

Immigration

Year	Pres.	House	Senate	Democrats	Republicans	
1900	R	R	R	We favor the continuance and strict enforcement of the Chinese exclusion law, and its application to the same classes of all Asiatic races.	In the further interest of American workmen we favor a more effective restriction of the immigration of cheap labor from foreign lands, the extension of opportunities of education for working children, the raising of the age limit for child labor, the protection of free labor as against contract convict labor, and an effective system of labor insurance.	
1904	R	R	R			
1907	R	R	R			Busiest year at Ellis Island
1908	R	R	R	We favor full protection, by both National and State governments within their respective spheres, of all foreigners residing in the United States under treaty, but we are opposed to the admission of Asiatic immigrants who can not be amalgamated with our population, or whose presence among us would raise a race issue and involve us in diplomatic controversies with Oriental powers.		
1912	R	D	R		We pledge the Republican party to the enactment of appropriate laws to give relief from the constantly growing evil of induced or undesirable immigration, which is inimical to the progress and welfare of the people of the United States.	
1916	D	D	D			
1917	D	D	D			1917 Immigration Act. Creates Asiatic barred zone
1920	D	R	R	The policy of the United States with reference to the non-admission of Asiatic immigrants is a true expression of the judgment of our people, and to the several states, whose geographical situation or internal conditions make this policy, and the enforcement of the laws enacted pursuant thereto, of particular concern, we pledge our support.	The immigration policy of the U. S. should be such as to insure that the number of foreigners in the country at any one time shall not exceed that which can be assimilated with reasonable rapidity, and to favor immigrants whose standards are similar to ours. . . The existing policy of the United States for the practical exclusion of Asiatic immigrants is sound, and should be maintained.	
1921	R	R	R			1921 Emergency Quota Act. Sets admission quotas based upon nationality
1924	R	R	R	We pledge ourselves to maintain our established position in favor of the exclusion of Asiatic immigration.	The unprecedented living conditions in Europe following the world war created a condition by which we were threatened with mass immigration that would have seriously disturbed our economic life. The law recently enacted is designed to protect the inhabitants of our country, not only the American citizen, but also the alien already with us who is seeking to secure an economic foothold for himself and family from the competition that would come from unrestricted immigration.	1924 National Origins Quota Act. Excluded immigrants from Asia.

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1928	R	R	R	Laws which limit immigration must be preserved in full force and effect, but the provisions contained in these laws that separate husbands from wives and parents from infant children are inhuman and not essential to the purpose or the efficacy of such laws.	The Republican Party believes that in the interest of both native and foreign-born wage-earners, it is necessary to restrict immigration. Unrestricted immigration would result in widespread unemployment and in the breakdown of the American standard of living.	
1932	R	R	R		The restriction of immigration is a Republican policy. Our party formulated and enacted into law the quota system, which for the first time has made possible an adequate control of foreign immigration.	
1936	D	D	D			
1940	D	D	D		We favor the strict enforcement of all laws controlling the entry of aliens.	
1942	D	D	D			Bracero Agreement. Allows Mexican nationals to enter US as temp. agricultural workers. Magnuson Act repeals Chinese Exclusion Acts.
1944	D	D	D			
1945	D	D	D			War Brides Act.
1948	D	R	R			Displaced Persons Act of 1948. Allows 200,000 refugees displaced by Nazis
1952	D	D	D	Subversive elements must be screened out and prevented from entering our land, but the gates must be left open for practical numbers of desirable persons from abroad whose immigration to this country provides an invigorating infusion into the stream of American life, as well as a significant contribution to the solution of the world refugee and overpopulation problems. . . We pledge continuing revision of our immigration and naturalization laws to do away with any unjust and unfair practices against national groups which have contributed some of our best citizens. We will eliminate distinctions between native-born and naturalized citizens. We want no "second-class" citizens in free America.		Immigration and Nationality Act.
1953	R	R	R			The Refugee Relief Act of 1953 authorizes up to 205,000 non-quota immigrants from Europe
1954	R	R	R			Ellis Island closes
1956	R	D	D	The Democratic Party favors prompt revision of the immigration and nationality laws to eliminate unfair provisions under which admissions to this country depend upon quotas based upon the accident of national origin. Proper safeguards against subversive elements should be provided. Our immigration procedures must reflect the principles of our Bill of Rights. . . We also favor more liberal admission of relatives to eliminate the unnecessary tragedies of broken families.	The Republican Party supports an immigration policy which is in keeping with the traditions of America in providing a haven for oppressed peoples, and which is based on equality of treatment, freedom from implications of discrimination between racial, nationality and religious groups, and flexible enough to conform to changing needs and conditions.	

