# THE CASE FOR PROTECTING LEGAL IMMIGRATION AGAINST RECENT ATTACKS

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Developed by



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#### REPORT: ATTACKS ON LEGAL IMMIGRATION

Immigrants and immigration are good for our country, good for our communities, and good for our economy. The U.S.' greatest competitive advantage has long been a culture that welcomes immigrants and provides them with the freedom and opportunity to thrive. For generations, immigration has been a unique source of civic and economic strength, which grows GDP, increases wages for Americans, and has helped the United States avoid the fate of stagnant economies that have further struggled with an aging workforce.

This report details the intentional effort by the current Administration and some Members of Congress to make immigration harder and more burdensome with the goal of reducing overall legal immigration. In the face of failed legislative efforts to reduce legal immigration levels drastically, the Administration has pursued a series of misguided policies designed to impede aspiring Americans from immigrating legally to the United States, and to make it more difficult for those already here to take part in the American Dream. Growing attacks on legal immigration levels have brought about harmful regulations, unnecessary obstacles, and detrimental enforcement actions.

It is important to remember that efforts to gut our legal immigration system exacerbate an already broken immigration system that keeps the United States at an economic disadvantage. The status quo already makes it too hard for immigrants to come and contribute to our country, and too easy for those who are here already contributing to be removed. A patchwork of ad hoc policies have been implemented over the course of many years to address these shortcomings, but have instead resulted in an immigration system at conflict with our country's core values, leaving the United States at a severe economic disadvantage.

Recent efforts to further stymie immigration reflect a growing attack on legal immigration that undermines the U.S.' global standing, threatens our economic leadership, and fundamentally contradicts our nation's heritage as a country that welcomes immigrants from every corner of the globe. Moreover, eliminating avenues for people to immigrate to the United States would **devastate economic growth in the United States causing as much as a two percent drop in GDP by 2040, with 4.6 million fewer jobs.** This report will outline the overall benefits of immigrants and immigration, as well as the policies and regulations that have been pursued over the last year, and the impact on our families, communities, and economy.

# IMMIGRANTS ARE ECONOMIC MULTIPLIERS

A number of renowned economists<sup>2</sup> agree that immigrants are good for the U.S., bringing skills, work ethic, and a determination that has helped build the most dynamic and powerful economy in the world. Immigration complements and heightens the good work that nativeborn Americans are doing, facilitates diverse skill sets and new ideas

"America is a land of immigrants. It's who we are. From our farms to our hospitals to our laboratories, immigrants are helping to move our country forward."

—Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) (Alaska Public Media, 06 Dec. 2017.) to keep our workforce flexible,<sup>3</sup> helps companies grow faster,<sup>4</sup> and increases the productivity of American workers. The influx of foreign-born families is also responsible for creating trillions of dollars in housing wealth across the country, helping to bolster property values, stabilize less desirable communities, and revitalize neighborhoods in cities experiencing decline.<sup>5</sup> Arguments that claim immigrants take American jobs are fundamentally flawed. Immigrants not only create jobs for Americans, being twice as likely as native-born Americans to start new U.S. businesses,<sup>6</sup> but they also tend to push American workers into higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs.<sup>7</sup>

The drastic cuts to legal immigration system pursued by the Current Administration would do long-term damage to the American economy by shrinking GDP, hurting middle-class workers, and denying American families the opportunity

to reunite with their loved ones. A 2016 report from the National Academy of Sciences estimated that **immigrants accounted for \$2 trillion of the U.S.' \$18 trillion economy.**<sup>8</sup> They also drive up wages for the overwhelming majority of Americans. According to the Pew Research Center, between incoming and existing immigrants through 2035, immigrants will account for all the growth in the working-age population.<sup>9</sup> The current Administration's current proposals to cut legal immigration levels could shrink the labor supply and the economy's long-term growth potential.<sup>10</sup>

#### ATTEMPTS TO DRAMATICALLY CUT LEGAL IMMIGRATION LEVELS HURT THE U.S.'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Over the past year and a half, immigration restrictionists have made a concerted effort through Congress, federal agencies, and the White House to limit the number of individuals allowed to enter the United States through legal avenues to reunite with their families, fill crucial gaps in our workforce, and find refuge and asylum. **New regulations and policies have increased hurdles for individuals already living, working, and paying taxes in the U.S. to be able to stay and continue contributing to communities across the country.** Further, they have deterred travelers from coming to the U.S., contributing to a decline in tourism across the country.<sup>11</sup>

"I am one of them
who believes that legal
immigration is important.
Even if we want to maintain
our current population,
we have to have legal
immigration. I really am
more interested in finding a
way to shorten the lines..."

