on integration.

The United States' foreign-born population totals more than thirty-one million, based on the 2000 Census, representing more than 11 percent of the country's total population. Immigrants and their children comprise approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population. According to the Urban Institute, the foreign-born represent one in every nine U.S. residents, one in seven workers, and one in five school-age children. More than twenty-seven million native-born residents, including 950,000 in Illinois, have at least one foreign-born parent.

These figures, combined with the growing diversity of immigrants and settlement destinations, are sufficient justification on their own for developing an integration policy. The 1.4 million immigrants in the Chicago metropolitan area, for instance, have arrived from over 100 countries, with the largest numbers from Mexico, Poland, and India.

The development of an integration policy is critical, however, for yet another reason: The United States should no longer rely on integration to take care of itself, as has happened in the past. Historically, immigrant integration has occurred despite the absence of public or private sector policies to facilitate or promote it. Indeed, the support

**Midwestern states historically active in integration efforts**

Midwest state and local governments were more involved than is usually recognized in facilitating the economic and political integration of European immigrants in the early 20th century. Polish and Italian foreign-born mothers in Nebraska, for example, were the principal recipients of welfare programs such as “Mothers’ Pensions.”

The more progressive components of Americanization programs allowed local governments and school districts in cities such as Omaha to support dozens of English and civics classes that helped immigrants of various religious and ethnic backgrounds pass citizenship exams and improve their chances for socioeconomic mobility. Governmental and nongovernmental agencies often joined forces to offer programs such as free clinics and dental care for native and foreign-born school children and adult education classes that were particularly important to immigrant women.

immigrants receive from their extended families, the result of an immigration policy based largely on family reunification, has been America’s successful de facto immigrant integration policy.

Today, however, absolute numbers of immigrants are at their highest levels ever. They are more varied racially and ethnically than the European migrants of the past. Many of the well-paid, industrial jobs available to previous generations of newcomers as the basis for economic and social mobility no longer exist. Many newcomers lack the English proficiency, or even literacy, necessary to survive and thrive in an information age. Moreover, some who are not integrated into society may be susceptible to influence by those who wish to harm the United States, as has been the case with restive marginalized populations in Europe. A large undocumented population, in particular, facilitates the ability of those who wish to do harm to hide and operate among the population. These challenges make explicit integration efforts more important now than ever.

Nevertheless, throughout history Americans have been ambivalent about immigration. Public sentiment is strongly influenced by these very problems, reflecting changing concerns about the economy, security, or immigrant countries of origin. The Task Force recognizes that there are deep-seated fears about whether integration of immigrants and an increasingly diverse society can succeed today, regardless of the successes of the past.

Yet even if today’s immigrants ultimately would succeed on their own, as so many have before them, the stakes are too high to take that

chance. The challenges immigrants face individually are not theirs alone but those of American society more broadly. The Task Force believes that the United States should no longer depend solely on families for integration, instead developing proactive immigrant integration policies at the national, state, and local levels.

**The Task Force urges development of a national immigrant integration policy that aims to incorporate new Americans fully into the economic, social, and political fabric of the United States. Moreover, each state should designate a focal point for integration efforts.**

Integration is a critical function that requires the active attention and support of federal, state, and local governments. Decisions on admissions are made at the federal level, but the effects are played out daily at the state and local level. Lacking a national policy, families, nongovernmental organizations, localities, and states have shouldered most of the responsibilities of integration with insufficient resources or knowledge. The result is a patchwork of policies. The one valuable and instructive exception is for those few who arrive as refugees, for whom the Office of Refugee Resettlement coordinates settlement assistance through a network of voluntary agencies.

The goals of an integration agenda should be to (1) encourage civic participation, including but not limited to naturalization, (2) overcome known barriers to full incorporation into society such as limited English skills and health care, (3) maximize effectiveness by developing partnerships with state and local governments as well as private sector actors, and (4) strengthen communities by reducing misperceptions about immigration. In addition, resources must be available to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate access to these programs.

**Civic Engagement**

*Citizenship*

Citizenship is a fundamental American value and provides great benefits for both naturalized citizens and the country. It is also considered



the marker of full and genuine membership in American society. According to a 2003 Urban Institute report, almost one-third of the foreign-born population are naturalized U.S. citizens, with the number having nearly doubled during the 1990s to reach eleven million in 2002.

Yet nearly eight million legal permanent residents currently are eligible to become citizens and another 2.7 million will soon become eligible. The nationwide processing backlogs included 627,000 pending naturalization applications in 2003. This is due to a combination of factors, including applications that skyrocketed to well over one million in the 1990s, eligibility by immigrants who were legalized during the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, a reengineered process, and new post-September 11 name checks.

In the Midwest, 76 percent of those eligible to naturalize have done so in Indiana. The figures are 70 percent in Michigan, 65 percent in Kansas and Minnesota, 63 percent in Ohio and Wisconsin, 58 percent in Nebraska and Illinois, and 53 percent in Iowa. In absolute numbers, 340,000 immigrants in Illinois are currently eligible for naturalization, compared to 98,000 in Michigan and 24,000 in Kansas, according to 2002 Current Population Survey data tabulated by the Urban Institute.

In addition to processing backlogs, many of these eligible immigrants possess insufficient English-language proficiency and lower levels of education. Many originate in Mexico, which traditionally has lower rates of naturalization than other countries. Only one million of the twelve million immigrants who entered over the last decade naturalized, though immigrants who entered during the 1980s naturalized at a national rate of 38.9 percent, and 71.3 percent of those who entered before 1980 have become citizens.

**The United States should encourage U.S. citizenship by informing potential applicants of the benefits of citizenship and facilitating the naturalization process.**

Some qualified applicants inadvertently sabotage their chances for naturalization by leaving the country for six months, failing to disclose information on the application, or not filing tax returns. A coor-

**Private sector helps ease transition of immigrants**

The Capital City Fruit Company, a small family-owned business located in Norwalk, Iowa, has approximately 100 employees, many of whom are immigrants from diverse backgrounds. The company recently won the Greater Des Moines Partnership “Diversity Award” for its policies aimed at easing the transition of immigrants into American society.

