



# THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF FIXING OUR BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

Roundtable Tool-Kit

July 2013



***“If we are truly committed to strengthening our middle class and providing more ladders of opportunity to those trying to make it into the middle class, we have to fix this system. We have to make sure that every business and every worker in America is playing by the same set of rules. We have to bring this shadow economy into the light so that everybody is held accountable...That’s common sense.”*** - President Obama

As we work to rebuild the economy, our ability to thrive depends, in part, on restoring responsibility and accountability to the immigration system. Today, too many employers game the system by hiring undocumented workers and there are 11 million people living and working in the shadow economy. Neither is good for the economy or the country. It is time to fix our broken immigration system.

Last month, the Senate passed historic legislation that is largely consistent with the President’s principles for commonsense immigration reform with a strong bipartisan vote. The Senate’s Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744) represents the best chance that our country has had in years to modernize our immigration system.

In response to the vote, President Obama issued a statement, lauding the Senate’s action:

*I urge everyone who cares about this issue to keep a watchful eye. Now is the time when opponents will try their hardest to pull this bipartisan effort apart so they can stop commonsense reform from becoming a reality. We cannot let that happen. ...We have a unique opportunity to fix our broken immigration system in a way that upholds our traditions as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We just need Congress to finish the job.*

To read the full statement [click here](#).

To make the economic case for commonsense immigration reform, the White House released a report, [The Economic Benefits of Fixing Our Broken Immigration System](#), detailing the range of benefits to the U.S. economy that would be realized from passage of commonsense immigration reform, *and* the high costs of *inaction*. Specifically, the report finds that the Senate’s bipartisan immigration reform bill: Strengthens the overall economy and grows U.S. GDP; Fosters innovation and encourages more job creation and job growth in the U.S.; Increases the productivity of workers and adds new protections for American workers; and Decreases budget deficits, balances out an aging population, and strengthens Social Security.

This tool kit will provide resources for you to host a roundtable or conversation in your community with business and community leaders to discuss the economic benefits of immigration reform, the high cost of in action, and most importantly to make your voice heard. After you host your roundtable we will review the feedback we receive from your community conversations.

Read the President’s speeches and find additional resources at [WhiteHouse.gov/immigration](http://WhiteHouse.gov/immigration).



## **Host a Roundtable to Make Your Voice Heard**

Thanks for downloading the toolkit! This is your guide to hosting a roundtable – to engage in the conversation regarding fixing our broken immigration system.

There is a diverse group of stakeholders that care about addressing this issue –including faith leaders, business leaders, labor leaders, and ordinary Americans – and your diverse perspectives are necessary to remedy the system.

Host a roundtable in your community – register it at [www.wh.gov/issues/immigration/roundtables](http://www.wh.gov/issues/immigration/roundtables) and if you'd like someone from the Administration to join, let us know by clicking the box on the form.

If we can send someone to your roundtable, we'll let you know about 24-48 hours in advance. If we can't – you can hold the roundtable and send us the feedback and sign-in sheets from this toolkit so that we can follow up with you.

Our Immigration Reform team here will read your submissions. We'll be in touch with all of your participants in the coming weeks with invitations to White House conference calls, web chats, and other opportunities to talk with folks across the Obama Administration about our progress on immigration reform.

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1. How to Host a Roundtable
2. Overview on the Economic Benefits of Fixing Our Broken Immigration System
3. An Infographic on the cost of inaction
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5. Feedback Template
6. FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

## How to Host a Roundtable

### BEFORE

Find about 10-15 people from your community to meet – set a date, time, and place, and invite them! You may consider inviting participants from diverse sectors including the business, faith, law enforcement, and immigrant advocacy communities to your event.

If you want someone from the Obama Administration to join, fill out the webform at [WhiteHouse.gov/immigrationaction](http://WhiteHouse.gov/immigrationaction) and let us know when and where the event is taking place (if we can join, we will)!

### DURING

**Sign in:** Have everyone sign-in

**Handout or Show:** Give participants a copy of the Benefits of Immigration Reform and the cost of inaction handout from the tool-kit or show the White House's 3 minute video on the Economic Benefits of Fixing our broken immigration system, <http://at.wh.gov/mRvoZ>.

**Talk:** Talk about what immigration means to you and your community

**Identify:** Ideas that the Administration should be considering, and ways to engage your community in this important debate.

**Challenge:** Ask the group to work together to educate your community about what is needed to fix our broken immigration system

**Discuss:** Ways that you can share the broad support for addressing the need to reform the immigration system with us and others in your community.

### AFTER

**Return:** the completed web form to us at [WhiteHouse.gov/immigrationaction](http://WhiteHouse.gov/immigrationaction). That way we can share your concerns and successes with the President's advisors and people that care about fixing our broken immigration system around the country and also keep you informed about next steps in the debate.

**Continue the national conversation on this issue!**

### SHARE YOUR VOICE WITH THE PRESIDENT

Your submissions will be compiled and turned into a briefing memo for the President's team that will include concerns, successes, and solutions – ways that you are helping to change the debate on this issue and helping to create an opportunity to move a solution forward.

### NEXT STEPS

We'll follow up with you and invite you to White House conference calls on issues that matter to you, keep you in the loop with web chats and other events here in Washington, and all around the country.

## **The Economic Benefits of Fixing Our Broken Immigration System**

### *The Senate-Passed Bipartisan Immigration Reform Bill:*

#### **Strengthens the overall economy and grows U.S. GDP:**

Independent studies affirm that commonsense immigration reform will increase economic growth. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that enacting the Senate immigration reform bill will increase real GDP relative to current law projections by 3.3 percent in 2023 and 5.4 percent in 2033 – an increase of roughly \$700 billion in 2023 and \$1.4 trillion in 2033 in today’s dollars.

