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?

I believe America’s immigration system should reflect our core values of freedom, opportunity, diversity and safety. I would, within the first 100 days of taking office, send Congress immigration reform legislation. My bill would focus on family reunification, job creation by providing the tools American employers need to attract and retain foreign talent, a temporary worker program tied to our economic needs and a robust asylum and refugee program. My legislation would include a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living in our country.

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. We are, after all, a nation of immigrants. I would restore USCIS to its mission as a benefits, not an enforcement, agency.

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

On day 1 I would rescind the so-called “Buy American, Hire American” Executive Order and order DHS to rescind the various USCIS guidance memoranda that have served merely to justify USCIS restrictive adjudications. Within the first 90 days of my administration I would begin the process of repealing all restrictive, indeed in many cases antiimmigrant, regulations promulgated in the past several years, including the so-called Public Charge Rule.

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

On day 1 I would order DHS to: 1) rescind DHS memoranda of February 20, 2017 Implementing the President’s Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvement Policies; and Enforcement of the Immigration Laws to Serve the National Interest and reinstate the Obama era civil immigration enforcement priorities; 2) restore DACA by rescinding the Memorandum on Rescission Of Deferred Action For Childhood Arrivals (DACA); and take steps to rescind the cancellation of TPS where appropriate.

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.

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

Yes

7. How would you reform the immigration court system to ensure the fair and effective administration of justice?
The immigration court system must be independent of the U.S. Department of Justice. I would take the necessary steps to create an Article I immigration court.

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

Under my administration Congress would enact immigration reform legislation that would revamp the current broken immigration system, transforming the 11 million undocumented immigrants into documented immigrants. Under my administration immigration enforcement focus on bad-actor employers who exploit and abuse undocumented workers, not on hard working immigrants seeking to build a better life for their families and themselves. We need to create a level playing field in this country, focused on protecting families, providing businesses the tools they need to complete in a global economy and a robust asylum system which protects vulnerable refugees in need of safe haven.

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

Yes.

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

We need to protect vulnerable refugees in need of safe haven. First, I would end the cruel policies designed to thwart asylum protections such as the Migration Protection Protocols and metering practices. Rather than waste billions of U.S. taxpayer money on a wall, I would direct resources to the USCIS Asylum Corps and Executive Office For Immigration Review so that asylum applications can be handled in a manner that protects the integrity of the asylum process and ensures due process. What we have today at the southern border is an assault on the rule of law by an anti-immigrant administration. I would end that and restore core American values to the asylum process.

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?

America is a country that does great things. We certainly can solve the plight of refugees fleeing Central America. I would work closely with our regional partners to build democratic governments, free of corruption, that respect the rule of law and protect their citizens. I would reinstate programs closed by the Trump administration that were aimed at the root causes including the Central American Minors (CAM) program which enabled young people with claims to refugee status to apply in their home countries rather than embark on the dangerous journey north to the U.S.-Mexico border. I would work with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to organized regional refugee processing centers, thereby reducing the need for families flee north to the U.S.

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

I support the right to counsel in removal hearings. I would include the right to counsel in removal proceedings as part of an overall immigration reform package.