—Senator Mike Rounds, R-SD (vox.com. Vox, 14 Feb. 2018.)

These efforts track closely with the restrictionist playbook advanced for years by anti-immigrant organizations, led largely by three main groups: the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR),<sup>12</sup> NumbersUSA,<sup>13</sup> and the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS).<sup>14</sup> They aggressively promote hardline policies to cut legal immigration levels drastically and deport as many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S. as possible.

Under the current Administration, a number of regulatory and policy changes to restrict and reduce legal employment and family-based immigration are taking place, with more threatened to come.<sup>15</sup> Below is an overview of some of these efforts and their impact.

# Delaying Implementation of the International Entrepreneur Rule

The International Entrepreneur Rule (IER), established via regulation in January 2017,<sup>16</sup> would allow the world's most talented entrepreneurs to start and grow the next generation of innovative companies in the United States, boosting our economy and creating American jobs. The policy established a clear immigration pathway for qualified foreign entrepreneurs to build startups in the U.S., addressing a major gap in our immigration system facilitating entrepreneurship, helping to create jobs for American workers, and helping keep America at the forefront of innovation.

The rule was set to go into effect in July 2017, but one week prior to its scheduled implementation,<sup>17</sup> the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued a memo stating its intent to delay the program launch to March of 2018. DHS also stated that it would propose rescinding the rule entirely, placing the Department at odds with the Administration's previously-stated commitment to working with technology leaders<sup>18</sup> to expand the American economy.

The IER was reinstated in January of 2018 following a series of lawsuits. The policy intends to bring vital skills, new ideas, and expertise to our nation, rather than incentivizing skilled entrepreneurs to put their talents to work for our competitors abroad. **Delaying the IER was unquestionably a setback for the U.S. in the global race for talent.** 

# Eliminating the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Policy and Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

273,200 children

will be separated from their parents if TPS is terminated.

In September of 2017, President Trump announced the termination of the DACA policy, creating a dire emergency for Dreamers — undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children — across the country, and for the millions of Americans who live, work, and study with them every single day. Further, the Administration terminated four categories of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for individuals from Haiti, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Sudan.<sup>19</sup> These actions, will result in more the removal of legal work authorization for more than 1,000,000 immigrants current contributing to our country, having devastating impacts to our families, communities and economy.<sup>20</sup> The decision will likely **separate thousands of mothers and fathers from the 273,200 U.S.-born children** whose parents are TPS holders.<sup>21</sup>

# **800,000** young people

have enrolled in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The average DACA recipient arrived in the United States at six years old and today is 24, having lived in the U.S. for an average of two decades.<sup>22</sup> DACA has unlocked countless economic opportunities for roughly 800,000 young people, enabling them to get a job, obtain a driver's license, get health insurance, access basic health services, open a bank account, pay taxes, enroll in college, take out mortgages and car loans, and provide for their families. Dreamers drive the U.S. economy forward, helping to grow the American tax base through their spending and by paying billions of dollars in federal, state, and local taxes.<sup>23</sup> They contribute their talents and skills to the American workforce, making the economy stronger and strengthening the middle class through their economic contributions.<sup>24</sup>

TPS holders are integral members of American society, having lived in the United States for an average of 19 years.<sup>25</sup> The vast majority are employed, largely in the construction, restaurant and food services, and landscaping industries. Roughly nine thousand TPS holders work as

"Immigrants are essential to the success of our country and addressing the plight of the Dreamers is a top priority for this network. We are committed to working with Congress and the White House to find a solution that does this without arbitrarily reducing the number of people who come here to contribute."

