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## How Would Project 2025 Affect Immigrants?

*The conservative blueprint has been deemed an assault on immigration on a scale unseen in modern American history*

Project 2025, the conservative party blueprint for dismantling the US government and remaking it to reflect extremist Christian Right policies and ideologies, **lays out a cruel and unprecedented plan to detain and deport millions of people living in the US, and deter others seeking refuge from persecution.** Former White House aide, Steven Miller, who was chief architect of Trump's border policy, has been credited in the media for the ideas that are regurgitated in Project 2025.

The new plan represents an extreme expansion of anti-immigration policies that, if enacted, will lead to unprecedented suffering and renewed displacement for millions into insecurity and dangerous home countries in conflict, a draconian plan, say immigration critics of Project 2025. It calls for the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.

America's economy will also suffer significant negative impacts, since Project 2025's proposals directly affect workers in several major sectors, including agriculture and construction. The blueprint represents a serious setback for immigrants' rights, and many of the proposed policies are likely to be contested as violations of human rights under current law.

Project 2025's authors openly admit that immigration is a hot-button polarizing political issue that resonates with conservative voters, and admit they plan to exploit fear of immigration to lure voters. Here, immigrants are presented as a threat to Americans, and to America's cities, and to safety and the economy. Immigrants make for an all-purpose enemy, and are pitted against citizens, and linked with crime. Inflammatory rhetoric infuses Project 2025.

Project 2025's blueprint reflects a **nativist domestic policy and an isolationist foreign policy.** It calls for **militarizing enforcement to seal the border**, and going after undocumented immigrants in ways not previously allowed by law or policy. Among radical proposals, it calls for **abolishing the Department of Homeland Security** and merging it with other agencies now tasked with border control activities into a **giant, umbrella law enforcement agency, the third-largest in government, with Cabinet-level status.** (pg. 89) It would redirect money from the military budget to border enforcement.

Below are key specific proposals and how they may impact immigrants, divided into topic areas:



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## Enforcement

- **Revise existing law to allow mass detention:** The authors propose passing new federal rules that will overrule individual states: *“A single nationwide detention standard should be codified that prevents individual states from mandating that federal government agencies adhere to widely expansive and ever-changing sets of standards. Such standards should allow the flexibility to use large numbers of temporary facilities such as tents.”* (pg. 140)
- **Set up 100,000 new beds for detainees:** “Congress should mandate and fund additional bed space for alien detainees. ICE should be funded for a significant increase in detention space, raising the daily available number of beds to 100,000.” (pg. 143)
- **Militarize the border:** The authors propose using the Department of Defense (the Army, National Guard, etc.) to help civil authorities with “domestic emergencies” and “law enforcement support.” (pg. 107)
- **Expedite detentions and deportations – without warrants:** *“ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) should be identified as being primarily responsible for enforcing civil immigration regulations, including the civil arrest, detention, and removal of immigration violators anywhere in the United States, without warrant where appropriate....”* (pg. 142)
- **Create a new authority** to *“expel illegal aliens across the border immediately when certain non- health conditions are met, such as loss of operational control of the border.”* (pg. 147)
- **Direct Congress to fund 20,000 Expedited Removal Officers** (ERO) and 5,000 attorneys at the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA). (pg. 143)
- **Direct ICE** to *“take custody of all aliens with records for felonies, crimes of violence, DUIs, previous removals, and any other crime considered a national security or public safety threat under current laws.”* (pg. 141)
- **Give ICE authority to arrest, detain, and remove “immigration violators” anywhere;** eliminate “sensitive zones” where ICE now cannot operate. (pg. 142)
- **Expand use of workplace search warrants** (‘Blackies Warrants’) to allow ICE to question or apprehend workers it suspects of being undocumented immigrants. (pg. 142)



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- Recommence negotiations with Mexico to **fully implement the Remain in Mexico Protocols.** (pg. 151)
- **Give Border Patrol agents more leeway:** Bring back horseback-mounted Border Patrol, and “*clear the records and personnel files of those who were falsely accused by Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas of whipping migrants and issue a formal apology on behalf of DHS and CBP.*” (pg. 139)
- **Fund and expand the border wall** by appropriating money from Congress. (pg. 147). Use the Department of Defense to “*assist in aggressively building the wall.*” (pg. 166)
- Have Congress authorize state and local law enforcement to join in immigration and border security actions to detain and question individuals suspected of violating work rules that forbid undocumented immigrants from working.<sup>1</sup>

### **Restrict Immigrants’ Rights**

- **Treat unaccompanied immigrant children like adults, and send them back alone to their home countries:** Project 2025 would eliminate the Flores Settlement agreement (which takes care of unaccompanied children) and remove them from the custody of the Health and Human Services, to the Department of Homeland Security (pg. 148).
- **Revise laws on trafficking to facilitate deportation of children.** Amend Section 235 of the Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (TVPRA) to more easily deport unaccompanied children. (pg. 148)
- **Reduce the rights of legal immigrants:** Project 2025 proposes cutting off federal benefits for all immigrants (documented or undocumented). For example, no non-citizens would have access to public housing (including all mixed-status families). (pg. 509)
- **Reduce the number of employees** whose job is to enforce civil rights rules for immigrants.

### **Restrict Migration**

- **Abolish H-2A visas** (agricultural workers) and H-2B visas (for other temporary workers). (pp. 611-612)
- **Abolish “chain migration” -- but prioritize the highly skilled:** H1-B visas would be reserved for “high-skilled aliens”: “To that end, the diversity visa lottery should be repealed, chain migration should be ended while focusing on the nuclear family, and the



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employment visa program should be replaced with a system to award visas only to the “best and brightest.” (pg. 145)

- **Make it harder to seek asylum in the U.S.:** Project 2025 would remove “credible fear” and fear of gang violence as grounds for asylum and tighten up asylum eligibility requirements, while also searching out “asylum fraud.” (pg. 143)
- **Roll back visa eligibility (T and U visas) for victims of human trafficking:** “Victimization should not be a basis for an immigration benefit.” (pg. 141)
- **Congress should halt funds** given to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to process and transport illegal aliens into and throughout the US. (pg. 149)
- **Eliminate or significantly reduce the number of visas issued to foreign students from enemy nations**— a version of the prior Trump-era Muslim ban. (pg. 141)

Recently, Trump promised that, if elected, he would work to carry out Project 2025’s ambitious agenda, which mirrors his immigration goals, a plan the *New York Times* recently declared, “***an assault on immigration on a scale unseen in modern American history. Millions of undocumented immigrants would be barred from the country or uprooted from it years or even decades after settling here.***”

### **Our view goes further:**

Project 2025 is a return to the racism and anti-immigrant attitudes that marked one of the darkest chapters of American history, when millions of Japanese-Americans were rounded up and put into internment camps. Project 2025 goes against the founding ethos and welcoming spirit of America as a democratic nation founded and built by immigrants, a melting pot of diversity, and an enduring beacon of freedom. Its immigration proposals threaten the fabric and future of America.

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<sup>i</sup> *Arizona vs. United States* 567 U.S. 387 (2012)