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1960 R	D	D	We shall adjust our immigration, nationality and refugee policies to eliminate discrimination and to enable members of scattered families abroad to be united with relatives already in our midst . . . The national-origins quota system of limiting immigration contradicts the founding principles of this nation. It is inconsistent with our belief in the rights of man.	Immigration has historically been a great factor in the growth of the United States, not only in numbers but in the enrichment of ideas that immigrants have brought with them. . . Immigration has been reduced to the point where it does not provide the stimulus to growth that it should, nor are we fulfilling our obligation as a haven for the oppressed. . . The annual number of immigrants we accept be at least doubled.	
1964 D	D	D	The immigration laws must be revised to permit families to be reunited, to welcome the persecuted and oppressed, and to eliminate the discriminatory provisions which base admission upon national origins.		
1965 D	D	D			1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. Abolishes national origin quota system and replaces with system based upon immigrant relationship to US Citizen or US employer
1968 D	D	D	A new Immigration Act removed the harsh injustice of the national origins quota system and opened our shores without discrimination to those who can contribute to the growth and strength of America.	The principles of the 1965 Immigration Act—non-discrimination against national origins, reunification of families, and selective support for the American labor market—have our unreserved backing. We will refine this new law to make our immigration policy still more equitable and non-discriminatory.	
1972 R	D	D		We stand for an equitable, non-discriminatory immigration policy, reaffirming our support of the principles of the 1965 Immigration Act—non-discrimination against national origins, reunification of families, and the selective admission of the specially talented. The immigration process must be just and orderly, and we will increase our efforts to halt the illegal entry of aliens into the United States.	
1975 R	D	D			1975 Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act
1976 R	D	D	We support a provision in the immigration laws to facilitate acquisition of citizenship by Resident Aliens.		Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1976

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1980	D	D	<p>America's roots are found in the immigrants and refugees who have come to our shores to build new lives in a new world. The Democratic Party pledges to honor our historic commitment to this heritage. . . The first comprehensive reform of this nation's refugee policies in over 25 years was completed with the signing in March 1980 of the Refugee Act of 1980, based on legislation submitted to Congress by the Carter Administration in March 1979. . . World population projections, as well as international economic indicators—especially in the Third World—forewarn us that migration pressures will mount rapidly in many areas of the world in the decade ahead. Our own situation of undocumented workers underscores how difficult it is to deal with economic and employment forces that are beyond any nation's immediate control. . . We will work with other nations to develop international policies to regularize population movement and to protect the human rights of migrants even as we protect the jobs of American workers and the economic interest of the United States.</p>	<p>Republicans are proud that our people have opened their arms and hearts to strangers from abroad and we favor an immigration and refugee policy which is consistent with this tradition. We believe that to the fullest extent possible those immigrants should be admitted who will make a positive contribution to America and who are willing to accept the fundamental American values and way of life. . . Immigration into this country must not be determined solely by foreign governments or even by the millions of people around the world who wish to come to America. The federal government has a duty to adopt immigration laws and follow enforcement procedures which will fairly and effectively implement the immigration policy desired by the American people.</p>	<p>Refugee Act of 1980. Defines a refugee.</p>
1984	D	R		<p>Our history is a story about immigrants. We are proud that America still symbolizes hope and promise to the world. We have shown unparalleled generosity to the persecuted and to those seeking a better life. In return, they have helped to make a great land greater still. . . We affirm our country's absolute fight to control its borders. Those desiring to enter must comply with our immigration laws. Failure to do so not only is an offense to the American people but is fundamentally unjust to those in foreign lands patiently waiting for legal entry. We will preserve the principle of family reunification.</p>	
1986	D	R			<p>Immigration Reform and Control Act. 50% increase in border patrol staffing. Sanctions on employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens</p>
1988	D	D	<p>that our immigration policy should be reformed to promote fairness, non-discrimination and family reunification and to reflect our constitutional freedoms of speech, association and travel.</p>	<p>We welcome those from other lands who bring to America their ideals and industry. At the same time, we insist upon our country's absolute right to control its borders.</p>	
1990	D	D			<p>1990 Immigration Act. Raises legal admissions to 50% above pre-ICRA level</p>