—Brian Hooks, President of the Charles Koch Foundation (bloomberg.com. Bloomberg, 27 Jan. 2018.) maintenance staff for the U.S. government, where they clean buildings from the Department of Justice to Walter Reed National Medical Center.<sup>26</sup> About one-third are homeowners in the United States.<sup>27</sup> They have started families and opened 401(k) retirement accounts. Removing TPS holders from the American labor force would cause domestic GDP to drop by a devastating \$164 billion over the next decade, translating into a \$6.9 billion reduction in Social Security and Medicare **contributions** during that same period of time.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, employers of current TPS holders would experience roughly \$967 million in turnover costs if work authorization was removed from these critical employees.<sup>29</sup> Remittances from TPS holders have also played a key role in facilitating the economic recovery of countries encountering environmental disasters and active conflict. These financial contributions are particularly important at a time when U.S. foreign aid to these countries is experiencing a decline to levels not seen since 2001.30

### **Eliminating Work Authorization for H-4 Visa Holders**

100,000

new people have been allowed to begin working because of H-4 work

authorization.

DHS announced in the fall of 2017 its intent to rescind the H-4 work authorization regulation.<sup>31</sup> The H-4 regulation currently allows spouses of H-1B holders with approved employment-based petitions for lawful permanent residence to work legally in the United States.<sup>32</sup> This policy is important because it allows certain individuals to secure gainful employment without having to wait for their spouses to receive permanent residency, many of whom are experiencing a processing backlog of more than a decade.33 Roughly 80 percent of H-4 visa holders are women, and many had successful jobs and held advanced degrees in their native countries before coming to the U.S. with their H-1B spouse.<sup>34</sup> Without the H-4 work authorization rule, the spouses of H-1B high-skilled employees would be unable to work legally and contribute financially to their households and communities, as well as pay taxes on their wages, unless they had alternate immigration avenues for work authorization.35 H-4 work authorization has allowed an estimated 100,000 people to begin working and further integrate into their communities.<sup>36</sup> Rescinding this rule and removing tens of thousands of people from the American workforce would be devastating to their families, and would hurt our economy.

# Compounding Problems in the H-1B Visa Program

Highly-skilled immigrants grow our economy, create American jobs, and boost wages for American workers. H-1B visa holders in particular help make up a critical skills gap in the current U.S. workforce.<sup>37</sup> In 2018, the H-1B visa petition window closed in less than a week for the sixth consecutive year, showing that demand for specialized talent continues to dramatically outpace supply. The lack of available visas for highly-skilled workers forces the United States to miss out on the creation of American jobs, stifling medical innovation and wage growth, and ultimately hurting the economy.

Rather than advocating for smart reforms to the H-1B visa, the current Administration has pushed for a series of regulations that hinder economic growth and allow for abuses of the visa to continue. For the second time in two years, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), under the current Administration has suspended premium processing of H-1B petitions,<sup>38</sup> adding to the growing backlog and creating further uncertainty for prospective H-1B beneficiaries,

including for foreign-born doctors in small-town America.<sup>39</sup> Premium processing allows applicants to fast-track the adjudication process of the H-1B petition to just 15 days from the usual three to six month processing time for an additional fee of \$1,225,<sup>40</sup> providing greater certainty for employers while generating increased revenue for the federal government.

Additional barriers to securing an H-1B visa include unnecessarily increasing the scrutiny of H-1B petitions and adjudicating filings with more narrow interpretations of statutes and regulations than years' past. In October 2017, USCIS instructed its officers to review H-1B renewals as thoroughly as they would initial visa applications, creating duplicative work for the agency and adding delay and cost for the employer.<sup>41</sup> USCIS issued 85,000 "requests for evidence" (RFEs) to H-1B petitions between January 1 and August 31, 2017 — a 45 percent increase over the same period in 2016.<sup>42</sup> USCIS approved more than 90 percent of the H-1B applications it processed in FY 2017, but that rate dipped below 85 percent in the first two months of FY 2018.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, the current Administration has floated changes to stop extensions of the H-1B visas for thousands of immigrants who are currently exempted from the six year H-1B visa limit (two three-year visas) as they wait for their green card process, which is stalled due to visa backlogs. 44 Such a move would risk sending those sponsored for a green card by their employers outside the country — in some cases, for years — while their green card process languishes in the bureaucratic backlog through no fault of their own, causing economic hardship for the employer and employee. It also negatively impacts these individuals' families, many of whom have already been living in the United States for more than a decade. 45

# **Deterring Talented Foreign-born Students from Pursuing Degrees at American Universities**

\$36.9 Billion + 450,000 Jobs

economic contribution from international students during the 2016-2017 academic year.

