



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
O F F L O R I D A

# *Immigration*

## **What Concerned Citizens Need to Know**

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# Purpose of this Presentation

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- Share some Facts and the Faces of Immigration
- Gain a Deeper Understanding of the Immigration Issue
- Take Informed Action



# Content:

- Some Facts About Immigration
- Immigrants Contribute to the Economy
- Multiple Paths to Legal Permanent Residency
- Components of Evolving Comprehensive Immigration Reform Legislation & Executive Order of 2014
- League Position on Immigration
- What Can You DO? Take Action!
- Questions?????
- Resources

# *Enforcement vs. Intake Costs*

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- Immigration Enforcement FY2015 = \$18.5B
  - FBI = \$8.3B
  - Immigration and Customs Enforcement: \$5.4B
    - Second largest federal investigative agency
    - Removed 368,644 individuals in FY2013
      - 59% convicted criminals
      - 89% increase since FY2008
    - Funded 30,539 detention beds @ \$119 per day
      - \$184.8M decrease
  - Customs and Border Protection: \$13.1B
  - Immigration Intake FY2015 = \$3.3B
  - Citizen and Immigration Services

# *Where Do Immigrants Come From?*

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- US Foreign Born Population = 40.4 M or 12.9%

## Top Countries of Origin

- Mexico 29%
  - China & India 5%
  - Philippines 4%
  - Cuba & El Salvador 3%
- **Some other Immigrant statistics -- in 2013**
    - 990,553 received new green cards
    - 779,929 became citizens

# *Where Do Immigrants Come From?*

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- FL Foreign Born Population = 3.74 M or 19.4%  
Top 3 Countries of Origin
  - Cuba 23.1%
  - Mexico 7.2%
  - Colombia 6.3%
  - 75.2% from Latin America
- 48.5% of Foreign Born have become U.S.C.  
Immigrant statistics - in 2011

# *Contributions to the Economy*

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- **Nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, CIR will**
  - Reduce deficit by \$200B over 10 years/\$700B over the next decade
  - Increase real GDP 3.3% by 2023/5.4% by 2033
- **Increased immigration strengthens Social Security**
- **Immigrants start more business:** twice as likely to start bss. Immigrants started 28% of all new bss, accounting for 13% of US pop.
- **Immigrant owned bss create jobs for Americans:** 4.7mill jobs, and \$776bill in revenue
- **Immigrants boosts demand for local consumer goods:** Imm earned \$1.1trillion, purchasing power of Latinos \$1.5trill & Asians \$775bill by 2015
- **40% Fortune 500 founded by immigrants:** employ 10mill people worldwide & \$4.2trill in revenue

# Should Best and Brightest remain in US?

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- **Immigrants develop technology and companies:**  
1/3 of growth of patenting per capita in 1990s, resulted in US GDP increase of 2.4%.  
Immi started 25% of public co backed by venture capital investors:  
Google, eBay, Yahoo! Sun Microsystems and Intel
- **Immigrants innovate as scientist and engineers:**  
representing 50% of PhD in math and IT and 57% in engineering



# Agriculture & Immigration Facts:

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- 78% of Farm Workers are foreign born (NAWS)
- 2 – 3mill farmworkers labor US fields, including handpicking and fruit and vegetable crops
- Average salary: \$10,000 – 12,500/year/individ. or \$15,000 - \$17,500/year/family
- No protection: health problems, below minimum wages, threats of deportation, no drivers lic.
- Current H-2A system for farmworkers is inefficient: 4 gov' t agencies, 4 mths. to process

# Paths to Legal Permanent Residency or 'Greencard'

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- **Family Based Immigration Channel**
  - Immediate relatives of US Citizens – spouses, minor children and parents -- **no** cap
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Pref: Unmarried adult children of US Citizens – Wait 7+
  - 2A Pref: Spouses and minor children of LPRs – Wait 1+
  - 2B Pref: Unmarried adult children of LPRs – Wait 6+
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Pref: Married adult children of US Citizens – Wait 11+
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Pref: Adult siblings of US Citizens – Wait 12+
- **Total Family based cap = 226,000**