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1992 R	D	D	<p>Our nation of immigrants has been invigorated repeatedly as new people, ideas and ways of life have become part of the American tapestry. Democrats support immigration policies that promote fairness, non-discrimination and family reunification, and that reflect our constitutional freedoms of speech, association and travel.</p>	<p>Our Nation of immigrants continues to welcome those seeking a better life. This reflects our past, when some newcomers fled intolerance; some sought prosperity; some came as slaves. All suffered and sacrificed but hoped their children would have a better life. All searched for a shared vision—and found one in America. Today we are stronger for our diversity. . . Illegal entry into the United States, on the other hand, threatens the social compact on which immigration is based. That is, the Nation accepts immigrants and is enriched by their determination and values. Illegal immigration, on the other hand, undermines the integrity of border communities and already crowded urban neighborhoods. . . we will increase the size of the Border Patrol in order to meet the increasing need to stop illegal immigration and we will equip the Border Patrol with the tools, technologies, and structures necessary to secure the border. . . We also will reduce incentives to enter the United States by promoting initiatives like the North American Free Trade Agreement. In creating new economic opportunity in Mexico, a NAFTA removes the incentive to cross the border illegally in search of work.</p>	
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1996 D	R	R	<p>Democrats remember that we are a nation of immigrants. We recognize the extraordinary contribution of immigrants to America throughout our history. We welcome legal immigrants to America. We support a legal immigration policy that is pro-family, pro-work, pro-responsibility, and pro-citizenship, and we deplore those who blame immigrants for economic and social problems. . . Today's Democratic Party also believes we must remain a nation of laws. We cannot tolerate illegal immigration and we must stop it. For years before Bill Clinton became President, Washington talked tough but failed to act. In 1992, our borders might as well not have existed. The border was under-patrolled, and what patrols there were, were under-equipped. Drugs flowed freely. Illegal immigration was rampant. Criminal immigrants, deported after committing crimes in America, returned the very next day to commit crimes again. . . as we work to stop illegal immigration, we call on all Americans to avoid the temptation to use this issue to divide people from each other. We deplore those who use the need to stop illegal immigration as a pretext for discrimination. And we applaud the wisdom of Republicans like Mayor Giuliani and Senator Domenici who oppose the mean-spirited and short-sighted effort of Republicans in Congress to bar the children of illegal immigrants from schools -- it is wrong, and forcing children onto the streets is an invitation for them to join gangs and turn to crime. . . We continue to firmly oppose welfare benefits for illegal immigrants. We believe family members who sponsor immigrants into this country should take financial responsibility for them, and be held legally responsible for supporting them.</p>	<p>As a nation of immigrants, we welcome those who follow our laws and come to our land to seek a better life. New Americans strengthen our economy, enrich our culture, and defend the nation in war and in peace. At the same time, we are determined to reform the system by which we welcome them to the American family. We must set immigration at manageable levels, balance the competing goals of uniting families of our citizens and admitting specially talented persons, and end asylum abuses through expedited exclusion of false claimants. . . We also support efforts to secure our borders from the threat of illegal immigration. Illegal immigration has reached crisis proportions, with more than four million illegal aliens now present in the United States. That number, growing by 300,000 each year, burdens taxpayers, strains public services, takes jobs, and increases crime. . . We support a constitutional amendment or constitutionally-valid legislation declaring that children born in the United States of parents who are not legally present in the United States or who are not long-term residents are not automatically citizens.</p>	
2000 R	R	R	<p>Immigrants enrich the tapestry of American life, making our economy more vibrant, our workplaces more productive, and our nation stronger. We believe that all levels of government, in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors, must devise and pursue a comprehensive immigrant integration agenda that will make the newest Americans full participants in the nation's mainstream. . . Democrats believe in an effective immigration system that balances a strong enforcement of our laws with fair and evenhanded treatment of immigrants and their families. The Clinton-Gore administration provided long overdue leadership in dramatically improving border management and law enforcement, including a major expansion of the Border Patrol and curbs on abuses of the asylum process.</p>	<p>As a nation of immigrants, we welcome all new Americans who have entered lawfully and are prepared to follow our laws and provide for themselves and their families. In their search for a better life, they strengthen our economy, enrich our culture, and defend the nation in war and in peace. To ensure fairness for those wishing to reside in this country, and to meet the manpower needs of our expanding economy, a total overhaul of the immigration system is sorely needed. . . The administration's lax enforcement of our borders has led to tragic exploitation of smuggled immigrants, and untold suffering, at the hands of law-breakers. . . Because free trade is the most powerful force for the kind of development that creates a middle class and offers opportunity at home, the long-term solution for illegal immigration is economic growth in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.</p>	
2002 R	R	D			<p>Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act. Homeland Security Act. ICE created</p>