American colleges and universities rank among the best in the world, and therefore attract the brightest students from across the globe to pursue higher education here. Ensuring that qualified students are able to enroll in our colleges and universities is economically beneficial to the U.S. According to a report published using data in partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the "1,078,822 international students studying at U.S. colleges and universities contributed \$36.9 billion and supported more than 450,000 jobs to the U.S. economy during the 2016-2017 academic year."<sup>46</sup> In addition to their economic contributions, international students also bring cultural value and significant academic benefits to U.S. campuses of higher education.<sup>47</sup>

Talented individuals are already responding to anti-immigrant rhetoric coming from this Administration; university engineering programs across the U.S. are reportedly seeing a drop in the number of foreign applicants who may be concerned about rising anti-immigrant sentiment and may be discouraged from undertaking their research here. Nationwide, the number of international students enrolling at American universities declined an average of seven percent in the fall of 2017, with 45 percent of campuses reporting drops in new foreignborn enrollment, according to a survey of nearly 500 campuses across the country by the Institute of International Education. In addition to seeing a dwindling tuition revenue stream from the loss of international student enrollment, the growing uncertainty is weighing down the bond ratings of some universities, making it more expensive for them to borrow money and forcing internal budget cuts.

262 Jobs

created for every 100 foreign-born students who graduate from a U.S. university.

Multiple studies have repeatedly shown that **every 100 foreign-born students who graduate from a U.S. university with an advanced degree and stay to work in a STEM field create 262 jobs** for American workers.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, foreign students subsidize the cost of attending public universities and programming for American students, because they almost always pay higher tuition than students who are U.S. citizens, as international students generally must pay out-of-state tuition.<sup>52</sup>

#### **Restricting Optional Practical Training (OPT)**

After completing a degree at an American university or college, F-1 visa students can apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT), which affords them temporary employment and additional training and skills development directly related to their area of study. Under the Obama Administration, DHS provided a 24-month OPT extension for eligible STEM students, which extends the total time for them to stay in the U.S. for up to 36 months post-graduation.<sup>53</sup> The extension is intended to grow scientific and technological competitiveness through increased innovation and research in the United States, while creating a positive economic spillover effect as a result of this demographic's productivity.

Some lawmakers have introduced legislation to prevent "brain drain" of the world's most talented thinkers and researchers. The Stopping Trained in America Ph.D.s From Leaving the Economy Act of 2017 — or the STAPLE Act — would issue green cards to foreign-born graduates of American doctoral programs in STEM, providing them with a clear pathway to permanent U.S. residency. Smart legislation such as the STAPLE Act would help eliminate the revolving door of educating the best and brightest only to send them away to apply their knowledge and skills abroad.

#### **Imposing a Harmful Travel Ban**

Among the first actions of President Trump's Administration was an executive order that halted all refugee admissions and barred entry of citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen), including legal U.S. residents, triggering mass confusion and uncertainty that left thousands stranded at airports or in transit. One lawsuit alleges that as many as 60 individuals were coerced into giving up their green cards and visas and prohibited from entering the U.S.<sup>54</sup> In addition to barring all refugees for 120 days, the current Administration blocked Syrian refugees indefinitely, harming vulnerable women, children, and men from around the world fleeing active conflicts. Although mired in litigation on the basis of unconstitutionality, these travel bans have negatively impacted students, doctors, and family members, among others, without any indication of having enhanced our national security.<sup>55</sup>

300 foreign-born doctors

who were turned away because of the travel ban.

The travel ban has already turned away high-skilled engineers, budding entrepreneurs, and nearly **300 foreign-born doctors who could have provided medical care to nearly one million American patients**. <sup>56</sup> It also hurt efforts to make up for rural doctor shortages, and has jeopardized specialized research conducted by foreign-born researchers in engineering and the biomedical space. <sup>57</sup>

According to the American College of Physicians, recent travel ban restrictions exact serious costs on medical education and access to health care services, as well as on public health.<sup>58</sup> The travel ban affects individuals holding student visas, green cards, high-skilled visas like the H-1B, and their family members. The ban prevents hundreds of applicants currently seeking residency and fellowship positions in the U.S. from doing so, interrupts the training of medical students and residents, stalls medical research, and denies thousands of patients access to their physicians.

