Donald Trump Administration Releases 10-Point Immigration Plan

November 12, 2016

A Donald Trump administration will execute a 10-point plan to "restore the integrity" of the U.S. immigration system, including building a wall along the border with Mexico, suspension of visas from certain countries and reforming the legal immigration system, the president-elect's transition team said Nov. 11.

The new administration under Donald Trump will focus on radical ideologies, nuclear weapons and cyber-attacks as three areas of threat in the national defense and security domain, the transition team said.

The team listed what it called the 10-point plan for immigration reform though not much details of such a policy framework were immediately available. It broadly indicates the policies articulated by Trump during his election campaigning.

As per the Trump Transition, the list includes to build a wall on the southern border, end catch-and-release, zero tolerance for criminal aliens, block funding for sanctuary cities, and cancel unconstitutional executive orders and enforce all immigration laws.

It also includes suspending the issuance of visas to any place where adequate screening cannot occur. This policy appears to have evolved from Trump's election time statements related to banning entry of Muslims from entering the country.

The policy, among other things, also calls to ensure that other countries take their people back when the U.S. deports them.

Interestingly, this year India has taken back at least three charter planes full of people who came to the U.S. illegally or were asked to be deported.

Among other policies include completing the biometric entry-exit visa tracking system and turning off the jobs and benefits magnet.

The Trump Transition has also talked about reforming the legal immigration system, which among other things includes the much sought after H-1B visas.

"Reform legal immigration to serve the best interests of America and its workers," it said, without giving any further details.

While there is no mention of H-1B visas, a position paper issued by the Trump Campaign during the primaries was critical of this system and had called for increasing the minimum wage of H-1B visa holders to $100,000.

This was described as a deal killer by immigration experts and Indian companies.

"We graduate two times more Americans with STEM degrees each year than find STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) jobs, yet as much as two-thirds of entry-level hiring for IT jobs is accomplished through the H-1B program," said the position paper.

More than half of H-1B visas are issued for the program's lowest allowable wage level, and more than 80 percent for its bottom two, the position paper had rued.

"Raising the prevailing wage paid to H-1Bs will force companies to give these coveted entry level jobs to the existing domestic pool of unemployed native and immigrant workers in the U.S., instead of flying in cheaper workers from overseas," it said.

This will improve the number of black, Hispanic and female workers in Silicon Valley who have been passed over in favor of the H-1B program, the Trump campaign said then.

However, the Cato Institute in a policy paper Nov. 10 said that Trump's H-1B visa policy proposal will reduce the number of legal skilled temporary migrant workers.

Just over 124,000 H-1Bs were approved in 2014 for initial employment in the U.S., with 85,000 of them for employment in firms and the rest in non-profit research institutions.

These workers have an average salary of $75,000 so they do not compete with low-skilled America workers, it said.

"If the minimum salary for H-1B visas was bumped up to $100,000 then the number of H-1Bs hired by private firms would decrease while they'd also shrink for research institutions. The 75th percentile for wage compensation for H-1B workers is $81,000," wrote Alex Nowrasteh, in his policy paper for the Cato Institute.

"Even including all of the petitions for high wage workers that are rejected each year, this reform would significantly shrink the number of H-1B visas issued at an enormous economic cost. The H-1B system is also the feeder to the employment-based green card so any change here could disrupt future flows there even if no other changes are made," Nowrasteh said.

The Cato Institute said the policy would increase the regulatory cost for American firms hiring skilled foreign workers in specialty occupations.

"Congress considered this policy for the H-1B visa in 1990 and rejected it because the regulatory costs would be so high," Nowrasteh said.

Trump's transition team in its brief position paper also listed radical ideologies, nuclear weapons and cyber-attacks as three areas of threat in the national defense and security domain.

"Mr. Trump recognizes that we cannot tackle challenges, especially threats to our security, unless we define the problem in a way that American resources and instruments of power can be applied against them," the Trump Transition said, setting in motion to evolve policies and plan of action so that Trump is ready to take actions immediately after he is sworn in on Jan. 20 next year.

"To this end, Mr. Trump recognizes the long-term threat posed to our nation and our allies by radical ideologies that direct and inspire terrorism. A Trump administration will be committed to both immediate and sustainable actions to counter the threats posed by these radical ideologies," the position paper said.

Noting that a Trump Administration also recognizes the uniquely catastrophic threats posed by nuclear weapons and cyber attacks, it said the president-elect will ensure the strategic nuclear triad is modernized to ensure it continues to be an effective deterrent.