

VOICES ACROSS AMERICA SUPPORT ADMINISTRATIVE RELIEF



Broad Coalition with Diverse Set of Voices Supporting Administrative Relief

On November 20, people across the country tuned in to listen to President Obama address the country and describe the actions his administration would be taking since Congress had failed to act on immigration. The president made the long-awaited decision to provide relief from deportation to up to five million people, including the parents or children who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. Statements of support for his actions came from the leadership and membership of organizations of every walk of American life: business and labor, mayors, civil rights groups, faith communities, teachers, and social workers.

<p>Mayor of Sacramento Kevin Johnson, President, U.S. Conference of Mayors</p>	<p>“For more than a decade the nation’s mayors have called for repairs to our broken immigration system. We applaud the president’s actions today, which are consistent with the adopted policy of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. They will ensure that millions of undocumented immigrants, who want to play by the rules and pay taxes, are protected from deportation and made eligible to work. These actions will not only stabilize families and communities, they will strengthen the American economy and our national security. We look forward to assisting the administration in this effort.”</p>
<p>Mayor of Minneapolis Betsy Hodges</p>	<p>“America’s immigration system is broken, which is why I join the immigrant community of Minneapolis in praising President Obama for acting decisively to ease the burden and uncertainty that many hard-working immigrants have had to live with every day. My great thanks goes to President Obama for taking this important step forward that will benefit all the people and communities of Minneapolis. I look forward to working closely with the immigrant community and those who serve them to help all affected Minneapolis residents adjust to their new status. Last year, the U.S. Senate—with the leadership of Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken—passed comprehensive immigration reform. The inability of the House to act on it has led to President Obama’s executive action today. It is past time for Congress to act on a permanent solution and pass comprehensive immigration reform. It is the right thing to do to move the dial on equity and improve the lives of millions of people, and what we must do for our nation to keep its economic competitiveness with the rest of the world.”</p>

<p>Mayor of Saint Paul Chris Coleman, President, National League of Cities</p>	<p>“The president is to be commended for his strong leadership today. The use of executive authority in this manner can go a long way towards providing a fully workable solution to this crisis.”</p>
<p>Javier Palomarez, President and CEO, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (USHCC)</p>	<p>“The USHCC supports the executive action President Obama plans to take on immigration, following his address to the nation this evening... Regrettably, Congress has failed to fix our broken system, leaving the president no option but to choose temporary and limited solutions. To say the president's actions poison the well and discourage Congress from addressing immigration is both inaccurate and irresponsible. Comprehensive immigration reform has had the full support of the American business community, yet a bipartisan bill that passed in the Senate sat idly in the House of Representatives since 2013. Given the newly elected Congress, House and Senate leadership have an extraordinary opportunity to present a clear vision on the role of immigrants in America, and how they respond will be crucial... We applaud President Obama's leadership in recognizing that reform is what the business community has called for, and the American people deserve.”</p>
<p>Arturo Rodriguez, President, United Farm Workers</p>	<p>“The United Farm Workers commends President Obama for his leadership by acting on immigration policy. The president's action will allow at least 250,000 of America's current professional farm workers who feed our nation to apply for temporary legal status and work permits. Farm workers who have lived in the United States for five years and have children, who are U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents, who pass a criminal background check, pay all of their taxes, and pay a fee will be able to work and live in the United States without fear of deportation.”</p>
<p>James M. Perrin, President, American Academy of Pediatrics</p>	<p>“President Obama's executive action unveiled tonight includes needed, new commitments to protect immigrant children, youth, and families. The nation's pediatricians support the president's plan to help keep millions of immigrant families together by delaying deportations for undocumented immigrants whose children are U.S. citizens or meet other residency requirements, and by expanding the existing Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals policy to allow additional undocumented immigrants who came to this country as children to remain in the United States... All children, no matter where they or their parents were born, should be able to pursue a high-quality education, remain united with their families, and access health care services. Pediatricians welcome President Obama's commitment tonight as an important step forward and urge its swift implementation. Children are not a political problem; they are a national treasure. It is time for Washington to set politics aside and craft public policy that gives children and their families our full compassion, attention, and care.”</p>