These policies include free, on-site English as a Second Language classes with a paid bonus upon completion, assistance with naturalization and citizenship, company-sponsored meals that observe multicultural dietary restrictions, and up to four weeks unpaid leave to visit friends and family abroad. The company requires supervisors to learn about foreign cultures and the proper pronunciation of immigrant workers’ names.

minated outreach and orientation strategy could remedy many of these problems.

Overbooked civic education classes and government application fees that have been raised three times in six years make the process more difficult for many, when, in fact, access to such classes should be expanded to facilitate the process. A revised naturalization test is expected to standardize the process, but some are concerned that the test will preclude qualified but less educated, or older, immigrants from passing. Issues bearing on the validity, reliability, and fairness of the redesigned naturalization tests are being reviewed by a panel convened by the National Research Council’s Board on Testing and Assessment and sponsored by the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

**The Task Force is heartened by the ambition and efforts of the new Office of Citizenship within DHS and urges the Congress to provide it with the resources necessary to achieve its mission.**

The Office of Citizenship has a total operational budget of only \$4 million, of which one-quarter is available for program initiatives. There are approximately thirty staff slots, twenty of which are for field-based community liaison officers.

Currently, the office is working on developing a guide for new immigrants, modifying the naturalization oath, and raising awareness

about best practices in integration, while trying to leverage limited resources in developing partnerships nationwide. Nevertheless, the office needs to be expanded, to be given grant authority, and to be empowered within the administration to work out interagency arrangements on issues of mutual concern such as education and language training. Civic engagement should not be limited to naturalization and voting, as it also includes participation in homeowner associations, unions, schools, and community-based organizations.

### Educational System

#### Adults

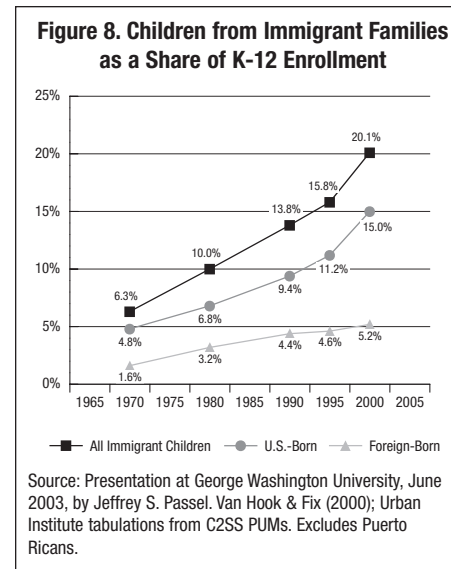
**The Task Force urges the government to make a concerted effort to address the barriers to English language training for adult immigrants, including expanding language training opportunities and access to such opportunities.**

The single most important skill an immigrant can possess to succeed in the United States is a command of the English language. English proficiency improves job prospects and allows effective communication with doctors, police officers, teachers, and others.

However, 75 percent of all U.S. workers with less than a ninth-grade education are immigrants, and 50 percent of all foreign-born workers are Limited English Proficient (LEP). In Illinois, half of reported adult education students are enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Obstacles to learning English include limited course offerings, inconsistency in the quality of these courses, inconvenient class schedules for immigrants (most of whom work full-time and often have more than one job), lack of financial aid, and limited transportation to classes.

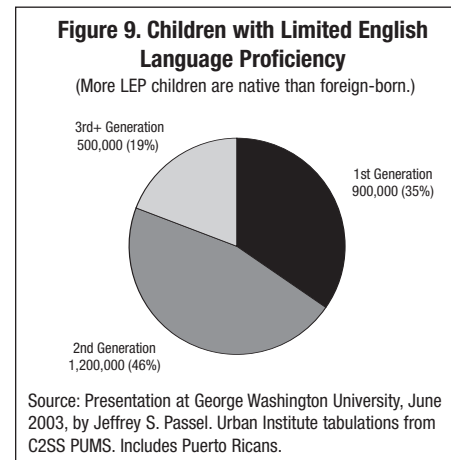
#### Children

For most children, the integration experience occurs through their schools, where they are exposed to the English language and American culture on a daily basis. One in five children in U.S. schools today is the child of an immigrant (see Figure 8), and one in four low-



income children is the child of an immigrant. By 2010 more than 30 percent of school-age children will be the children of immigrants. However, the percentage of LEP students in Illinois has doubled since the mid-1980s, and 85 percent of the parents of foreign-born LEP students are themselves LEP. Figure 9 shows a breakdown of the 2.6 million LEP students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in the United States.

This rapid demographic change has occurred during a period of standards-driven education reform that specifically mandates serving LEP and immigrant students and being held accountable for their progress, as for other students. This has far-reaching implications for students. Education is the single most critical factor that will determine the success of this next generation in terms of integration and future economic and social mobility. All parties must ensure it receives the attention it deserves.



**An expert panel should assess systematically the benefits of the No Child Left Behind Act with regard to its impacts on immigrant students and Limited-English-Proficient youth and develop corrective action proposals if needed.**

Well-known barriers for immigrant and LEP students

include shortages of specially trained staff, a lack of assessment instruments to measure content knowledge and language proficiency, and linguistic isolation (attending schools where fellow students also are LEP).

As schools recruit bilingual/bicultural teachers and improve transitions into mainstream classes, immigrant families should be encouraged to place their children in preschool and Head Start programs as early as possible. These programs, however, often lack sufficient capacity. More slots need to be made available to ensure that the children of immigrants have access to such programs. State governments also could provide incentives for high school graduation such as in-state university tuition or post-graduation vocational training.

### Access to Health Care

**The Task Force urges that greater investments be made towards health and human services for immigrants.**

Given that an individual's health is one of the primary factors influencing his or her capacity to be a productive member of society, access to adequate healthcare increases the immigrant population's potential for full integration into their host communities and impacts their ultimate success in this country. Children of healthy parents are more likely to be healthy themselves and succeed in school.

Yet immigrants are more likely than nonimmigrants to lack health insurance, with low-income noncitizens more than twice as likely to be uninsured as low-income citizens. The Task Force recognizes the financial costs inherent in such a proposal, but as with other uninsured groups, immigrants who lack coverage typically neglect preventive care and end up using far more costly emergency room services, in addition to posing public health risks if they fail to receive necessary medical services.

