



we are one family under God

U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021

Key Points

- **Eliminates the use of the word “alien” and replaces it with “noncitizen”**
- **Creates an earned roadmap to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented**
 - *3-year path to citizenship* - Dreamers, TPS holders, and some farmworkers.
 - *8-year path to citizenship* - All other undocumented immigrants who pass background checks and pay taxes without fear of deportation.
 - Clarifies “inspected and admitted” in § 244 of the INA to include a noncitizen granted TPS.
- **Reforms the family-based immigration system to keep families together**
 - Recaptures unused visas from previous years to clear backlogs and includes spouses and children of green card holders as immediate family members.
 - Increases per-country caps for family-based immigration.
 - Provides protections for orphans, widows, and children, and allows immigrants with approved family-sponsorship petitions to join family in the U.S. on a temporary basis while they wait for green cards to become available.
 - Repeals the three- and ten-year bars.
 - Provides humanitarian and family-unity waivers for certain grounds of inadmissibility and deportability.
- **Strengthens Immigrant Integration and Citizenship Initiatives for Immigrant Communities**
 - Creates and authorizes start-up funds for the U.S. Citizenship and Integration Foundation to coordinate and fund integration pilots across the country.
 - Authorizes \$25 million for existing citizenship education grants.
 - Authorizes English language and workforce development grant programs carried out by the Department of Education, and authorizes \$200 million in funding.
 - Authorizes USCIS to grant legal service NGOs funding to provide legal services to attain LPR status, and authorizes \$50 million from Immigration Exam fees.
 - Waives naturalization English language, civics requirements for U.S. high school graduates.
 - Waives naturalization English language, civic requirements for elderly, foreign born LPRs.
- **Addresses Root Causes**
 - Implements a four-year strategy, known as the “United States Strategy for Engagement in Central America” to:
 - Advance reforms in Central America and address key factors contributing to the flight of families and other individuals in Central America to the U.S.

- Coordinate with other U.S. entities as well as national and local civil society organizations in Central America, the U.S., and the governments of Central America.
 - Reintroduce legal asylum and refugee pathways to vulnerable populations such as the Central American Minor program.
- Also appropriates \$1,000,000,000 for each of the Fiscal Years 2022–2025.
- **Supports Asylum Seekers and Other Vulnerable Populations**
 - Eliminates the one-year deadline for filing asylum claims.
 - Reduces asylum application backlogs.
 - Increases protections against detention and removal for U visa, T visa, and VAWA applicants, and raises the cap on U visas from 10,000 to 30,000.
 - Provides better access to work authorization for those seeking or granted asylum, withholding, CAT, and other protected statuses.
 - Provides in-state tuition for public higher education to asylees, refugees, SIVs.
 - Improves access to SIV status for Afghan and Iraqi widows and orphans.
 - Establishes a Syrian SIV program, authorizing 5,000 slots per year for five years.
- **Addresses Border Security**
 - Directs the Secretary to develop and implement a strategy to manage and secure the southern border by deploying smart technology to counter transnational criminal networks. Requires such strategy to include:
 - A comprehensive assessment of physical barriers, levees, technologies, tools, and other devices currently in use along the southern border.
 - Specific steps that may be taken in each Border Sector over 5 years to identify technology systems and tools to provide situational awareness at the southern border.
 - A cost justification for each time a more expensive technology, tool, or device is recommended over a less expensive option in a given Border Sector.
 - A performance measure to evaluate the effectiveness of each technology deployed in Border Patrol operations in each Border Sector.
- **Grows Our Economy**
 - Eliminates per-country caps, making it easier for STEM advanced degree holders from U.S. universities to stay.
 - Gives families of H-1B holders work authorization.
 - Creates a pilot program to stimulate regional economic development and incentivizes higher wages for non-immigrant, high-skilled visas to prevent unfair competition with American workers.
 - Requires that all those granted Lawful Prospective Immigrant status be issued a Social Security Number and work authorization with supporting documentation.
 - Expands protections and prohibitions against exploitation of, and unjust discrimination against, immigrant laborers, while also establishing a Commission to improve employment authorization, including the E-Verify system.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Increases annual number of U.S. diversity visas from 55,000 to 80,000.