

Los Angeles Times / Bloomberg

Many Would Deny Illegal Immigrants Access to Basic Social Services *But Path To Citizenship Still Finding Wide Support*

Illegal immigration was a hot topic in Congress during last year's session, and it has been heating things up on the campaign trail as well, especially among Republican hopefuls battling their way toward the first elections of the primary season in Iowa and New Hampshire. The Democrats have been largely trying to stay out of the fray, although Hillary Clinton has faced sharp questions about her support of giving driver licenses to illegal immigrants. This distinction mirrors the concerns of the major party's voters as well, according to the latest Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll.

Nearly four out of 10 registered voters who describe themselves as Republicans said that illegal immigration is one of the most important problems facing the country, twice the proportion of Democrats who felt that way. Republicans ranked it third on the list of priorities they'd like the presidential candidates to address, behind protecting the country from terrorist attacks and the war in Iraq, compared to its sixth place ranking among Democrats. And Republicans, not surprisingly, would pick the party they feel most closely affiliated with to do the best job of handling this issue. Democrats choose their own party as well, while independents split 25% to 25% between Democrats and Republicans, with 28% of independents saying that neither of the major parties would be their choice. Overall, voters split - 30% chose the Democrats, 31% chose the Republicans, and 26% said that neither party was up for the job.

The survey also found voters drawing a distinct line between legal and illegal immigrants. Nearly half (46%) of voters – including 43% of Republicans and 49% of Democrats – said that *legal* immigrants have had a positive effect on their community. This contrasts with the 21% who saw a positive effect from those who have come into the country illegally. Three times as many voters said that illegal immigrants have adversely impacted their city or town as said that about legal newcomers to the country, by 36% to 12%.

Partisan Divide

Republicans take a tougher line on how to handle illegal immigration than Democrats or independents. For example, Republicans oppose by 49% to 39% the idea of allowing illegal immigrant parents to stay in the country to care for children who have been born in this country and are thus automatically granted U.S. citizenship. More than a third of Republicans oppose the idea "strongly". In contrast, six out of 10 of Democrats and 50% of independents support keeping such families together.

However, most voters, regardless of party, support allowing illegal immigrants who have been living and working in the U.S. for a number of years to start on a path to citizenship by registering, paying a fine, getting fingerprinted, and learning English, among other requirements. This is supported by roughly three out of five Democrats, independents and Republicans. A proposal along these lines was killed in Congress last year by mostly Republican lawmakers, at least partly on the grounds that the bill amounted to amnesty when what was needed was stronger border security.

In this, the poll found Congressional leaders out of step with voters. When read a selection of five choices and asked which was the most effective measure in dealing with illegal immigration, roughly three out of 10 voters picked beefing up border security as the most effective approach, 27% mentioned sanctioning employers, 27% said a pathway to citizenship would be best, and 18% thought instituting a guest worker program would do the trick.

Social Services

One of the issues surrounding immigration being debated is how much access, if any, illegal immigrants should be given to public social services. The survey found some concern about this - more than a third of voters nationwide said that illegal immigrants have had a mainly negative impact on their communities, and nearly one in five who think that immigrants of any kind have impacted their community in a negative way pointed to the drain on social services as the problem, and one in eight cited their effect on the educational system.

When asked if immigrants who are in the country illegally should be granted access to any or none of five social services - public school, emergency rooms, driver licenses, food stamps, or in-state discounts on college tuition, 33% of voters overall said that they would deny access to all of these services. This includes two out of five Republicans and 22% of Democrats wouldn't grant access to any of them. Most often favored for access was emergency medical care at 46%, followed by enrolling children in public school at 40%. Granting some type of limited driver's license received 22% of mentions, followed by food stamps at 18% and in-state college tuition discounts at 12%. Six percent weren't sure.

-- Analysis by Jill E. Darling

Survey Methodology:

The Los Angeles Times / Bloomberg Poll contacted 1,467 adults nationwide by telephone November 30 through December 3, 2007. Included are 1,245 registered voters. The margin of sampling error for all adults and for registered voters is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For certain subgroups, the error margin may be somewhat higher.

Telephone numbers for the sample were chosen randomly from a list of all exchanges in the nation, allowing listed and unlisted numbers to be contacted. Multiple attempts were made to contact each number. Adults were weighted slightly to conform with their respective census proportions by sex, ethnicity, age, education, and national region.

