



IMMIGRATION: **Reforming the Immigration System for American Competitiveness**

Our nation's rich heritage and global economic influence have been made possible by generations of immigrants. Indeed, America is a nation of immigrants. However, America has also become a nation with a broken immigration system. Decades of neglect and lack of enforcement of existing laws have eroded our citizens' confidence in our border security, failed to reflect economic workforce realities and created uncertainty for some individuals who know no home other than the United States.

Labor shortages are hurting every sector of our economy and obstructing American innovation and competitiveness. Indeed, 45% of manufacturers reported they have had to turn away new opportunities because they did not have enough workers. Reforming our immigration system to reflect the needs of our economy can help alleviate labor shortages, grow our economy and keep America competitive.

Manufacturers cannot afford to operate in a closed-door immigration system where the current labor needs are not addressed. If we continue with current immigration practices, we will lose talent, opportunity and economic growth.

Because manufacturers are in the business of building solutions, the NAM has a practical immigration plan, "A Way Forward,"⁵ with a range of solutions designed to bolster national security, show compassion and strengthen the American workforce. Immigration solutions require compromise, and manufacturers urge lawmakers to seize the opportunity for a solution and end the division that has been created over this issue.

“ We believe that our country is stronger and manufacturers like us are better when we have employees with a broad range of backgrounds and experiences because it fuels innovation and makes us more competitive globally. This is why we believe immigration is critical to job growth and economic prosperity in large and small communities across the United States, and why creating welcoming communities and work environments is essential.”

**— Tony Satterthwaite, Vice Chairman,
Cummins Inc.**

⁵nam.org/awayforward



An Immigration Agenda for the Future Must:

- Recognize that national security, compassion and addressing workforce realities are not mutually exclusive objectives when it comes to immigration.
- Establish a safe and secure border that both curbs illegal immigration and facilitates more than \$1.7 billion in daily commerce between the U.S. and Mexico.
- Prioritize America's workforce needs through reforms to the legal immigration system.
- Offer opportunities to attract and keep talent in the U.S.
- Address both legal and illegal populations facing uncertainty in their status.
- Clear immigration backlogs so new cases can be addressed efficiently.
- Promote the rule of law so that it is respected and followed by all.

ACTIONS FOR LEADERS TO TAKE:

- ✓ Fund border security through personnel, infrastructure, technology and enforcement via consistent appropriations that can address the needs and challenges of the southern border.
- ✓ Increase employment-based immigration as a percentage of overall new legal permanent residents in the U.S.
- ✓ Reform nonimmigrant visas and temporary worker programs to reflect employer needs, including a fund to support domestic STEM education programs to reduce the need for these types of visas in the future.
- ✓ Provide a permanent and compassionate solution for populations facing uncertainty, including Dreamers, who were brought here as children and know no other home, and individuals with Temporary Protected Status.
- ✓ Fix the problem of the unauthorized population with a realistic and compassionate solution that leads to a firm reset so that these challenges are not repeated year after year.
- ✓ Reform asylum and refugee programs for a more orderly and humane system.