**In particular, the Task Force recommends that Congress consider extending State Children's Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) to all children regardless of their immigrant status.**

Even when children of ineligible adults are themselves eligible for federally funded care, their parents may not enroll them due to confusion or fear of legal consequences. Language and cultural barriers also prevent some who are eligible from receiving health care, as do shortages of appropriately trained interpreters and legislative exclusions from coverage for new legal immigrants.

Facilitating professional recertification for immigrant health care professionals and providing incentives for appropriately trained health care interpreters can be useful in this regard. Continuing to fund hospitals that treat large numbers of undocumented immigrants would also help.

### Developing Partnerships

**To advance integration, the Task Force recommends the federal government develop partnerships with state and local governments as well as private-sector employers, educational and religious institutions, unions, and community-based organizations.**

For many adult immigrants, the workplace plays the role that schools play for children. It is the center of their integration experience and therefore should be an integral component of a national integration agenda, particularly given immigrant concentration in certain indus-

#### Illinois launches New Americans Initiative

Despite a tough budget year, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich, son of Serbian immigrants, recently proposed the "New Americans Initiative." This \$3 million per year pilot program aims to help 60,000 Illinois immigrants over the next three years learn English and pass the naturalization exam. Illinois currently is home to 1.5 million foreign-born, of whom approximately 340,000 have not become U.S. citizens even though they are eligible.

Working with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, the initiative will fund community-based organizations to undertake coordinated services focused on providing English classes, citizenship preparation, legal counseling, public education, and civic participation. In particular, it will target suburban Chicago and downstate areas, where social service agencies have yet to develop the necessary infrastructure for dealing with large numbers of new immigrants.

tries. Federal, state, and local governments should engage legal immigrants and establish a “New American Fund” for creative English literacy and civics programs, cultural orientation, legal counseling, community outreach, and public awareness through community-based organizations. Other integration activities might include voter registration and citizenship education campaigns, vocational training, and classes on financial awareness.

Established immigration gateways such as Chicago can serve as models for cities newly dealing with the opportunities and challenges of immigrants. Such challenges include creating the necessary infrastructure, services, and support networks for immigrants as well as an identity or culture that takes pride in incorporating newcomers. Such models can be supplemented by research on the unique dynamics of each city, research that can help policymakers tailor the services and approaches to community needs.

### **Strengthening Communities**

**The Task Force recommends outreach to educate the native-born about immigrants and immigrants about the native-born.**

As mentioned earlier, integration is about more than just the adjustment of newcomers into American society. Integration also includes the responsibilities of the native-born and earlier immigrant populations to facilitate this process and, in fact, adapt to and incorporate these newcomers into their own communities.

There are a great many misperceptions among the native-born about immigrants and their impact on society. Moreover, deep and persistent issues of race and poverty have exacerbated the reluctance of some among the native-born to welcome or support new immigrants, while simultaneously fueling misperceptions about competition between the domestic workforce and new arrivals. Such perceptions are harmful to community relations and immigrant integration. At the same time, many new immigrants are unaware of the histories and unique experiences of the native-born or earlier immigrant groups. Educational efforts could go a long way in reducing misperceptions on both sides, building community ties and enhancing support for immigration.

## **VIII. Providing the Necessary Infrastructure**

Reforms are only as good as the ability to implement them. Poor implementation frustrates even the best of intentions. At present, the U.S. immigration system is one in which enforcement of existing laws and implementation of policies are uneven at best, promised services are not delivered, new mandates receive scant resources, information is not easily shared, and multiple actors, including DHS and state governments, are playing key roles.

### **Organizational Structure**

**The Task Force recommends that proposals for immigration reform address organizational and implementation capacity as well as policy reforms.**

A well-managed, credible system is the necessary precursor to achieving any policy goal. Inadequate administrative capacity will hamper even the best policies. A reorganization as large and complex as that of DHS, which must meld agency cultures, personnel, and infrastructure, understandably may take years to fully accomplish. Senior managers must spend a great deal of their time and energy building their agency and resolving bureaucratic challenges, even as they are being asked to carry out a variety of new missions and meet tight deadlines without the supporting infrastructure. Moreover, DHS officials are being asked to accomplish their work with no margin of error, even though, realistically, 100 percent success can never be guaranteed despite their best efforts. The Task Force believes that DHS needs the following:

- Sufficient funding and personnel to accomplish its service and enforcement missions in ways that advance broader policy goals
- A structure for coordination with other government agencies (or even state governments) dealing with immigration

- A transparent and coherent approach (and single focal point) for developing and reviewing immigration policies more broadly and resolving interagency disputes

## Funding

**The Task Force calls for the Congress to ensure that all immigration functions are funded at adequate levels with direct appropriations.**

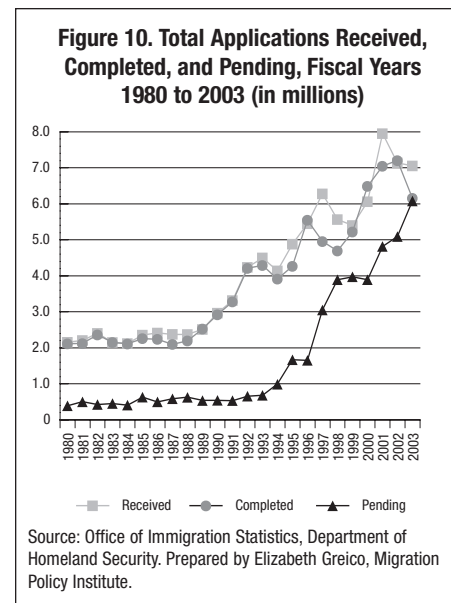
In particular, the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) should receive a much greater percentage of appropriated funds, as is the case for the other immigration-related bureaus in DHS, Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

In fact, for FY 2005 USCIS is losing funds despite demonstrated need for additional resources and personnel to accomplish its mission. It also needs funds to enhance employee training for accurate and consistent applications of immigration laws and for greater processing efficiency. Charging applicants for the processing costs of their applications is legitimate, but fees paid by applicants should not be used to finance infrastructure costs such as improved information systems.

Insufficient funding to accomplish directed mandates is not limited to USCIS. State Department consular officers were restricted in their ability to waive personal interviews of visa applicants overseas in 2003, but they were told to handle the additional interviews with existing resources. Similarly, the expansion of the U.S. VISIT program to land borders is occurring with little funding dedicated to infrastructure improvements that would facilitate operation of that program.