Poll results may also be affected by factors such as question wording and the order in which questions are presented. Interviewing was conducted by Interviewing Service of America, Inc. in Van Nuys, CA.

For L.A. Times poll stories, press releases, poll archives and more, visit <http://latimes.com/timespoll>

Los Angeles Times / Bloomberg National Survey

The 2008 Election, The Economy, Immigration, and Military Families

Field dates: November 30 – December 3, 2007

Release 2 – Immigration Questions by Selected Demographics

Released December 5, 2007 4:00 p.m. Pacific

Guide to column headings:

REG	All registered voters
DEM, IND, REP	Registered voters who are affiliated to the Democrats /Independents/ Republicans
LIB, MOD, CONS	Registered voters who are self-described Liberals / Moderates / Conservatives
WHT, NWHT	Registered voters who are white, non-white

Notes:

- (vol.) indicates a volunteered response
- ‘-’ indicates that a response added up to less than 0.5% of the question base
- The order of any arguments, names, or statements are rotated in all questions that mention them. Question order is rotated whenever applicable.
- Responses are among registered voters
- For the results of questions not included in this release, see LAT0548 Releases 1 and 3, December 4 & 6, 2007

Immigration

Q28. What issue or problem do you consider the top priority for candidates running for president to address this election: Is it the war in Iraq, or protecting the country from terrorist attacks, or the economy, or education, or the environment, or healthcare issues, or illegal immigration, or other social issues, such as abortion and gay rights, or is there another issue? I could Repeat these if you wish.

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
None /all of these (vol)	10	12	10	6	8	12	7	9	11
War in Iraq	32	43	27	26	41	33	27	32	33
Economy	25	28	26	20	25	29	21	25	24
Healthcare issues	19	24	21	11	25	22	15	18	23
Protect country from attacks	18	8	16	34	8	12	29	21	11
Illegal immigration	15	6	16	23	9	11	21	16	10
Education	10	10	13	6	13	11	9	9	14
Environment	5	8	5	3	12	5	2	4	8
Other social issues	5	2	6	7	0	3	9	5	5
Other	4	2	2	5	1	3	5	4	2
Don't Know	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1

Q29. Which party do you think can do a better job of handling immigration issues?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Democrats	30	60	28	8	50	37	18	26	46
Republicans	31	10	20	61	17	18	45	32	19
Both equally (vol)	8	8	7	6	8	9	6	8	7
Neither/ other party (vol)	18	9	29	15	15	21	16	19	13
Don't Know	13	13	16	10	10	15	15	15	15

Q43. Would you say that legal immigrants who live in your community have had a mainly positive or a mainly negative impact on community life, or haven't they affected it one way or the other? (IF POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE) Do you feel strongly about that, or not so strongly?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
No impact	<u>31</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>31</u>
Positive (net)	<u>46</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>47</u>
Positive - strongly	<u>32</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>33</u>
Positive - not so strongly	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
Negative (net)	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>
Negative - not so strongly	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
Negative - strongly	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
No immigrants in my community (vol)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
D/know (net)	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>

Q44. Would you say that illegal immigrants who live in your community have had a mainly positive or a mainly negative impact on community life, or haven't they affected it one way or the other? Do you feel strongly about that, or not so strongly?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
No impact	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>
Positive (net)	<u>21</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>26</u>
Positive - strongly	<u>13</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>20</u>
Positive - not so strongly	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>
Negative (net)	<u>36</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>30</u>
Negative - not so strongly	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>
Negative - strongly	<u>23</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>18</u>
No immigrants in my community (vol)	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
D/know (net)	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>

Asked Of Those Who See A Negative Impact From Illegal or Legal Immigrants

Q45. What is the main way that immigrants have had a negative impact on your community? *Two responses accepted*

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Nothing in particular	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
Crime/gangs/drugs	<u>30</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>19</u>
Public Schools/ Education	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>7</u>
Take jobs from Americans	<u>35</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>43</u>
Changed the community	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>
Impact on social services	<u>19</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>23</u>
Decreased housing values	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Don't speak English/won't assimilate	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
Different customs/don't trust	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
Unfair advantage over legal applicants	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>
Don't pay taxes	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
Other	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
Not sure	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>

