



Message to the Entire GOP: Follow the Republican Study Committee's Lead on Immigration

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The Republican Study Committee (RSC) released its budget proposal for the 2022 fiscal year, which runs from September 2021 through October 2022. The proposed budget includes a number of critical immigration reforms that would squarely reorient the party in an America First direction.

The RSC includes 149 Republican members of the House of Representatives – nearly 71 percent of all Republicans in the lower chamber. The RSC is the largest self-described conservative caucus in Congress, and its members wield vast influence over the ideological and policy direction of the GOP as a whole.

The FY 2022 RSC budget calls for a number of needed improvements to our country's immigration system based on four principles:

- Immigration policy should protect our national security by protecting the American people from terrorism, cartels, and other threats to their safety.
- Immigration policy should prioritize American workers, help grow our middle class, raise wages, and enhance economic opportunity for all lawful residents.
- Immigration policy should respect the rule of law, along with immigrants that honor our legal immigration processes, rather than incentivize law breaking.
- Immigration policy should aim to assimilate legal immigrants into the American family so they too can take pride in our values, history, and heritage.

On top of addressing the elephant in the room – Biden's Border Crisis – the budget specifically calls for mandatory use of E-Verify by all employers. E-Verify is a free, easy to use program administered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that instantly checks the information provided on a prospective employee's I-9 form against records available to the Social Security Administration (SSA) and DHS. Mandatory E-Verify would turn off the job magnet in the United States that draws most illegal aliens to the country in the first place.

The budget also includes a number of proposals that would prevent the proliferation of sanctuary cities and states, whose strategy to nullify Federal laws flies in the face of the Constitution's deference to the Federal government in matters concerning national borders and immigration. The budget calls for a number of long overdue changes to our country's legal immigration policies, which bring in over a million new immigrants every single year. The RSC budget suggests ending the diversity visa lottery, a bizarre program that brings in over 50,000 new immigrants a year for no other reason than the fact that they come from countries with small immigrant populations in the United States. No other developed country would ever dream of implementing such a scheme, and yet the U.S. continues this strange practice year after year. Importantly, the RSC proposal calls for the U.S. to move to a skills-based, rather than relationship-based, immigration model. FAIR opposes chain migration for the simple fact that it is not in the national interest. Chain migration prioritizes extended family relationships over skills, education, and the needs of our country. The RSC notes that in FY 2019, over 68 percent of new immigrants came in through chain migration and only 13 percent came in as prospective employees.

Further, the RSC budget proposes ending birthright citizenship by only conferring citizenship to individuals born in the country who have at least one U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident parent.

The immigration policies proposed in the budget are sound and sorely needed. Unfortunately, they will never see the light of day as long as Democrats control the White House and both chambers of Congress. However, this is a positive signal overall, showing what many House Republicans will push for on immigration if they regain control of the chamber after the 2022 midterms.

The budget is also a far cry from the immigration policy prescriptions offered by the old GOP establishment, which was more concerned with increasing the aggregate GDP (as opposed to per capita GDP) by any means necessary, regardless of the effect such policies had on American workers. Groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Cato Institute, and Bush Center still espouse open-door immigration policies which serve to flood the market with foreign workers, raising profits for corporations and businesses while destroying employment opportunities for Americans and changing the social fabric of our country. These groups and their allies held outsized influence over the GOP for decades.

But this orthodoxy is no more thanks to a new generation of leaders elected to Congress, including RSC Chairman Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.). The RSC's budget proposal reflects this change and advances policy goals that are more in line with the millions of voters around the country who oppose increasing immigration and want the federal government to regain control of our borders. The aforementioned four principles – not the demands of corporate lobbyists – must shape the GOP's direction moving forward if they want to gain and retain power. Party leadership at the headquarters and in both chambers must embrace a true America First immigration agenda – it's time.