

## Sample Editorial: On Citizenship Day, Setting a New Course for Reform

*This editorial uses an annual event, Citizenship Day, as an opportunity to educate its readers about the vital role immigration plays in our nation's economy. It opens with the tested Shared Prosperity Narrative, establishing the idea of a collective benefit from immigration that continues throughout the narrative that follows. The editorial then appeals to Pragmatism, calling for commonsense solutions to our outdated immigration system. That's followed by an Explanatory Chain, showing how immigration works and why the current system needs to be reformed. Applying the metaphor Immigration Sail makes the explanation "sticky," or memorable. A positive Tone is important to circumvent unproductive cultural models like crisis thinking, which can leave an audience with a sense that the problem is too big to solve. Presenting Solutions, such as visa reform and a pathway to citizenship, helps readers to scale the fix to the size of the problem. Lastly, the op-ed closes with a nod to the tested Value Moral Argument and another subtle appeal to Pragmatism.*

September 17 is Citizenship Day. This year marks the 62nd anniversary of President Harry Truman's creation of this national holiday in recognition of "all who, by coming of age or by naturalization, have become citizens."

It is no surprise that President Truman, a champion of immigration reform, thought the momentousness of the pledge of citizenship deserved a national day of recognition. Writing to the House of Representatives in 1952, he asserted, "Long dormant questions about the effect of our immigration laws now assume first-rate importance. What we do in the field of immigration and naturalization is vital to the continued growth and internal development of the United States—to the economic and social strength of our country." Truman recognized a key piece of the immigration story that is too often left untold: that America needs immigrants for its own wellbeing, and that delaying the adoption of a sensible immigration system is not in the country's best interests.

Six decades later, our national economic and social strength still rely on commonsense immigration and naturalization policies, yet, as in 1952, our current system is too outdated to meet our nation's needs. We need to fix it.

Like a strong wind filling the sail of a boat and propelling it forward, immigration is a force, a resource, that America needs for economic and social progress. Immigrants contribute tens of millions of dollars to the U.S. economy every year, money that we rely on as a substantial portion of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They bring skills, labor power, entrepreneurship, and ideas. They contribute to our labor force, filling jobs that the American labor force isn't able to fill. They add to our tax base, paying millions in taxes every year that contribute to our infrastructure, government services,

and national defense. Immigrants are twice as likely as Americans to start a new business—their entrepreneurial drive leads to job creation for domestic workers. And they bring their customs and culture, too, which add to the diversity that makes our country such a dynamic, creative marketplace of ideas.

Right now, though, our outdated immigration system is like a boat slowly drifting from swell to swell. Our sails aren't positioned to catch the full force of that wind: employer demand for highly skilled workers is so great that the current annual allotment is depleted within a week of its issuance. For workers already here, the visa renewal and green card processes can—and do—take years. In fact, what many Americans do not realize is that many undocumented workers have been here for years. They lack documentation precisely because the visa renewal system is so outdated and backlogged.

Meanwhile, employer demand for immigrants' skills and labor far outpaces supply, because our cumbersome system forces newcomers to wait far longer than they should to be granted entry. This has the unintended consequence of encouraging people to come to the United States without documentation. That, in turn, has created a population of people whose contributions to our nation, substantial though they are—\$15 billion to Social Security alone each year—nonetheless could be greater but for their precarious status. If our system were fixed to offer a streamlined, modern visa process and a pathway to citizenship, this group's additional contributions in taxes, earning power, and consumer spending would significantly and positively affect our economy.

According to Congressional Budget Office projections, adopting immigration reform today would increase our GDP by 5.4 percent, or \$1.4 trillion in today's dollars, by 2033. That's like adding the value of an entire year of Canada's goods and services to our country's budget. That's a lot of wind in our sails.

In his letter to the House, Truman wrote, "The time to develop a decent policy of immigration—a fitting instrument for our foreign policy and a true reflection of the ideals we stand for, at home and abroad—is now." His words are just as true today.

Citizenship Day is a time to reflect on the contributions of those who have chosen to leave their own countries of origin to join us here in this grand experiment. There is no better way for Americans to celebrate Citizenship Day than for us to stand together and support policy makers in calling for comprehensive immigration reform. The sooner we act, the faster our economy and society can resume progress, full speed ahead.