

AILA 2020 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE SURVEY

1. How do you propose to improve America's legal immigration system to ensure it meets the needs of American families, communities, and businesses?

Bernie believes that we are long overdue for humane immigration reform in this country. He supports a family-based immigration system grounded in civil and human rights. He opposes letting corporate America pick and choose who they want to come into our country. Bernie believes we must stand up for our values and accept refugees, asylum-seekers, and families who come to the United States in search of the American Dream.

When he is in the White House, Bernie will create a swift and fair roadmap to citizenship, ensure and expand access to asylum for persecuted immigrants, dismantle Trump's deportation machine and detention centers, put an end to family separation once and for all, decriminalize and demilitarize our border, establish a humane review process for those who are currently arriving at the border under civil proceedings, end the exploitation of immigrant workers and ensure that they are protected by law, modernize the visa system, rewrite bad trade agreements, and ensure access to justice for all immigrants.

2. Do you support reforms to ensure USCIS upholds its service-oriented mission to adjudicate immigration benefits in a fair and timely fashion? (Yes/No)

Yes. Bernie will reform USCIS and reverse the posture President Trump's administration has taken to make it slower, more time consuming, and more difficult for immigrants to navigate this country's immigration system.

3. How would you reform USCIS to uphold its mission to adjudicate immigration benefits in a fair and timely fashion?

Bernie will work with Congress to ensure that agencies such as USCIS have the funding and personnel necessary to eliminate the backlog of pending applications and cut wait times. A Bernie Sanders administration will not make it harder, as Trump has, to immigrate to the United States and to navigate the necessary channels and paperwork to access rights and benefits.

4. How would you address the population of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, including Dreamers, DACA recipients, and TPS recipients?

Bernie will work with Congress to pass the DREAM Act. He will also immediately extend and expand DACA and make deferred action available for more young people through executive action, as well as their parents. Bernie believes a pathway to citizenship should be broad and inclusive.

If Congress does not follow the will of the people to enact humane immigration reform, Bernie will use executive action to accomplish what they fail to do. He would expand upon President Obama's DACA and DAPA programs to provide broad administrative relief to the parents of DREAMers, the parents of citizens, and the parents of legal permanent residents. He will also allow all undocumented individuals who have been in the United States for at least five years to stay in the country without fear of deportation, which is well within the President's executive authority.

**5. Do you support enactment of a legalization plan that provides unauthorized immigrants lawful permanent resident status and the opportunity to apply for citizenship?
(Yes/No)**

Yes. Bernie agrees with the vast majority of Americans who believe we must bring the 11 million undocumented people in the country out of the shadows and provide a swift, fair path to citizenship. Bernie would ensure any path to citizenship is broad and inclusive, minimizes fees and waiting times, and ensures citizenship for those who pursue it within five years. A truly just pathway to citizenship does not contain arbitrary cut off eligibility dates and application periods. Such deadlines risk excluding hundreds of thousands of people who have arrived in the United States "too late," but have become an integral part of the American community.

**6. Do you support the creation of an independent Article I immigration court system?
(Yes/No)**

Bernie believes that justice demands ensuring judicial independence in our immigration system so that cases may be adjudicated in a fair, efficient manner. We have seen the Trump administration's efforts to undermine our immigration court system, and we must ensure a fair and independent judiciary. Bernie is open to creating an independent Article I immigration court system but believes that much more must be done to reform our broken immigration court system.

7. How would you reform the immigration court system to ensure the fair and effective administration of justice?

Bernie will work with Congress to fix our badly broken immigration adjudication process by fully funding the court system and hiring more immigration judges to eliminate the backlog of immigration cases. He believes that it is ridiculous that we have 400 immigration judges to handle nearly 1 million immigration cases. Bernie will end case quotas for immigration judges, restore discretion to judges and allow them to consider the unique circumstances of an individual's case, and guarantee immigrants a right to counsel.

8. How would you improve immigration enforcement and ensure accountability over the agencies responsible for the enforcement of immigration law?