## Backlogs

**The Task Force calls upon the administration and Congress to work together in finalizing and enacting backlog reduction plans, including adequate funding and infrastructure, in order to meet a six-month processing standard.**



The number of pending immigration-related applications has soared since 2001, increasing by nearly 60 percent to 6.2 million overall, according to the General Accounting Office. Otherwise qualified applicants may have to wait until a number is available in their category and for their nationality.

In one example, brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens wait more than 10 years (22 years if they are Filipino) to immigrate. Only now are the applications of

unmarried adult sons and daughters of U.S. citizens who filed in October 2000 being processed. Those parents and children have been separated for at least four years and siblings for decades, unable even to visit in many cases, since visa applications likely would be rejected as “intending immigrants.” Some petitions are being delayed by name checks and other new security measures levied since September 11, processes that need to be improved. Moreover, some employees who used to adjudicate applications were transferred to work on name checks after September 11.

Backlogs undermine credibility in and support for the immigration system. The reduction of these backlogs takes on even greater importance in light of a potentially massive new workload that could result from some of the reforms discussed earlier. Backlogs in one area of the immigration system often create additional workload and delays in others, as individuals are forced to file additional paperwork while waiting for adjudication of their initial application. When resources were shifted to naturalization cases in the Chicago office, it led to a two-and-a-half-year backlog for residency applications.

Delays and unpredictability are resulting in lost opportunities for American companies and universities and leading some separated

family members to attempt illegal entry on their own or with smugglers. Backlogs have also led some refugees, including the disabled and elderly, to lose their primary means of financial support—Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits—because they have been unable to naturalize within the seven-year requirement.

## **IX. A Call to Action**

Immigrants, and the renewal and resiliency they represent, are part of this country's national character and have been a key component of what has made U.S. democracy so vibrant over time. Even more importantly, immigration is critical to the United States' ability to adapt to global and domestic changes now and in the future.

U.S. policies and practices, therefore, must be framed in ways that help, rather than hinder national goals. An immigration system that is in accord with U.S. values, enhances competitiveness, and provides for security is vital for this country's future. This Task Force has proposed many reforms to bring current U.S. immigration law, policies, and functions into line with U.S. national interests. What are the next steps?

### **Presidential Leadership**

**Presidential leadership is essential for progress in immigration reform.**

The January 7, 2004, speech by President Bush has generated serious debate about the important immigration issues that face this country. Combined with Congressional initiatives, immigration issues have returned to the front burner of the policy debate, and the Task Force praises both parties for becoming active on these issues. However, the Task Force recognizes the political complexities of these issues, particularly in an election year.

### **Seizing the Opportunity in 2005**

**The Task Force urges the next president and Congress to make comprehensive immigration reform, inclusive of integration strategies, a top priority for action during 2005.**

The Task Force realizes that the next president will have many pressing matters on his agenda—the war on terrorism, global economic competition, education and health care, and budgetary pressures.

Immigration intersects with all of these issues. And with each day that passes, the situation worsens: more people die at the border, families remain separated, application backlogs grow, workers are exploited, refugees are marooned overseas, scientific and medical research is delayed by visa complications, and potential terrorists try to take advantage of systemic vulnerabilities.

Historically, significant reform has been possible only in the first year or two of an administration when the nettle of complicated politics can be grasped more easily. The country must not squander this opportunity. The president's statement should be a springboard for an expansive and urgent debate.

## Bipartisanship

**The Task Force calls upon Congress, the administration, and the American public to work in a spirit of bipartisanship to enact immigration and integration reforms designed to meet the opportunities and challenges immigration poses for the United States in the decades to come.**

The rhetoric on immigration has become far too divisive and polarized. It is possible, however, to build consensus on immigration issues across the country. For instance, encouraging examples of bipartisanship exist in two current legislative initiatives that relate to agricultural workers (AgJOBS) and college-bound undocumented students (DREAM Act). These could be a foundation upon which to build.

Moreover, this Task Force, representing a cross-section of opinions and interests from across the Midwest, illustrates that consensus can be reached. Our members grappled with these issues sufficiently to devise recommendations that are sensible and that are relevant nationwide. Thoughtful action is imperative. The national interest demands nothing less.

## Conclusion

Temporary and permanent immigration are necessary for the future strength of the Midwest and the country at large. Immigration repre-

sents one of our nation's greatest comparative advantages. Immigrants help preserve and advance the values and vitality of American society internally and around the world. As Secretary of State Colin Powell wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* in April 2004:

“Openness is fundamental to our success as a nation, economically, culturally, and politically. Our economy will sputter unless America remains the magnet for entrepreneurs from across the world. Our culture will stagnate unless we continue to add new richness to our mosaic. And our great national mission of spreading freedom will founder if our own society closes its shutters to new people and ideas. Openness also is central to our diplomatic success, for our openness is a pillar of American influence and leadership, or what is sometimes called ‘soft power.’”

Task Force members, spread out across the heartland of the United States, are eager to share our experiences with the rest of the country, are open to acting as a laboratory to test new ideas, and embrace the nation's immigration tradition both as part of our past and as part of our future.

## **Task Force Chairs**

**Jim Edgar** held a variety of national leadership roles while serving as governor of the State of Illinois from 1990 to 1998. He served as president of the Council of State Governments and chairman of the Education Commission of the States, the Committee on Economic Development, the education committee of the National Governors' Association, Midwest Governors' Association, and the Governors' Ethanol Coalition. He also served on the executive committee of the National Governors' Association. Governor Edgar's retirement from public office in 1999 marked 30 years of state government service. He is currently a distinguished fellow at the University of Illinois' Institute of Government and Public Affairs and lectures at other colleges and universities throughout the state. In the fall of 1999 Governor Edgar was a resident fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He also serves on a variety of corporate and civic boards.

**Doris Meissner**, former commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) from October 1993 to November 2000, is a senior fellow at the Migration Policy Institute (MPI). She contributes to MPI's project on national security and immigration and conducts policy research on international migration and development and on immigration policymaking in an era of globalization. Her impressive accomplishments include reforming the nation's asylum system; creating new strategies for managing U.S. borders in the context of open trade; improving services for immigrants; managing migration and humanitarian crises firmly and compassionately; and strengthening cooperation and joint initiatives with Mexico, Canada, and other countries. Ms. Meissner is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, where she earned both her bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees.