<p>Michael Rinehart, Bishop, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America</p>	<p>“The Christian church has always stood for family unity and for welcoming the stranger. President Obama’s action today helps us do more than talk about these concepts. It helps us live them out with our actions.”</p>
<p>Rev. Al Sharpton, President, National Action Network</p>	<p>“The executive action by the president is a huge step forward for the civil and human rights movement that wants to see people treated in a humane but thought-out manner. This is a constructive way to deal with a human problem in which everyone wins. The president had no choice but to do what Congress has failed to do and that is to move forward on this issue.”</p>
<p>National Association of Social Workers</p>	<p>“The National Association of Social Workers applauds President Obama’s decision to issue an executive action that will likely lead to as many as five million previously undocumented immigrants to be able to remain in the United States. This action was very meaningful to immigrant families with children who were born in the United States (and are therefore U.S. citizens) and to undocumented parents. Indeed, Obama’s speech announcing his executive action made it clear that he is deeply committed to helping these families remain intact... While we are greatly encouraged by the president’s action, to some degree it is only a first step. NASW and its partners in the fight for social justice and civil rights must continue to urge Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that fixes our broken immigration system once and for all.”</p>
<p>Richard Biehl, Chief, Dayton Police Department</p>	<p>“I’m very hopeful that the executive action has provided some clarity for our country, particularly for law enforcement. The current immigration system separates families and undermines trust and cooperation between police agencies and immigrant communities they serve. The clarity of community safety priorities will help public safety. The president has done at national level what local governments have had to do, which is to sort through our own resources to address this issue in the absence of congressional action. Until Congress takes action we will have to continue to try to solve this in a way that is compassionate and thoughtful, on both the local and national level.”</p>
<p>James R. Lopez, Chief, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department</p>	<p>“We believe executive action is an important first step. We believe it has increased dialogue in our community, which includes an estimated 1 million undocumented immigrants in Los Angeles County. In the immigrant community we serve, dialogue is important. We cannot do our job without their assistance, and that includes the undocumented community, who often fear being deported if they report crimes.”</p>

American Voters Support President Obama's Actions on Immigration

According to recent polls, when most Americans hear the details of what the president's action will do, they support President Obama's actions on immigration while they continue to show strong support for Congress acting to provide a permanent solution and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

A poll conducted by the [Public Religion Research Institute](#) found that nearly three-quarters of Americans (72%) favor executive action described as "allowing illegal immigrants who are the parents of children with legal status to stay in the U.S. for three years without being subject to deportation if they pass a background check and have lived in the country at least five years" (82% of Democrats, 70% of Independents, and 62% of Republicans support). When asked to judge the appropriateness of the action, more than half (59%) of Americans said either the action was "about right" (33%) or "did not go far enough" (26%), versus only 34% who said it "went too far." In response to a question stating, "Given that Congress has not yet acted to address the immigration issue, do you think President Obama should or should not have taken executive action on immigration?" 50% said yes while 45% said no. The public also strongly favors a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, as

the poll found 58% of Americans support a pathway to citizenship provided they meet certain requirements, 19% support legal residency but not citizenship, and just 20% support deportation.

A poll conducted by [CNN/ORC](#) in November shows that nearly three-quarters of Americans (72%) believe that the president's announced changes to immigration policy are either "about right" (50%) or "not far enough" (22%), while 26% say it goes "too far." Sixty percent of Americans in the CNN/ORC poll say Republicans should not sue to try to stop Obama's immigration plans, and 76% say they should spend their time trying to pass a comprehensive reform bill rather than trying to stop the president from acting.

A [Hart Research poll](#) from late November found that two-thirds of Americans (67%) support prioritizing immigration enforcement resources to "direct immigration enforcement officials to focus on threats to national security and public safety, and not on deporting otherwise law-abiding immigrants. Immigrants who are parents of children who are legal U.S. residents could qualify to stay and work temporarily in the United States, without being deported, if they have lived in the United States for at least five years, pay taxes, and pass a criminal background check." This description of executive action received support from 91% of Democrats, 67% of Independents, and 41% of Republicans.

Name of Poll	Date of Poll	Percent Supporting Administrative Relief
PRRI	December 2014	72%
CNN/ORC	November 2014	72%
Hart Research Poll	November 2014	67%

A [Latino Decisions](#) poll in November showed that nine out of 10 of Latino voters support “executive action to provide relief from deportation for any undocumented immigrant who has not committed a crime, has lived here five or more years, and is a parent of a U.S. citizen or legal resident child here in the U.S., and providing them with temporary work permits so they have legal status.”

Americans across the political spectrum understand that the nation’s immigration

system is broken and that it is in the best interest of the country to pass legislation that will bring its immigration laws into the 21st century. Americans also understand that the president’s action is not the permanent solution that is needed, but it will benefit the country and it serves as a wake-up call for Congress to finish the job and deliver the reforms that the vast majority of Americans support, which include a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.