- A larger labor force; higher productivity and investment; and stronger technology, tourism, hospitality, agriculture, and housing industries are just some of the key ways that immigration reform strengthens the U.S. economy.

#### **Fosters innovation and encourages more job creation and job growth in the U.S.:**

Evidence shows that immigrants are highly entrepreneurial. Immigration reform would streamline the process for highly-skilled and highly-educated workers to come to the U.S. and build businesses that create jobs for Americans. In addition, it encourages companies to locate, invest, and expand here in the U.S.

- Under the recently passed Senate legislation, entrepreneurial immigrants would be eligible for newly created temporary and permanent visas if they demonstrate that they have ideas that attract U.S. investment or revenue and establish businesses that create jobs.

#### **Increases the productivity of workers and adds new protections for American workers:**

According to CBO and other independent studies, immigration reform will ultimately increase overall U.S. productivity, resulting in higher GDP and higher wages. Part of this gain in productivity comes from immigrants’ creating new inventions and companies, as well as from improvements in U.S. production processes.

- Bringing undocumented workers out of the shadows and into the legal economy also helps put a stop to practices that undercut wages and worsen working conditions for American workers. This bill also has provisions to protect U.S. workers and ensure that new worksite enforcement and border security measures deter future illegal immigration.

#### **Decreases budget deficits, balances out an aging population, and strengthens Social Security:**

The CBO found that the enacting Senate immigration reform bill will reduce the federal budget deficit by nearly \$850 billion over the next 20 years. In addition, the independent Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration (SSA) has found that immigration reform will improve the long-term financial standing of Social Security by adding younger workers to the U.S. workforce.

- The SSA Actuary estimates that the Senate’s immigration reform bill will add nearly \$300 billion to the Social Security Trust Fund over the next decade and would improve Social Security’s finances over the long run, extending Social Security solvency by two years.

You can read the full Report by clicking [here](#) or you can watch the 3 minute video titled: [White House White Board: Why immigration Reform is Food for Our Economy](#)

# THE BENEFITS OF IMMIGRATION REFORM... VERSUS THE COSTS OF INACTION

## No immigration reform ECONOMIC COSTS

### LESS

Domestic production does not benefit from larger labor force, higher investment and increased productivity

### SHRINKS

Labor force participation continues to decline as the baby boom generation retires

### LESS

US economy does not benefit from technological advancements and higher productivity that would result from immigration reform

### LOWER

Wage increase for a median household in 2033 = \$0

### LESS

American workers do not benefit from new protections that help ensure immigrants complement the American workforce

### HIGHER

Federal budget does not benefit from additional taxes paid by new and legalized immigrants and deficits are nearly \$850 billion higher

### MORE

US debt as a share of the economy in 2023 = 3 percentage points higher as a result of not passing commonsense immigration reform

### STATUS QUO

Social Security does not benefit from new young and healthy workers to balance out strain from retiring baby boomers

### LESS

Talented entrepreneurs are prevented from starting new companies, patenting new technologies, and providing Americans with well-paying jobs

### STATUS QUO

Housing market does not benefit from higher demand, delaying economic revitalization of hard-hit communities

### Economic Growth



### Labor Force



### Productivity



### Wages



### Workers Protections



### Federal Deficit



### Federal Debt



### Social Security



### Entrepreneurs & Innovation



### Housing Market



## Commonsense immigration reform ECONOMIC BENEFITS

### MORE

In 2033, the US economy will be 5.4% larger than under the status quo – an increase of roughly \$1.4 trillion

### GROWS

New working-age immigrants participate in the labor force at a higher rate

### MORE

Productivity will increase by 1% in 2033

### HIGHER

Average wage increase for a median household in 2033 = \$250 (in today's dollars)

### MORE

American workers will benefit from wage protections for temporary workers and new safeguards against abuses in recruiting foreign labor.

### LOWER

Federal deficits cut by nearly \$850 billion through 2033

### LESS

US debt as a share of the economy in 2023 = 3 percentage points lower, compared to current law

### STRONGER

Social Security Trust Fund extended by two years

### MORE

Highly talented and entrepreneurial immigrants with ideas that attract investment and create jobs will be eligible for newly created temporary and permanent visas

### STRONGER

Housing market recovery will be strengthened by more demand and higher prices





## FEEDBACK MEMO

[INSERT DATE HERE]

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT'S IMMIGRATION TEAM

FROM: [NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE FOR YOUR ROUNDTABLE]

SUBJECT: ROUNDTABLE ON FIXING THE BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM FROM  
[INSERT NAME OF YOUR GROUP, ORGANIZATION, OR LOCATION HERE]

Top 3 Issues You Discussed:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What was the issue that you think most needs to be addressed and why?

What is an issue you discussed that folks have successfully helped tackle? What was their plan to tackle it?

What are your plans following the event to help make sure people in your community know about the diverse support for immigration reform e.g. letters to the editor, op-eds in the local paper, media interviews:

Additional Notes/Comments – what did participants at your roundtable want the P resident's team to know?:



### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What if I set up a roundtable and no one from the Administration comes?

A: That may happen, depending upon the response we get and the travel schedules of the folks participating. But the completed toolkit you send back will be read by the White House Immigration Team, and there will be follow-up with us over the phone, through webchats and potentially in person during future events and meetings.

Q: Where do I send my feedback?

A: You can upload both your attendee list and feedback memo at [WhiteHouse.gov/immigrationaction](https://www.whitehouse.gov/immigrationaction). We recommend doing this within a week of your event.