Bernie voted against the creation of DHS in 2002, and it was the right vote. Trump has used DHS, and its components ICE and CBP, as part of a deportation and detention machine. Bernie will dismantle that machine when in office. He will fundamentally restructure ICE and the other agencies responsible for our broken immigration and border enforcement system. Under a Bernie Sanders presidency, immigration agencies would not go after hard working immigrant families, as they do now under Trump. Instead, these agencies will serve a humanitarian mission grounded in civil and human rights. Bernie believes we can have a secure border without a militarized force and inhumane detention and deportation machine. He will prioritize enforcement on stemming the flow of illegal drugs at ports of entry, stopping human trafficking, and enforcing labor standards.

As president, Bernie will instruct DOJ to drop any litigation or funding restrictions relating to sanctuary cities. He will end programs that turn local police forces into immigration officers and end the workplace raids used to terrorize vulnerable communities and workers trying to put food on the table for their families. In too many instances, deportation programs like the 287(g) program, the Priority Enforcement Program (PEP), and the Criminal Alien Program have unjustly turned local law enforcement officials into immigration officers. These programs do not make us safer and they threaten vulnerable communities. Racial profiling and the criminalization of communities of color form the foundation of these deportation programs, and they will be eliminated under a Sanders Administration.

9. Do you support the reduction of immigration detention, including reduction in U.S. taxpayer funding of immigration detention? (Yes/No)

Yes. Bernie will order an immediate moratorium on private immigration detention centers and immediately begin the process of closing them. He will order a review of the standards for facilities that house children and immediately connect children to sponsors and supports. Bernie will ensure all children who were separated from their families by the United States government are reunited swiftly, including those who have been separated through unjust deportation.

He will authorize and expand the use of community-based alternatives to detention that connect immigrants to health care services, legal counsel, and work opportunities. Bernie will end detention for families, children, and non-violent immigrants.

10. How would you ensure the fair, humane and efficient screening of migrants coming to the southern border of the United States?

Bernie will end Trump policies such as “metering” and the “Remain in Mexico” policy. Bernie believes that no human being is illegal, and we should not treat families who travel thousands of miles to escape violence and misery as criminals. Securing our borders does not mean turning away weary asylum seekers who have made the arduous journey to America in search of peace and safety. Instead, we must live up to our ideals as a nation by welcoming refugees and those seeking asylum.

It is very clear that we are asking Border Patrol agents to serve a mission they are not equipped or trained for. The influx of families and children at the border calls for a humanitarian mission, including more health care workers, mental health specialists, legal counsel, and social workers, not more policing. As president, Bernie will instruct DHS to ensure arriving immigrants, especially children and families, are properly screened for humanitarian and immigration relief.

11. How would you address the root causes of migration that is resulting in more people fleeing from violence and persecution in the Americas region?

Bernie believes we must address the root causes of migration. Decades of disastrous U.S. foreign policy interventions and trade deals have contributed to the destabilization and poverty in Latin America. Bernie supports restoring and increasing aid to Central and South American nations, working to strengthen human rights, and funding programs to curb corruption, political repression, violence, and poverty.

As president, Bernie will bring together the leaders of Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, and other Central American countries in a hemispheric summit to address the root causes of the migration we are seeing. Bernie believes that trade policies should be written with the goal of lifting standards of living both in the United States and abroad, and must protect workers in all countries, not large multinational corporations. A Sanders Administration would end the destabilizing foreign policy decisions and trade deals that helped contribute to the crises we see in Central and South America today.

12. Do you support the right to legal counsel for people facing removal, including counsel paid-for by the government for those who cannot afford it? (Yes/No)

Yes. When immigrants have access to counsel, nearly 100 percent attend all their hearings, are far more likely to win their case, and report better overall well-being than those who do not have representation. That is why, when Bernie is president, all individuals facing removal will be entitled to legal counsel.

13. How would you ensure people facing removal receive legal counsel and have meaningful access to their counsel?

Currently, our immigration adjudication system is so broken that immigrants often do not receive notice of their hearings, notices are received in a language the recipients do not speak, and immigrants are sometimes even marked absent for hearings that did not even physically take place. Navigating the immigration system without legal counsel is next to impossible. To ensure that people can actually access their legal counsel, Bernie will adopt community-based alternatives to detention. When Bernie is in the White House, immigrants will have access to counsel, as well as other supportive services as they wait for their hearings.