**Alejandro Silva** is president of Evans Food Products Co., a food service company specializing in snack production and marketing. Operations are based in Chicago, Illinois, with joint ventures in Canada, Mexico, Colombia, and the Philippines. The company, which

has been in operation since 1947, was acquired by Mr. Silva in 1985. Mr. Silva has been in the food industry since 1972. He received a bachelor's degree in food technology from Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Mexico. He received a master's degree in food engineering from the National College of Food Technology in Weybridge Surrey, England. He has also received diplomas from the London School of Foreign Trade and from the College of Distributive Trades in advanced meat technology.



## Task Force Members

### **Ismael Ahmed**

*Executive Director*

*Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)*

Ismael Ahmed is cofounder of the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services organization (ACCESS) in Detroit, Michigan. Mr. Ahmed is also a vice chair of New Detroit, Inc., chairman of the Cultural Exchange Network, and a contributing author of the book *Arabs in America: Myths and Reality*.

### **Thomas Balanoff**

*President*

*Service Employees International Union—Illinois Council*

Thomas Balanoff is the president of Local 1 Service Employees International Union (SEIU). He serves as cochair of Chicago Jobs with Justice, is a founding member of Chicago Metropolitan Sponsors, and is on the board of the Anti-Defamation League and the Coalition for Better Health Care.

### **Rekha Basu**

*Editorial Page Columnist*

*Des Moines Register*

Rekha Basu has been writing commentaries for the *Des Moines Register* since November 1991, first as an editorial writer and then as a columnist. In 2001 Basu took a one-year leave to work as a columnist for *The South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. She has served on the Iowa Supreme Court's task force on race and is currently on the board of advisors of the University of Maryland's Journalism Fellowships in Child and Family.

### **Margaret Blackshere**

*President*

*Illinois AFL-CIO*

Margaret Blackshere was elected president of the Illinois AFL-CIO in 2000 after serving as secretary-treasurer from 1993-2000. She serves on a variety of boards and councils, including the Irish

American Labor Coalition, United Way of Illinois, Workers' Compensation Advisory Board, Unemployment Insurance Advisory Board, and the Alliance for Retired Americans.

### **Roland W. Burris**

*Counsel*

*Burris, Wright Slaughter and Tom, LLC*

Roland W. Burris serves as manager and chief executive officer of Burris & Lebed Consulting, LLC. He also acts as counsel to the law firm of Burris, Wright, Slaughter & Tom, LLC. Mr. Burris is currently serving on the board of directors of the Inland Real Estate Corporation as an independent director. Mr. Burris' government experience includes serving as Illinois State Comptroller (1979-91) and attorney general for the State of Illinois (1991-95).

### **Anna Peterson Crosslin**

*President and Executive Director*

*International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis*

Since 1978 Anna Crosslin has been president and executive director of the International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis, which is the area's central clearinghouse for services to and information about St. Louis' ethnic communities.

### **Irene Cualoping**

*Principal and Founder*

*ENERI Communications, LLC*

Irene Cualoping is managing partner, principal, and founder of Chicago-based ENERI Communications, LLC, a full-service creative advertising, global marketing, strategic communications and interactive Web design venture founded in the year 2000.

### **José M. De Lasa**

*Senior Vice President and General Counsel*

*Abbot Laboratories*

José De Lasa joined Abbott Laboratories, a diversified health care company headquartered in north suburban Chicago, in December 1994 as senior vice president, secretary, and general counsel. He

manages a law department that comprises more than sixty lawyers and is a member of the company's executive staff committee.

**Barry Edmonston**

*Director, Population Research Center*

*Professor, School of Urban Studies and Planning*

*Portland State University*

Barry Edmonston has been in demographic and statistical research since 1974. He currently directs the Population Research Center at Portland State University. He also serves as a professor in the College of Urban and Public Affairs, where he teaches courses in demography. In addition, he is the senior researcher in the program on Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM) at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia.

**D. Cameron Findlay**

*Executive Vice President and General Counsel*

*Aon Corporation*

D. Cameron Findlay is executive vice president and general counsel of Aon Corporation in Chicago. Before joining Aon, Findlay served from 2001 to 2003 as deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor in the administration of President George W. Bush. Findlay's previous professional experience includes serving as a partner at the law firm of Sidley Austin Brown & Wood.

**Michael Fix**

*Principal Research Associate*

*Population Studies Center, Urban Institute*

Michael Fix is a lawyer and principal research associate at the Urban Institute, where he directs the Immigration Studies Program. The focus of his work in recent years has been in the areas of immigration, the well-being of immigrant families and children, and civil rights policy.

**Jesus Garcia**

*Executive Director*

*Little Village Community Development Corporation*

Jesus Garcia, a resident of Little Village for thirty-one years, is executive director of the Little Village Community Development Corporation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to achieving balanced development projects that are responsive to the needs of residents and businesses of Little Village.

**Lourdes Gouveia**

*Director, Office of Latino/Latin American Studies*

*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Lourdes Gouveia is associate professor of sociology and director of Latino/Latin American Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She has participated in numerous international research projects and coauthored a variety of books and articles on the interrelation between the global restructuring of meat processing, the recruitment of Latino immigrant labor, and the implications of these changes for the future of Latino immigrant labor flows.

**Susan Gzesh**

*Director, Human Rights Program*

*University of Chicago*

Susan Gzesh is the director of the Human Rights Program, acting director of the Center for International Studies, and a lecturer in law at the University of Chicago. Ms. Gzesh has worked as a practicing attorney in federally funded legal services programs serving migratory workers and immigrants, in private practice representing individuals and institutions in immigration and civil rights cases, and for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

**Joshua W. Hoyt**

*Executive Director*

*Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights*

Josh Hoyt has worked for twenty-five years as an organizer for social justice in Chicago, Baltimore, and in the countries of Panama, Peru, and Spain. He also has extensive administrative experience in managing nonprofit organizations, including eight years of work in the poorest Latino communities of Chicago.