Considering that one quarter of physicians practicing in the United States are international medical graduates, that DACA students are applying for and enrolling in medical school in the U.S., and that thousands of international medical graduates complete their residencies in the U.S., the health of this country depends on smart immigration policies that do not discriminate based on national origin, religion, or immigration status. According to the president of the American College of Physicians, restrictionist policies such as the ban on refugees "will contribute to a public health crisis for those affected."<sup>59</sup>

In September 2017, the Administration announced their decision to dramatically reduce the annual cap of admitted refugees to an unprecedented low of 45,000, down from the Obama Administration's

goal of resettling more than 110,000 individuals per year.<sup>60</sup> The figure is the lowest refugee cap since President Ronald Reagan, a Republican, signed the Refugee Act in 1981.<sup>61</sup> Today, there are roughly 22.5 million refugees in the world, more than half of whom are children under the age of 18.<sup>62</sup>

#### **Expanding the Definition of "Public Charge"**

Leaked proposals show the Administration is considering a striking redefinition of the "public charge" policy by expanding the grounds upon which an immigrant could be denied entry or residency in the United States on the basis of being a potential "public charge." Under current law, individuals looking to immigrate to the U.S. are evaluated on their likelihood to become "primarily dependent" on government assistance (currently defined as cash-benefits such as welfare or food assistance).

Under the proposed regulation, the government could deny entry, visas or green cards to legal immigrants if they "had used a broad swath of local, state or federal social services to which they are legally entitled — even enrolling their U.S.-born children in Head Start or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)."<sup>63</sup> Applicants could be denied entry based on an expanded list of factors, including age, health, educational history, and English proficiency. The radically broadened regulations would also apply to these individuals' children and dependents. USCIS also proposes expanding public charge assessments to nonimmigrants (temporary workers and visitors), despite their ineligibility for public benefits, providing them another tool for rejecting valid applications

Under the new rule, immigrants' use of housing and transit subsidies could be considered a "heavily weighted negative factor" to deny them entry, visas or permanent residency in the United States, even if they used these programs legally. In reality, immigrants contribute greatly to the United States and overwhelmingly tend to be economic multipliers. It is worth noting many of these public benefits are heavily subsidized by the tax contributions of immigrants and nonimmigrants alike. Under the proposed regulation, using the programs immigrants have faithfully paid into could now be considered a "negative factor" in determining their value to the United States. While the basis for the public charge standard - determining if someone is going to abuse U.S. resources and become entirely dependent on the government for subsistence - is an important one, this massive expansion in the definition of a "public charge" reflects a hardening administrative and regulatory effort to exclude sweepingly broader classes of aspiring immigrants from pursuing the American Dream.

The impact of the leaked memo is already being felt in communities across the country. As a response, government "agencies in regions with high immigrant populations have reported canceled appointments, urgent requests for disenrollment and even subsequent requests to have any record of families purged from the database"<sup>64</sup> throughout the first year of the current Administration, according to the New York Times. Counties with predominantly immigrant populations in states from New Jersey to Texas to Colorado and California have seen reported substantial declines in participation for SNAP and WIC programs. <sup>65</sup>

#### **Other Efforts to Restrict Legal Immigration**

The Administration is also attempting to restrict legal immigration levels by approving fewer applications for family visas. The number of approvals for family-reunification petitions "dropped by nearly a quarter in the first nine months of 2017 to roughly 406,000 compared to a year earlier when approvals were more than 530,000 despite a similar number of applications during both periods,"66 according to USCIS data. Approvals of the fiance visa dropped by roughly 35 percent over the same period.67 Family-based immigration plays an important economic and social role by reunifying relatives, supporting the integration of new immigrants and facilitating the development of small businesses across the country.

