

A policymaker's guide to immigration reform proposals

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The Biden Administration faces various demands from multiple stakeholders to reform the immigration system, and [has provided some indications of its plans](#).² To focus the discussion, we identified plans from 14 organizations published after the 2020 election, and we highlighted proposals (and sections of proposals) on employment-based/student immigration. Those plans are linked below with information about the organizations so that policymakers can access more information and identify allies when proposing changes.

American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA): association of about 15,000 immigration attorneys. See Section 11 on employment-based immigration, and Section 12 on improving processing at US consulates abroad. See this short [Blog](#) with key recommendations.

Alliance of Business Immigration Lawyers (ABIL): specific proposals led by a call for returning USCIS to being a benefits agency with a customer service mission.

American Association of Universities (AAU): organization representing research universities. See page 7 for immigration proposals, including creating a new category of permanent residence for graduate students in science, math and engineering, and reviving the Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council.

American Council on Education (ACE): letter on behalf of a wide variety of higher education organizations summarizing goals for the Biden team. See #9 on immigration. ACE is often in a role coordinating recommendations on behalf of its 1700 members, which include other organizations, as well as colleges and universities.

Association of Public & Land Grant Universities (APLU): see pages 23-24 about attracting international science and engineering students to public universities.

CATO Institute: policy research organization presents 30 specific action items to remove impediments and expand customer service.

Immigration Hub: this nonprofit led over 100 immigration organizations through 2020 on a comprehensive review of the U.S. immigration system. Action #3 specifically addresses rebuilding the U.S. economy through reform of employment-based and student immigration programs.

Migration Policy Institute (MPI): nonprofit immigration research organization lays out detailed plan, see in particular Section 2E on immigration benefits at USCIS and Section 7C on temporary visa processing at US consulates abroad. This [policy brief](#) reviews stated Biden team priorities, and some of the challenges the new Administration will face.

Migration That Works Coalition: the only proposal that focuses specifically on lower-wage workers, in particular H-2A and H-2B temporary workers. The Coalition includes labor unions, academics, and nonprofits.

National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA): professional organization of international student and scholar advisers, with focus on messaging strong support for international education.

National Immigration Forum: nonprofit policy and advocacy organization, with suggestions that include tying immigration reform to the pandemic by adding visas for healthcare workers and immigration benefits for essential workers on the front lines.

Presidents' Alliance on Immigration and Higher Education: a newer group representing over 500 college and university presidents on issues related to higher education. See Section 2 specifically on international students and scholar immigration.

World Education Service (WES): nonprofit supporting workforce development for international students and immigrants in general. See Recommendation #5 on making the United States most attractive to international students.

Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility: Academic center at the New School in New York City sets goals for immigration reform. See in particular Section 4.3 and 4.4 about removing impediments to immigration processing.

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2. For more details on Biden's immigration goals: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/politics/biden-immigration/>