



## **Responding to the Current Border Crisis with Practical Solutions**

*As Congress considers responses to the current crisis at the border, several interconnected solutions will help more effectively manage these challenges in a way that is consistent with our nation's values and interests:*

### **Funding for border security needs to be paired with significant increases in funding for the Immigration Courts and USCIS to timely adjudicate cases.**

- Investing in more security will be ineffective if we do not also provide sufficient funding to address the huge backlogs in the immigration courts and USCIS and build their capacity to timely adjudicate cases near the border. This needs to include appropriate investment in free legal assistance for migrants to ensure their cases can be processed fairly and efficiently, building on the success of existing Department of Justice legal access programs.
- People with meritorious claims for relief should get timely authorization to work so they can live independently, and contribute to our communities; prompt adjudication will also ensure resolution of cases for people who do not have a legal pathway to stay in the U.S.
- More prompt adjudication will conserve resources in the long run by allowing people who have valid claims to independently support themselves, contribute to the community, and pay taxes, while simultaneously reducing the cost of care for people during the pendency of their cases.

### **Any changes to the asylum process must be carefully considered and ensure protection for vulnerable migrants fleeing persecution and terror.**

- Concerns about invalid asylum claims should be addressed through a fair and efficient adjudication process that provides access to legal assistance and sufficient time to appropriately present these claims.
- Adequate funding to ensure timely adjudication of asylum claims near the border is the most fair and effective way to manage unfounded asylum claims. Congress could also create a commission charged with a balanced review of the entire asylum adjudication system to consider other ways to increase efficiency in the process without compromising our nation's core values and legal obligations.
- Proposals that would unduly restrict how or where people can make initial asylum claims will endanger vulnerable people with legitimate claims for protection and do not respect settled due process principles.

**Federal coordination and more support for border communities and other jurisdictions responding to the surge of recent migrant arrivals is also necessary.**

- Immigration is a national (and international) issue.
- For too long, border states and jurisdictions have not been given the resources they need to adequately respond to waves of migrants seeking protection at the border. Many other cities and states throughout the country are now experiencing similar challenges as more migrants have been transported there.
- The federal government needs to take responsibility for coordinating the care and relocation of new migrant arrivals while they await processing of their cases. Additional support and funding should be provided to localities experiencing migrant arrivals so they can respond to humanitarian needs.

**Reforms to modernize and fix our legal immigration system are necessary to reach true solutions.**

- People have been coming to America for the same essential reasons since before our nation's founding: to seek a better life.
- Our legal channels for immigration, however, have not kept pace with economic realities, leading to the dysfunctional system we have today where people risk long and dangerous journeys to the border to seek protection-based legal pathways that often are not appropriate for their circumstances.
- In a time when there are still labor shortages in many parts of the economy and businesses are in need of workers throughout the country, Congress needs to create viable and reality-based legal channels to meet current and future economic needs.

*For more information, please contact Bob Glaves at [bglaves@chicagobarfoundation.org](mailto:bglaves@chicagobarfoundation.org) or (312) 554-1205.*