**↓ 35%** reduction in fiance visa approvals in 2017.

## **Dangerous Legislation Would Drastically Cut Legal Immigration Levels**

The current Administration has proposed severely restricting family-based immigration, preventing U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents from sponsoring certain immediate family members for immigration to the United States. Eliminated family sponsorship categories include parents, adult children, and siblings. The proposals also call for substantially lowering the number of family-based visas available without increasing the number of employment-based visas. Family-based immigration accounts for the majority of legal immigration in the United States.<sup>68</sup>

Below are three of the bills that have been introduced in Congress over the past year which are designed to reduce dramatically overall legal immigration to the US. **↓50%** 

reduction in legal immigration levels proposed in the RAISE Act.

#### The RAISE Act

Included within the text of the Securing America's Future Act is the RAISE Act, introduced in 2017 by Senators Tom Cotton (R-AR) and David Perdue (R-GA) and supported by the White House. The legislation proposes radically **reducing legal immigration levels by nearly 50 percent over the next 10 years**. This reduction would represent the most dramatic cut in legal immigration since the 1920s, cutting the family-based legal immigration system by 85 percent.

#### The Secure and Succeed Act

Introduced in February of 2018 by Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA), the Secure and Succeed Act is modeled on the four-part immigration framework outlined by the White House. The GOP bill would allocate \$25 billion for the construction of a border wall, eliminate the diversity visa, and create a 12-year path to citizenship for roughly 1.8 million Dreamers. It would also cut most categories of family-based immigration, resulting in an approximately 44 percent annual reduction in legal immigration to the United States, blocking U.S. citizens from reunifying with their parents, adult children, and siblings.

In February, the legislation, endorsed by the White House, failed a Senate vote by a 39-60 margin, proving its overwhelming unpopularity.

#### **Securing America's Future Act**

The Securing America's Future Act — introduced in January 2018 by Representatives Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) and Martha McSally (R-AZ) — would slash legal immigration nearly in half, the largest cuts to legal immigration since the racial quota laws of the 1920s. This legislation goes far beyond any proposal at any point in our nation's recent history to restrict and criminalize immigrants. This extreme, hardline immigration enforcement proposal not only attempts to remake our current immigration system by **cutting legal non-employment based immigration levels by 43 percent**,<sup>69</sup> but also tries to criminalize civil immigration violations and keep Dreamers in limbo by providing them only a temporary immigration status with no ability to become permanent members of American society.<sup>70</sup>

#### REPERCUSSIONS OF CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON LEGAL IMMIGRATION CHANNELS AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Our immigration system is clearly broken and requires substantial reform, but those changes must protect and expand current immigration levels, not make it harder for immigrants to contribute to our country and economy. The responsibility of reforming immigration laws resides with Congress, which should take up legislation to modernize the immigration system, starting with passing legislation to create a path to citizenship for Dreamers. There are a number of pieces of bipartisan legislation that would address this urgent crisis, and Congress should immediately ensure that young people who came to this country as children can continue to live and work in the only country most of them have ever known. Lawmakers should also work to provide permanent protections for TPS holders and ultimately all 11 million undocumented immigrants who are actively contributing to the social and economic wellbeing of the United States.

At the same time, the current Administration must reverse its attempts to use the regulatory and policy process to make it harder for international talent to contribute to the United States, and to make it more challenging for those who are already here to continue to contribute. This means keeping the OPT program, the H-4 Rule, the International Entrepreneur Rule, and other existing policies in place. We also support reducing the green card backlog, including "recapturing" unused green cards never issued because of bureaucratic gaps that instead could be issued to employment- or family-based legal immigrants without requiring Congress to authorize any new green cards.

The U.S.' continued social and economic success will depend on our ability to harness the talents of the best and the brightest from around the world, foster an ecosystem that champions entrepreneurs and encourages the creation of new American jobs, integrates Dreamers who desperately deserve permanent protections, and preserves its legacy as a nation of immigrants. We are facing a fundamental, existential question as a nation - will we remain the leader of global innovation and business, "the place" to come to study, work, and build the most innovative companies - or will we sacrifice that leadership role, and our core identity as a nation that welcomes immigrants, by telling the majority of the world that they are not welcome here? There is no question that our immigration system is fundamentally outdated and broken, but the answer cannot be to simply shut the door; instead, we must begin the hard but crucial work of reform to ensure that immigration remains a driver of our economy and America's unique competitive advantage for generations to come.

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