Q46. Compared to other problems facing the country, how big a problem is illegal immigration? Would you say it is one of the most important problems facing the country, or is it an important problem, but not one of the most important, or is it not all that important, or is it not important at all?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Important (net)	<u>81</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>71</u>
One of the most important	<u>27</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>24</u>
Important, not most	<u>54</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>47</u>
Not Important (net)	<u>17</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>26</u>
Not all that important	<u>11</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>
Not important at all	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>
D/know (net)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>

Q47. As you may know, children of illegal immigrants who are born in the United States are legal citizens of the US. Since they are citizens they cannot be deported, however, their parents can be deported, and the family broken up. Do you favor or oppose allowing the parents of such U.S. citizen children to stay in the U.S. legally so that they can raise their children? Do you (favor/oppose) that strongly, or only somewhat?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Favor (net)	<u>48</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>58</u>
Favor strongly	<u>29</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>41</u>
Favor somewhat	<u>19</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17</u>
Oppose (net)	<u>43</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>34</u>
Oppose somewhat	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>
Oppose strongly	<u>29</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>21</u>
D/know (net)	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>

Q47. As you may know, children of illegal immigrants who are born in the United States are legal citizens of the US. Since they are citizens they cannot be deported, however, their parents can be deported, and the family broken up. Do you favor or oppose allowing the parents of such U.S. citizen children to stay in the U.S. legally so that they can raise their children? Do you (favor/oppose) that strongly, or only somewhat?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Favor (net)	<u>48</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>58</u>
Favor strongly	<u>29</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>41</u>
Favor somewhat	<u>19</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17</u>
Oppose (net)	<u>43</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>34</u>
Oppose somewhat	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>
Oppose strongly	<u>29</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>21</u>
D/know (net)	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>

Q48. One proposal that has been discussed in Congress would allow illegal immigrants who have been living and working in the United States for a number of years, and who do not have a criminal record, to start on a path to citizenship by registering that they are in the country, paying a fine, getting fingerprinted, and learning English, among other requirements. Do you support or oppose this, or haven't you heard enough about it to say? Do you (support/oppose) it strongly, or (support/oppose) it somewhat?

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Support (net)	60	63	57	64	61	59	59	60	55
Support strongly	40	42	35	42	37	41	37	38	38
Support somewhat	20	21	22	21	24	18	22	22	17
Oppose (net)	15	8	13	18	11	11	18	15	14
Oppose somewhat	4	3	3	5	4	3	4	4	3
Oppose strongly	11	5	11	13	6	8	14	10	10
D/know (net)	25	29	30	18	28	30	23	25	31
Haven't heard enough	21	25	26	14	25	27	19	22	26

Q49. Which of the following social services, if any, do you think illegal immigrants should be able to legally use: Should they be able to enroll children in public schools, or get medical treatment in emergency rooms, or qualify for food stamps, or be given in-state discounts on college tuition, or be issued limited drivers licenses? *Five responses accepted*

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
None of these	33	22	35	40	24	32	39	37	22
Emergency medical treatment	46	51	48	41	58	49	39	46	48
Use public schools	40	48	39	34	52	44	30	39	44
Limited driver's licenses	22	31	19	14	30	22	16	19	31
Qualify for food stamps	18	26	15	12	25	18	14	17	25
In-state discounts on college tuition	12	21	9	8	17	13	9	10	20
Not sure	5	7	2	5	3	4	8	4	8
Refused	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1

Considering all you know about illegal immigration, generally speaking...

Q50. What do you think, if anything, is the most effective measure in dealing with the issue of illegal immigration: Should the focus be on more border security, or more arrests and deportations, or sanctions against employers who hire illegal immigrants, or a guest worker program for some businesses such as agriculture, or a pathway to citizenship with certain requirements? *Two responses accepted*

	<u>REG</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>IND</u>	<u>REP</u>	<u>LIB</u>	<u>MOD</u>	<u>CONS</u>	<u>WHT</u>	<u>N/WHT</u>
Nothing is effective	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	1
More border security	31	32	36	34	26	28	40	33	31
More arrests and deportations	16	11	14	25	16	11	19	16	14
Criminal sanctions against employers	27	25	29	25	28	27	23	28	18
Guest worker program	18	17	20	17	19	18	17	18	18
Pathway to citizenship	27	28	27	25	34	32	21	28	24
Other	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
Not sure	8	10	7	7	5	9	9	7	14
Refused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1