**Verne G. Istock**

*Retired Chairman and President  
Bank One Corporation*

Verne G. Istock retired on September 30, 2000, as president of Bank One Corporation, having previously served as chairman of the board. In addition, he is a member of the board of directors of the Chicago Crime Commission, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, and the Economic Club of Chicago and is a member of the Commercial Club of Chicago.

**Richard M. Jaffee**

*Chairman of the Board  
Oil-Dri Corporation of America*

Mr. Jaffee joined Oil-Dri in 1958 and served as its president from 1960 to 1995 and chief executive officer from 1962 to 1997. Mr. Jaffee retired as an employee of the company in 2000. He has served as chairman of the board since 1962. He is a trustee and member of the executive committee of Rush-Presbyterian–St. Luke’s Medical Center and the Illinois Institute of Technology.

**Randel K. Johnson**

*Vice President, Labor, Immigration & Employee Benefits  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce*

Mr. Johnson joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in 1997. He is primarily responsible for labor, employee benefits, and immigration issues pending before the U.S. Congress and the federal agencies. Prior to joining the chamber, Mr. Johnson was the Republican labor coordinator for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Mr. Johnson currently serves on the Department of Homeland Security Data Management Improvement Act Task Force.

**Michael Kotzin**

*Executive Vice President  
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago*

Michael Kotzin is executive vice president of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago. He joined the staff in 1988 as director of its Jewish Community Relations Council, a

position he held until July 1999. He continues to supervise the activities of that body.

**Alfredo S. Lanier**

*Editor, Editorial Board  
Chicago Tribune*

Alfredo Lanier is a member of the editorial board of the *Chicago Tribune*. His areas of specialization include immigration policy, Latin American affairs, and Latino issues in the United States. Prior to his present position, Lanier served on the *Tribune*’s foreign desk and was the founding editor of *Exitto*, a Spanish-language weekly the *Tribune* published for ten years.

**Ngoan Le**

*Special Assistant to Mayor Daley on Homelessness  
City of Chicago*

Ngoan Le was recently appointed special assistant to Chicago’s mayor on homelessness. In this position, she coordinates the City Inter-Agency Task Force on Homelessness and cochairs the Chicago Continuum of Care, a consortium of more than 200 organizations. A refugee from Vietnam, Le is active with efforts to advance the Asian American community. She has served on the board of many organizations, including the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium.

**Sid Mohn**

*President  
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights*

Sid Mohn is president of Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights, a comprehensive antipoverty and human rights organization engaged in service and policy solutions on issues of immigration, poverty, disadvantage, and displacement. He joined the organization in 1980 and also serves as president of its three partner agencies: Chicago Connections, Century Place Development Corp., and Chicago Health Outreach, Inc.

**Belkis Cervantes Muldoon**

*Immigration Counsel and Director of Global Immigration Services Motorola, Inc.*

Belkis Muldoon is immigration counsel and director of Motorola's Global Immigration Services in Schaumburg, Illinois. Most recently, she has been interim corporate chair of the Executive Working Group for Global Mobility Policies (EWG). Muldoon is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and a member of the Cook County State's Attorney's, Illinois State Comptroller's, and the Illinois Secretary of State's Hispanic Advisory Councils.

**Clare Muñana**

*President  
Ancora Associates, Inc.*

Clare Muñana is a public sector, not-for-profit, and international management consultant operating her own firm. She is also currently a member of the board of education of the City of Chicago (appointed by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 1999), a trustee of the Aspen Institute, and vice chairman of the board of the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum.

**Talat Othman**

*Chairman and CEO  
Grove Financial Inc.*

Talat M. Othman formed Grove Financial Inc. in 1995 and currently serves as chairman and chief executive officer. In addition, he serves on the board of governors of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the board of the Middle East Policy Council, and the honorary board of the Middle East Center at University of Chicago. He was born in Betunia, Palestine, and immigrated to the United States with his family in 1947, settling in Chicago.

**Edward A. Pease**

*Senior Vice President of Government Relations  
Rolls-Royce*

Edward A. Pease joined Rolls-Royce North America on March 15, 2001, as senior vice president of government relations. Prior to joining Rolls-Royce, Pease served two terms as a United States con-

gressman, seventh district, Indiana, during which time he served as a member of the House Judiciary Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and House Small Business Committee.

**William D. Persell**

*Bishop  
The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago*

William D. Persell was elected the eleventh bishop of Chicago on November 14, 1998, and was ordained and consecrated bishop on March 13, 1999. He also currently serves as a member of the boards of trustees of Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, and the Christian Century Foundation. He is president of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago.

**Margot L. Pritzker**

*Civic Leader*  
Margot L. Pritzker, 53, was born in Sale, England, and became a United States citizen in 1994. She serves as a trustee of the Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School, where she was chairman of the board and a board of trustee member since 1981. She is also a trustee of the board of the Children's Hospital of Chicago and a director of The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations.

**Sylvia Puente**

*Director, Metropolitan Chicago Initiative  
University of Notre Dame, Institute for Latino Studies*  
Sylvia Puente serves as the director of the Metropolitan Chicago Initiative for the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame. She oversees the Berwyn-Cicero Community Initiative, researching public policy issues that impact the Latino community and serves on the board of the Chicago Foundation for Women, the Leadership Greater Chicago Fellows Board, and the leadership circle of the National Network for Women in Community Development.

**Paul J. Redmond**

*Consultant*  
Since retiring from the Clandestine Service of the Central

Intelligence Agency after 33 years of service, Paul J. Redmond has consulted in the area of commercial counterespionage and was retained by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. In 2003 he served at the Department of Homeland Security and is currently a member of a commission advising the director of central intelligence (DCI) on the integration and analysis of terrorist threat information.

**Peggy Rosenzweig**

*Member of the Board of Regents  
University of Wisconsin*

Peggy Rosenzweig served in the Wisconsin State Senate from 1993 to 2002 and the State Assembly from 1983 to 1992. During her twenty years of legislative service, she focused on issues relating to health care, the environment, and education. She is a member of the National Advisory Council on Health Care Corps and the Wisconsin Historical Society Foundation and a former member of the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board.