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2004	R	R	R	<p>Undocumented immigrants within our borders who clear a background check, work hard and pay taxes should have a path to earn full participation in America. We will hasten family reunification for parents and children, husbands and wives, and offer more English-language and civic education classes so immigrants can assume all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. As we undertake these steps, we will work with our neighbors to strengthen our security so we are safer from those who would come here to harm us.</p>	<p>Our nation has been enriched by immigrants seeking a better life. In many cases, immigrants of the past fled violence and oppression searching for peace and freedom. All suffered and sacrificed but hoped for a better future for their children in America. Our nation has been enriched by their determination, energy, and diversity. . . We must strengthen our Border Patrol to stop illegal crossings, and we will equip the Border Patrol with the tools, technologies, structures, and sufficient force necessary to secure the border. . . America is a stronger and better nation because of the hard work and entrepreneurial spirit of immigrants, and the Republican Party honors them. . . We oppose amnesty because it would have the effect of encouraging illegal immigration and would give an unfair advantage to those who have broken our laws. . . To better ensure that immigrants enter the United States only through legal means that allow for verification of their identity, reconnaissance cameras, border patrol agents, and unmanned aerial flights have all been increased at the border.</p>	
2005	R	R	R			Real ID Act
2006	R	R	R			Secure Fence Act. Mandates construction of more than 700 miles of double-reinforced fence to be built on border with Mexico
2008	R	D	D	<p>Nonetheless, our current immigration system has been broken for far too long. We need comprehensive immigration reform, not just piecemeal efforts. We must work together to pass immigration reform in a way that unites this country, not in a way that divides us by playing on our worst instincts and fears. . . We cannot continue to allow people to enter the United States undetected, undocumented, and unchecked. The American people are a welcoming and generous people, but those who enter our country's borders illegally, and those who employ them, disrespect the rule of the law. . . We also need to do more to promote economic development in migrant-sending nations, to reduce incentives to come to the United States illegally. And we need to crack down on employers who hire undocumented immigrants. . . For the millions living here illegally but otherwise playing by the rules, we must require them to come out of the shadows and get right with the law. We support a system that requires undocumented immigrants who are in good standing to pay a fine, pay taxes, learn English, and go to the back of the line for the opportunity to become citizens. They are our neighbors, and we can help them become full tax-paying, law-abiding, productive members of society.</p>	<p>Border security is essential to national security. In an age of terrorism, drug cartels, and criminal gangs, allowing millions of unidentified persons to enter and remain in this country poses grave risks to the sovereignty of the United States and the security of its people. We simply must be able to track who is entering and leaving our country. . . We oppose amnesty. The rule of law suffers if government policies encourage or reward illegal activity. The American people's rejection of en masse legalizations is especially appropriate given the federal government's past failures to enforce the law. . . We support English as the official language in our nation, while welcoming the ethnic diversity in the United States and the territories, including language. . . Our country continues to accept refugees from troubled lands all over the world. In some cases, these are people who stood with America in dangerous times, and they have first call on our hospitality. We oppose, however, the granting of refugee status on the basis of lifestyle or other non-political factors</p>	

