



FAITH VOICES FOR IMMIGRANTS

THE RESEARCH ON FAITH AND IMMIGRATION

Among Christians — the largest religious group in the United States today — and particularly among Evangelical Christians, there is broad consensus that America’s current immigration system is broken and needs to be reformed. The [Partnership for a New American Economy](#) (PNAE) is pairing with the [National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference](#) (NHCLC) to launch a national campaign focusing on the faith-based case for immigration reform. Together, PNAE and NHCLC will advance the national debate on immigration within churches across the country through coordinated sermons, Bible study curricula, prayer breakfasts, and a fly-in of faith leaders from around the country who will meet with political leaders in Washington, DC, in September. Both immigration and the Christian electorate will play significant roles in determining the next U.S. president in 2016 — and both parties should take note. Find out the facts below:

THERE IS BROAD CONSENSUS AMONG AMERICAN CHRISTIANS THAT OUR CURRENT IMMIGRATION SYSTEM IS BROKEN:

- “Majorities of all major religious groups believe the current immigration system is broken, including more than 6 in 10 white Catholics (67 percent), white mainline Protestants (67 percent), minority Protestants (64 percent), white evangelical Protestants (63 percent), the religiously unaffiliated (61 percent) and 56 percent of Catholics overall.” (Brookings, “[What Americans Want from Immigration Reform in 2014](#)”)
- Among U.S. Protestants, nearly 7 in 10 believe currently undocumented immigrants living in the United States should be allowed to legally stay in the country if they meet certain requirements. (Pew Research Center, “[Catholics, other Christians support immigration reform, but say faith plays small role](#)”)

PARTICULARLY AMONG AMERICAN EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS, THERE IS BROAD SUPPORT FOR REFORMING THE CURRENT IMMIGRATION SYSTEM:

- Nearly 7 in 10 Evangelicals (68 percent) believe it is important for Congress to pass significant new immigration legislation. (LifeWay Research poll, “[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)”)
- 6 out of 10 Evangelicals (61 percent) believe immigration reform should establish a path toward citizenship. (LifeWay Research poll, “[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)”)
- 68 percent of Evangelicals support immigration law changes that both increase border security and provide a pathway to citizenship. (LifeWay Research poll, “[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)”)

A CANDIDATE WHO OPPOSES IMMIGRATION REFORM RISKS LOSING VOTES FROM CHRISTIANS:

- Nearly half of white evangelical Protestant voters (45 percent) and minority Protestant voters (46 percent) say they would be less likely to vote for a candidate who opposes immigration reform, approximately twice as many who say they would be more likely to support such a candidate (22 and 18 percent, respectively). (Brookings, “[What Americans Want from Immigration Reform in 2014](#)”)



FAITH VOICES FOR IMMIGRANTS

CHRISTIANITY REMAINS THE DOMINANT RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES, BOTH AMONG NATIVE-BORN AND IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS:

- Today, roughly 7 in 10 Americans identify with the Christian faith, making the United States home to more Christians than any other country worldwide. (Pew Research Center, "[America's Changing Religious Landscape](#)")
- Additionally, among all legal U.S. immigrants, Christians remain the largest religious group at 61 percent (in 2012). (Pew Research Center, "[The Religious Affiliation of U.S. Immigrants: Majority Christian, Rising Share of Other Faiths](#)")
- Between 1992 and 2012, an estimated average of 600,000 Christian immigrants became permanent residents of the United States each year, totaling approximately 12.7 million Christians who received green cards. (Pew Research Center, "[The Religious Affiliation of U.S. Immigrants: Majority Christian, Rising Share of Other Faiths](#)")

AMONG HISPANICS, THE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS EVANGELICALS IS GROWING:

- "In 2000, only 1 in 10 Hispanic immigrants identified as Evangelical Christians. By 2013, nearly 1 in 6 did." (Partnership for a New American Economy, "[Shared Values: How Immigrants Align with the Republican and Democratic Parties on Social Voting Issues](#)")

THE CHURCH CAN DO MORE TO INFORM CHRISTIANS' VIEWS ON IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRATION REFORM:

- While roughly two-thirds of Evangelicals say they want Congress to act on immigration reform, only 12 percent said their views on immigration reform were influenced by biblical principles. (LifeWay Research poll, "[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)")
- 68 percent of Evangelicals say they would value hearing a sermon taught on how biblical principles and examples can be applied to immigration, as well as the Bible's views on immigration. (LifeWay Research poll, "[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)")
- The same number of Evangelicals report that their churches and pastors have never preached about the importance of reaching out to immigrants. (LifeWay Research poll, "[Evangelical Views on Immigration](#)")