**Adele Simmons**

*Vice Chair and Senior Executive  
Chicago Metropolis 2020*

Adele Simmons is currently vice chair of Chicago Metropolis 2020, a senior research associate at the University of Chicago, president of the Global Philanthropy Partnership, and a senior advisor to the World Economic Forum. Mrs. Simmons is currently on the board of Marsh and McLennan Companies and a number of nonprofit organizations, including The Chicago Council of Foreign Relations.

**Paul L. Zulkie**

*Managing Partner  
Zulkie Partners LLC*

Mr. Zulkie concentrates his practice in business immigration and corporate law in Chicago. He is the president-elect of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and will become president in June 2004. In addition, Zulkie is a regular lecturer at local and national continuing legal education seminars on the subject of business immigration and has published several articles in nationally distributed publications.

**Observers**

Michael Berry  
*Federal Reserve Bank, Chicago*

J.D. Bindenagel  
*The Chicago Council on Foreign  
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Oussama Jammal  
*The Mosque Foundation*

Michael Moskow  
*Federal Reserve Bank, Chicago*

Edwin Silverman  
*Illinois Department of Human  
Services*

Roberto Suro  
*Pew Hispanic Center*

Alicia Williams  
*Federal Reserve Bank, Chicago*

## Appendix A

**Table 1. The 10 fastest growing occupations, 2002-12**

(Numbers in thousands of jobs)

Occupation	Employment		Change		Most significant source of post-secondary education or training <sup>(1)</sup>
	2002	2012	Number	Percent	
Medical assistants	365	579	215	59	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Network systems and data communications analysts	186	292	106	57	Bachelor's degree
Physician assistants	63	94	31	49	Bachelor's degree
Social and human service assistants	305	454	149	49	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Home health aides	580	859	279	48	Short-term on-the-job training
Medical records and health information technicians	147	216	69	47	Associate degree
Physical therapist aides	37	54	17	46	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer software engineers, applications	394	573	179	46	Bachelor's degree
Computer software engineers, systems software	281	409	128	45	Bachelor's degree
Physical therapist assistants	50	73	22	45	Associate degree

(1) An occupation is placed into one of 11 categories that best describes the education or training needed by most workers to become fully qualified.

Source: Hecker, Daniel E., "Occupational Employment Projections to 2012" in *BLS Monthly Labor Review Online*, February 2004, Vol. 127, No. 2. ([www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art5full.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art5full.pdf))

**Table 2. The 10 occupations with the largest job growth, 2002-12**

(Numbers in thousands of jobs)

Occupation	Employment		Change		Most significant source of post-secondary education or training <sup>(1)</sup>
	2002	2012	Number	Percent	
Registered nurses	2,284	2,908	623	27	Associate degree
Postsecondary teachers	1,581	2,184	603	38	Doctoral degree
Retail salespersons	4,076	4,672	596	15	Short-term on-the-job training
Customer service representatives	1,894	2,354	460	24	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	1,990	2,444	454	23	Short-term on-the-job training
Cashiers, except gaming	3,432	3,886	454	13	Short-term on-the-job training
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	2,267	2,681	414	18	Short-term on-the-job training
General and operations managers	2,049	2,425	376	18	Bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience
Waiters and waitresses	2,097	2,464	367	18	Short-term on-the-job training
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	1,375	1,718	343	25	Short-term on-the-job training

(1) An occupation is placed into one of 11 categories that best describes the education or training needed by most workers to become fully qualified.

Source: Hecker, Daniel E., "Occupational Employment Projections to 2012" in *BLS Monthly Labor Review Online*, February 2004, Vol. 127, No. 2. ([www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art5full.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2004/02/art5full.pdf))

## Appendix B

### Legal Immigration Preference System

Category		Numerical limit
Total family-sponsored immigrants		480,000
Immediate relatives	Aliens who are the spouses and unmarried minor children of U.S. citizens and the parents of adult U.S. citizens	Unlimited
Family-sponsored preference immigrants		Worldwide level 226,000
1st preference	Unmarried sons and daughters of citizens	23,400 plus visas not required for 4th preference
2nd preference	(A) Spouses and children of LPRs (B) Unmarried sons and daughters of LPRs	114,200 plus visas not required for 1st preference
3rd preference	Married sons and daughters of citizens	23,400 plus visas not required for 1st or 2nd preference
4th preference	Siblings of citizens age 21 and over	65,000 plus visas not required for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd preference
Employment-based preference immigrants		Worldwide level 140,000
1st preference	Priority workers: persons of extraordinary ability in the arts, science, education, business, or athletics; outstanding professors and researchers; and certain multinational executives and managers	28.6% of worldwide limit plus unused 4th and 5th preference
2nd preference	Members of the professions holding advanced degrees or persons of exceptional abilities in the sciences, art, or business	28.6% of worldwide limit plus unused 1st preference
3rd preference — skilled	Skilled shortage workers with at least two years training or experience, professionals with baccalaureate degrees	28.6% of worldwide limit plus unused 1st or 2nd preference
3rd preference — “other”	Unskilled shortage workers	10,000 (taken from the total available for 3rd preference)
4th preference	“Special immigrants,” including ministers of religion, religious workers other than ministers, certain employees of the U.S. government abroad, and others	7.1% of worldwide limit; religious workers limited to 5,000
5th preference	Employment creation investors who invest at least \$1 million (amount may vary in rural areas or areas of high unemployment) which will create at least 10 new jobs	7.1% of worldwide limit; 3,000 <i>minimum</i> reserved for investors in rural or high unemployment areas

Source: Congressional Research Service summary of §203(a), §203(b) and §204 of INA; 8U.S.C. 1153, in Ruth Ellen Wasem, “U.S. Immigration Policy on Permanent Admissions,” Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, Library of Congress, February 18, 2004.