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2010 D	D	D			Dream Act falls in the Senate
2012 D	R	D	<p>And to make this country a destination for global talent and ingenuity, we won't deport deserving young people who are Americans in every way but on paper . . . Democrats are strongly committed to enacting comprehensive immigration reform that supports our economic goals and reflects our values as both a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. The story of the United States would not be possible without the generations of immigrants who have strengthened our country and contributed to our economy. . . Today, the Southwest border is more secure than at any time in the past 20 years. Unlawful crossings are at a 40-year low, and the Border Patrol is better staffed than at any time in its history. . . So the Obama administration provided temporary relief for youth who came to the United States as children, through no fault of their own, grew up as Americans and are poised to make a real contribution to our country.</p>	<p>The greatest asset of the American economy is the American worker. Just as immigrant labor helped build our country in the past, today's legal immigrants are making vital contributions in every aspect of our national life. . . Illegal immigration undermines those benefits and affects U.S. workers. . . In this country, the rule of law guarantees equal treatment to every individual, including more than one million immigrants to whom we grant permanent residence every year. That is why we oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by intentionally violating the law, disadvantage those who have obeyed it. Granting amnesty only rewards and encourages more law breaking. . . The double-layered fencing on the border that was enacted by Congress in 2006, but never completed, must finally be built. . . we support English as the nation's official language, a unifying force essential for the educational and economic advancement of—not only immigrant communities—but also our nation as a whole.</p>	
2016 D	R	R	<p>The Democratic Party supports legal immigration, within reasonable limits, that meets the needs of families, communities, and the economy as well as maintains the United States' role as a beacon of hope for people seeking safety, freedom, and security. People should come to the United States with visas and not through smugglers. Yet, we recognize that the current immigration system is broken. . . And while we continue to fight for comprehensive immigration reform, we will defend and implement President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans executive actions to help DREAMers, parents of citizens, and lawful permanent residents avoid deportation. . . We believe immigration enforcement must be humane and consistent with our values. . . We reject attempts to impose a religious test to bar immigrants or refugees from entering the United States. It is un-American and runs counter to the founding principles of this country.</p>	<p>Our immigration system must protect American working families and their wages, for citizens and legal immigrants alike, in a way that will improve the economy. Just as immigrant labor helped build our country in the past, today's legal immigrants are making vital contributions in every aspect of national life. . . we both encourage the preservation of heritage tongues and support English as the nation's official language . . . Illegal immigration endangers everyone, exploits the taxpayers, and insults all who aspire to enter America legally. We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed it. . . That is why we support building a wall along our southern border and protecting all ports of entry. The border wall must cover the entirety of the southern border and must be sufficient to stop both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.</p>	

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2020 R	D	R	<p>Out of many, we are one. That bedrock American idea has animated our country from its earliest days, inspiring people from every corner of the earth to participate in our great democratic experiment. . . . Immigrants are essential to our society and our economy. Immigrants are part of our families. They enrich our culture. They grow our food, care for our loved ones, serve in our armed forces, and provide critical health care services. Immigrants make America stronger. Not only do immigrants support us—immigrants are us. . . . Democrats will rescind President Trump's fabricated "National Emergency," which siphons funding away from our men and women in uniform to construct an unnecessary, wasteful, and ineffective wall on the southern border. . . . Democrats believe it is long past time to provide a roadmap to citizenship for the millions of undocumented workers, caregivers, students, and children who are an essential part of our economy and of the fabric of our nation. . . . Democrats believe family unity should be a guiding principle for our immigration policy. We will prioritize family reunification for children still separated from their families, and we will restore family reunification programs ended by the Trump Administration. . . . We will ensure that enforcement mechanisms are humane and consistent with our values and international humanitarian obligations. That's why we will end workplace and community raids. We will protect sensitive locations like our schools, houses of worship, health care facilities, benefits offices, and DMVs from immigration enforcement actions, and prohibit raids in which children and members of vulnerable populations are left behind without their caregivers. . . . Democrats will address the root causes of migration—violence and insecurity, poverty, pervasive corruption, lack of educational and economic opportunity, and the impacts of climate change.</p>		
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