+ excludes China India, Mexico & Philipines

# Paths to Legal Permanent Residency or 'Greencard'

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- **Employee Based Immigration Categories**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Pref: individuals of extraordinary ability, executives/managers, national interest\*
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Pref: individuals holding advanced degrees\*
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Pref: Skilled workers – Wait 1+\*
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Pref: Special immigrants including Afghan/Iraqi translators, international org workers and religious leaders
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Pref: Immigrant investors (\$500,000 or 1mill)
- **Total Employee based cap = 140,000**

\* Category excludes China, India, Mexico & Philippines

# Process for 'Greencard'

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- Step 1: US Citizen, LPR or US Employer files a visa petition to USCIS, establishing priority date.
  - USCIS approves petition
  - Priority date determines where in the line the immigrant falls
  - Lines are by preference and/or per country of origin
- Step 2: Immigrant applies for visa
  - Wait for a current priority date
  - Visa number available in requested visa category
  - Department of State publishes monthly Visa Bulletin with current dates

# Waiting Periods

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- Demand far exceeds current annual limits in most categories – 4.4M in line
- Per country demand is not even
- Countries with higher demand = longer waits
  - Currently Mexico, Philippines, China & India
  - Mexico – applications filed before July 22, 1993
  - Philippines – applications filed before October 15, 1998
- Waiting period can be as much as two decades

# Evolving Federal Immigration Reform

- The Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill in 2013. House did not.
  - Executive Orders: work permits, deportation stays
    - Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals – June, 2012
    - Expansion of DACA -- Announced November, 2014
      - Individuals 16 or less and entry before 1/1/10
      - Expected implementation date: February 2015
    - Creation of Deferred Action for Parental Accountability
      - Parents as of 11/20/14 & entry prior to 1/1/10
      - Expected implementation date: May 2015
- Work authorization (EAD) for 3 years

**\*\*ALERT OF NOTARIO FRAUD\*\***

# Update on Cuba

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- Cubans or dependents of Cubans are eligible for the Greencard under the Cuban Adjustment Act (CAA – 1966) after a year and a day in U.S.
- Cubans are considered Refugees
- Relations between U.S. & Cuba are being restored
- Fear that CAA may be repealed
- Travel to Cuba: license is not currently being required, but must be within an authorized category: visit relatives, academics, professional research, sports, religious
- LWVF's Sisters Across the Straits Program (2012) has taken XX league member. May not need the OFAC license

# League's Position on Immigration

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- Reunification of immediate families
- Provision for economic, business and employment needs of the United States
- Responsiveness to those facing political or humanitarian crises
- Provision for qualified students to obtain visas for study in the United States
- Due process for all persons
- A system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to learn legal status.



# Immigration at State Level:

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- Legislation allowing Drivers' License for undocumented in Florida (1mill people) would:
  - Provide safer roads because all drivers will be required to take a driving test
  - More drivers will be covered by car insurance
  - A boost to our local economy because licensed drivers can more easily purchase vehicles and car insurance.
  - Lower insurance premiums for all Floridians
  - Increased revenue to our state because there will be new drivers paying fees to register their car, take a driving test and renew their tag
  - Removes fear for the undocumented who have often gotten pulled over for driving w/o a license and then turned in for deportation.

# What Can You Do? Take ACTION!

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- LWVUS – Action Alerts
  - Express support for Comprehensive Immigration Reform per League’s Immigration Position
  - To your US Representative & both US Senators
- LWVF – Action Alerts & Weekly Capital Reports
  - Show your support for Drivers’ Licenses for undocumented immigrants in Florida
  - To your FL Representative and FL Senator
- Email – simply go to their website, call, visit local office and talk with Staff, write letters to the Editor
- **Most importantly -- ACT**

# Questions???



# Resources

- ***The Economic Case for Commonsense Immigration Reform*** by Gene Sperling, 3/13/13. The White House Blog.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/03/13/economic-case-commonsense-immigration-reform>
- ***Going to the Back of the Line***, Migration Policy Institute Issue Brief, March 2013
- ***MPI Data Hub: Migration Facts, Stats and Maps***, Migration Policy Institute, November 8, 2012
- ***The President's FY2015 Budget: Department of Homeland Security***
- ***National Agricultural Workers Survey*** (NAWS, Farmworker Justice]
- **Florida Immigrant Coalition** (FLIC), Maria Rodriguez Executive Director, (305) 571-7254 [maria@floridaimmigrant.org](mailto:maria@floridaimmigrant.org)