## Appendix C

### Task Force Meeting Speakers

#### Session I: Opening Comments and Background to the Issues

##### Michael Fix\*

*Principal Research Associate  
Population Studies Center  
Urban Institute*

##### Charles B. Keely

*Donald G. Herzberg Professor of International Migration  
Georgetown University*

##### Rob Paral

*Independent Research Consultant  
Institute for Metropolitan Affairs  
Roosevelt University (Chicago, IL)*

#### Session II: Immigration and the U.S. Economy

##### B. Lindsay Lowell

*Director of Policy Studies  
Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown  
University*

##### Brian R. Perryman

*Former District Director, Illinois  
U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration & Naturalization Service*

##### Finis Welch

*Distinguished Professor of Economics and Abell Professor of  
Liberal Arts  
Texas A&M University*

\* Task Force member

### **Session III: Legal Permanent Immigration and Integration Issues**

**Mark Krikorian**

*Executive Director*

*Center for Immigration Studies*

**Dhooleka Raj**

*Principal Health Research Scientist*

*Centers for Public Health Research and Evaluation, Battelle*

*Memorial Institute Fellow, Lucy Cavendish College*

*The University of Cambridge*

**Barbara Strack**

*Independent Consultant*

*Former Director, Center for the New American Community*

*National Immigration Forum in Washington*

*Former Acting Executive Associate Commissioner, Office of Policy and Planning*

*Immigration and Naturalization Service*

### **Session IV: The Undocumented Population and Homeland Security**

**Jeffrey Passel**

*Principal Research Associate*

*The Urban Institute*

**John Quattrochi**

*Special Advisor*

*National Counterintelligence Executive*

**Paul Redmond\***

*Intelligence Consultant*

### **Session V: Immigration and Labor**

**Charity Wilson**

*Lead Policy Analyst*

*Public Policy Department*

*AFL-CIO*

## **Resources**

### **List of Readings, Handouts, and Briefing Materials for Task Force Sessions**

#### **Session I**

##### *Overview of Policy*

“The A,B,C’s of U.S. Immigration.” The National Immigration Forum, Online.

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##### *Demographics*

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“Immigration of the Heartland: How Immigration Is Revitalizing America’s Midwest.” Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights in collaboration with Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights, June 2000.



Rob Paral and Michael Norkewicz, "The Metro Chicago Immigration Fact Book." Institute for Metropolitan Affairs, Roosevelt University, June 2003.

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## Session II

### *Globalization and International Migration*

"Growing Global Migration and Its Implications for the United States." *National Intelligence Estimate*, National Intelligence Council, March 2001, pp. 1-32.

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George J. Borjas, "Immigration Policy: A Proposal." Richard D. Lamm and Alan Simpson, eds., *Blueprints for an Ideal Legal Immigration Policy*, Center Paper #17, March 2001.

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### *Legal Permanent Immigration*

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<http://www.cis.org/articles/2001/blueprints/toc.html>

T. Alexander Aleinikoff, "Legal Immigration Reform: Toward Rationality and Equality."

John Isbister, "Give Higher Priorities to Refugees."

Mark Krikorian, “Legal Immigration: What Is To Be Done?”

Susan S. Martin, “Setting Priorities in Immigration Policy.”

*Social and Cultural Integration Issues—General*

Frank D. Bean, Mark A. Fossett, and Kyung Tae Park, “Labor Market Dynamics and the Effects of Immigration on African Americans.” Gerald D. Jaynes, ed., *Immigration and Race: New Challenges for American Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Michael Fix, Wendy Zimmerman, and Jeffrey D. Passel, “Immigration Studies: The Integration of Immigrant Families in the United States.” Washington D.C.: Urban Institute Press, July 2001.

Demetrios Papademetriou, “Policy Considerations for Immigrant Integration.” Migration Policy Institute, October 1, 2003  
[www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=171](http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=171)

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*Social and Cultural Integration Issues—Health/Education*

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“Strengthening Illinois’ Immigrant Policy: Improving Health and Human Services for Immigrants and Refugees” (Executive Summary). *Illinois Immigrant Policy Project*, August 2002.

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## Web Resources

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The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy: [www.brookings.edu/urban](http://www.brookings.edu/urban)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics: [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

The Census Bureau: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

Center for Immigration Studies: [www.cis.org](http://www.cis.org)

Citizenship and Immigration Canada:

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.html)

and Canada Border Services Agency:

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.html](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.html)

Department of Homeland Security

*Citizenship and Immigration Services:*

<http://uscis.gov>

*Customs and Border Protection:* [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov)

*Immigration and Customs Enforcement:* [www.ice.gov](http://www.ice.gov)

*Immigration Statistics:*

<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/index.htm>

Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs:  
<http://travel.state.gov>

General Accounting Office (GAO) reports by topic:  
[www.gpoaccess.gov/gaoreports/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gaoreports/index.html)

Georgetown University Institute for the Study of International Migration: [www.georgetown.edu/sfs/programs/isim](http://www.georgetown.edu/sfs/programs/isim)

Library of Congress Legislative Information on the Internet (THOMAS): <http://thomas.loc.gov>

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National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States: [www.9-11commission.gov](http://www.9-11commission.gov)

White House press releases and speeches by President George W. Bush: [www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/immigration](http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/immigration)

The Urban Institute: [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org)

# **Keeping the Promise: Immigration Proposals from the Heartland**

Report of an Independent Task Force  
Sponsored by The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations

Immigration is transforming this country, yet the United States currently lacks comprehensive and effective policies for managing its immigration system or responding to changing trends. The impact is being felt in the Midwest and nationwide as the country deals with significant growth in immigration and large-scale integration issues. To address these issues, The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations convened an Independent Task Force to examine the key opportunities and challenges of U.S. immigration and develop a set of recommendations for national policy reform.

The Task Force finds the U.S. immigration system to be poorly equipped to handle its critical mandates. Policy goals are insufficiently articulated, laws are overly complicated, immigrant integration is largely unaddressed on a federal level, processes are inefficient, and resources are insufficient to meet massive demand and be responsive to economic needs. The nation is struggling to meet the sometimes conflicting objectives of enhancing homeland security and ensuring the timely and efficient movement of people in and out of the country that is so crucial to the U.S. economy and society. In addition, the growing undocumented population is creating a disconnect between law and reality that breeds disrespect for American laws and values.

The Task Force recommends modification and greater flexibility in the temporary and permanent-based categories, backlog reductions, and timely processing of visa applications in order to facilitate trade, travel, study, and family reunification. Other recommendations include an earned legalization program for the undocumented and the development of a national integration policy. In taking such actions, the United States must maintain effective border controls, develop better information-sharing methods and database integration efforts between government agencies, and provide increased funding for the Department of Homeland Security to carry out its myriad immigration-related functions.