

Excerpts from a 41-page 2014 EAGLE FORUM report:

# **How Mass (Legal) Immigration Dooms a Conservative Republican Party**

*A comprehensive review of surveys in immigrant communities showing their support for big government*

A large volume of survey data show that, in general, immigrants and their adult children are significantly more liberal than the average American voter on a host of policy issues, including the size of government, Obamacare, affirmative action, gun control, greater environmental regulation, and other issues championed by the Left ...

**Because immigrants and their adult children overwhelmingly favor big government, there is no issue more important for conservatives than reducing the future number of legal immigrants allowed into the country each year.** Otherwise, legal immigration will continue to add millions of liberal voters every decade, making it extremely unlikely that conservatives will be successful on all the issues they care about.

**To be sure, many conservatives are much more committed to issues other than immigration. But there is little long-term chance of achieving those goals if legal immigration continues to change the ideological balance of the electorate. There is no question that if Republicans are to remain conservative and nationally viable, they must defeat any proposed increase in immigration, as well as reduce legal immigration levels significantly.**

In a democracy, public policy has to reflect the overall orientation of the electorate. Change the electorate through immigration, and public policy eventually must follow.

## **Immigration in General — Not Race — Is the Issue**

This report focuses on Hispanics and Asians, who comprise three-fourths of all recent immigrants and as a result have been extensively surveyed. The term “immigrant communities” is used to refer to both native-born and foreign-born Hispanics and Asians collectively (71 percent of voting-age Hispanics and 93 percent of voting-age Asians are either foreign-born or have at least one foreign-born parent).

Hispanics and Asians are not alone in holding liberal views; the limited data for other immigrants — including Europeans and Muslims — indicate that they, too, generally hold views well to the left of the average American voter. **Thus, the problem for conservatives is not the race or ethnicity of immigrants but immigration in general. ...**

## **High Immigration Overwhelms GOP Recruitment Efforts**

Better Republican outreach to Asian and Latino voters is critical. But nothing in the U.S. history of mass immigration suggests that Republicans can turn previous immigrants and their children into conservatives faster than a policy of 11 million legal immigrants a decade can bring in new liberal voters. What Republicans can more easily influence is how many immigrants are added each year. Even without future immigration, the country’s changing demographics due to post-1970 immigration and the higher fertility of some groups will work against Republicans. **But the level of immigration is determined by Congress and it can be changed at any time.**

## “Comprehensive Reform” Means Big Increases in Legal Immigration

All immigration bills of the last decade that have been called “comprehensive” would not only amnesty (with or without citizenship) millions of illegal immigrants, but these bills would dramatically accelerate legal immigration, adding additional liberal voters each year. It is the huge volume of legal immigration, more than illegal immigration or amnesties, that has been the primary cause of the changing electoral demographics that disadvantage the Republican Party.

### Good Policy and Good Politics

Republicans’ message of lower immigration must not disparage our fellow Americans who were born abroad. One way to do this, which is both valid as a matter of policy and also politically appealing to a broad group of voters, is to frame the issue as standing up for *wage earners* — especially immigrants already here — who will be harmed by future immigration flows. With a record number of working-age Americans not working, most Americans are very skeptical of the view that the country needs more workers. Arguing for less immigration on populist economic grounds would demonstrate concern for the working class, something particularly appealing to many swing-vote groups. Equally important, like the immigration slowdown from the 1920s to the 1960s, a reduction today would facilitate assimilation of immigrant communities.

### Conclusion

Supporting the amnesty and increased legal immigration in S.744 will not just add millions of liberal-oriented voters; it will alienate the Republican base, working class whites, at least four million of whom stayed home in 2012. It is difficult to imagine a policy that could do more damage in both the short run and the long run to Republican electoral prospects than supporting legislation like S.744. ...

This isn’t the place to spell out in detail what a low-immigration policy would look like, but its broad outlines would be to limit family immigration to the spouses and minor children (i.e., no special immigration rights for adult sons and daughters and adult siblings), eliminate the visa lottery, limit skilled immigration to truly exceptional talents, and admit only genuine refugees who have absolutely nowhere else to go. **Future legal immigration could be reduced by half from the current level of over one million a year and still allow the admission of more people than any other nation in the world.**

Republicans, mainly at the behest of employers, have supported large-scale immigration for decades. As many have observed, ***the GOP faces a choice: It can either change its position on legal immigration or it can change its position on almost every other issue.***

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*The Eagle Forum is Phyllis Schlafly’s organization. The above points were excerpted—with added emphases—from their report, which is freely available online at:*

[http://www.eagleforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/2014\\_ImmigrationBook-6-12-14.pdf](http://www.eagleforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/2014_ImmigrationBook-6-12-14.pdf).

*The report includes a foreword by Ms. Schlafly.*