

Session 11: Migration, Immigration, and Population Shifts within the U.S.

## What about the Illegal Aliens?

By

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\*The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Center for Migration Studies.

“Keeping America competitive requires an immigration system that upholds our laws, reflects our values, and serves the interests of our economy. Our nation needs orderly and secure borders. To meet this goal, we must have stronger immigration enforcement and border protection. And we must have a rational, humane guest worker program that rejects amnesty, allows temporary jobs for people who seek them legally, and reduces smuggling and crime at the border.”  
(President George W. Bush, *State of the Union Address*, 31 January 2006)

## I. Introduction

What should be done about the people who are illegal aliens in the United States? Some advocate amnesty. Some strongly believe that illegal aliens should be sent back home. Others propose a guest-worker program. And still others are not really sure about exactly what to do.

So highly emotional and contentious has the issue become, that even the terminology to be used when referring to people who enter or remain in a country in breach of national laws is controversial. Commonly used terminology includes unauthorized or undocumented migrants, illegal migrants, over-stayers, and migrants with irregular status. In this paper the phrase “illegal aliens” is used because it is generally consistent with legislative and penal code usage and is believed to more properly reflect the status of persons who entered the country illegally as well as those who remained in the country illegally beyond their permitted period of stay.

Before considering available policy options, it seems both reasonable and worthwhile to examine briefly a few relevant and fundamental issues, in particular the number and characteristics of U.S. illegal aliens and the views of the American public on this subject. After examining these issues, the focus of this paper moves to an analysis of some of the major options that are currently being put forth to deal with illegal aliens. The paper concludes with a discussion of possible future government policies and actions that may effectively address the increasingly politically sensitive question of what to do about illegal aliens in the United States.

## II. Illegal Aliens in the U.S.

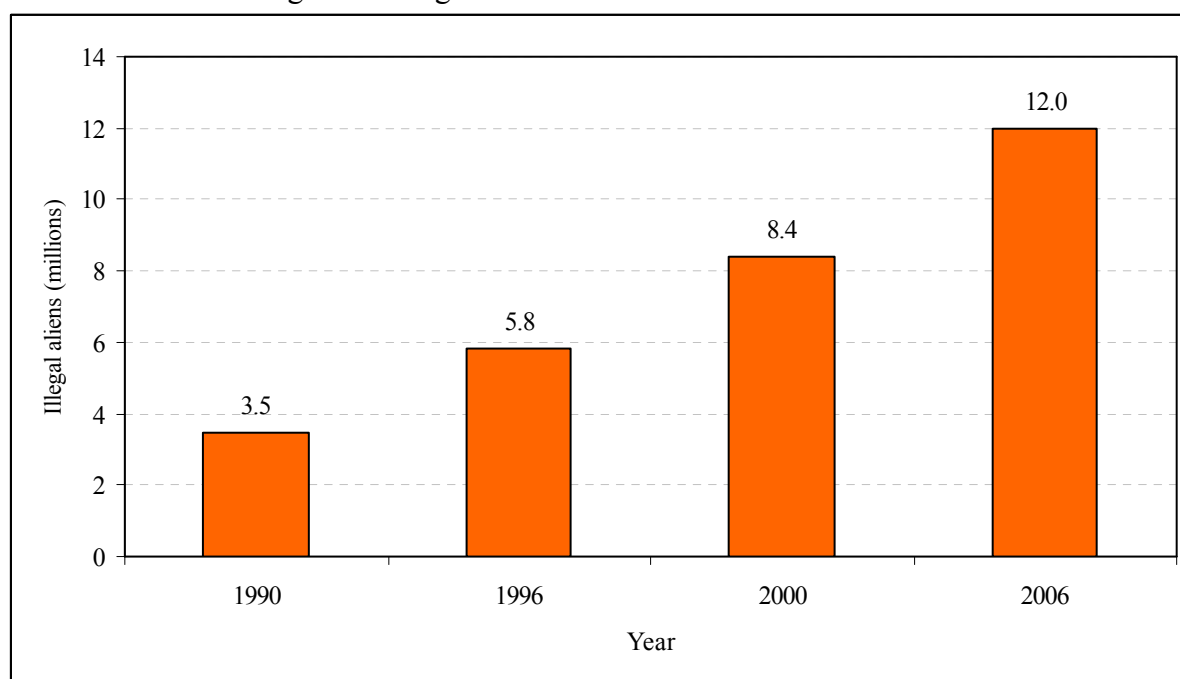
Clearly, as they are undocumented and in an illegal status, it is difficult to say precisely how many people are illegally residing in the United States. Estimates of the current number of persons who are illegal aliens in the U.S. vary greatly, from around 12 million (Passel 2006) to 20 million (Justich and Ng 2005). Based on data from the Census 2000 and the March 2005 Current Population Survey, widely-cited estimates in the media and the nation’s capitol (Passel 2006) have generally put the current number of illegal aliens at approximately 12 million (Figure 1). This estimate is double the figure from 10 years ago, and more than triples the number of illegal aliens in 1990.

The figure of 12 million people who are illegal aliens amounts to 4 percent of the U.S. population, and roughly one-third of the total foreign-born population residing in the country. Recent estimates also put the average annual net inflow of illegal aliens since 2000 at more than

500,000, which is believed to be roughly equivalent to the average number of legal migrants arriving each year (Passel 2006).

Some of the people who are illegal aliens entered the country legally, but then overstayed their period of authorized visit. Most, however, are believed to have entered the country illegally overland. Recent estimates indicate that the largest group, about 6.2 million, are Mexicans, followed by about 2.5 million from other countries in Latin America (Passel 2006). About 1 million have come from Asia, 0.6 million from Europe and Canada, and 0.4 million from Africa. The main destination states have been California, Texas, New York, Illinois and Florida, which together account for nearly two-thirds of the total. Recently, however, persons who are illegal aliens have been moving increasingly to non-border states, such as Arkansas, Georgia, North Carolina, and Oregon.

Figure 1. Illegal Aliens in the United States: 1990-2006.



Source: 1990 & 1996: US Immigration and Naturalization Service; 2000 & 2006: Passel 2005, 2006.

About a third of the illegal alien population is estimated to be between the ages of 18-29, which is about double the proportion for Americans. Children are a relatively small proportion of the illegal alien population as most of their children were born in the U.S (about 1.8 million) and therefore have American citizenship. Among the adult population of illegal aliens, close to 60 percent are males. Also about two-thirds of the illegal aliens have been in the country for ten years or less, and 40 percent have been in the country for five years or less (Passel, 2006).

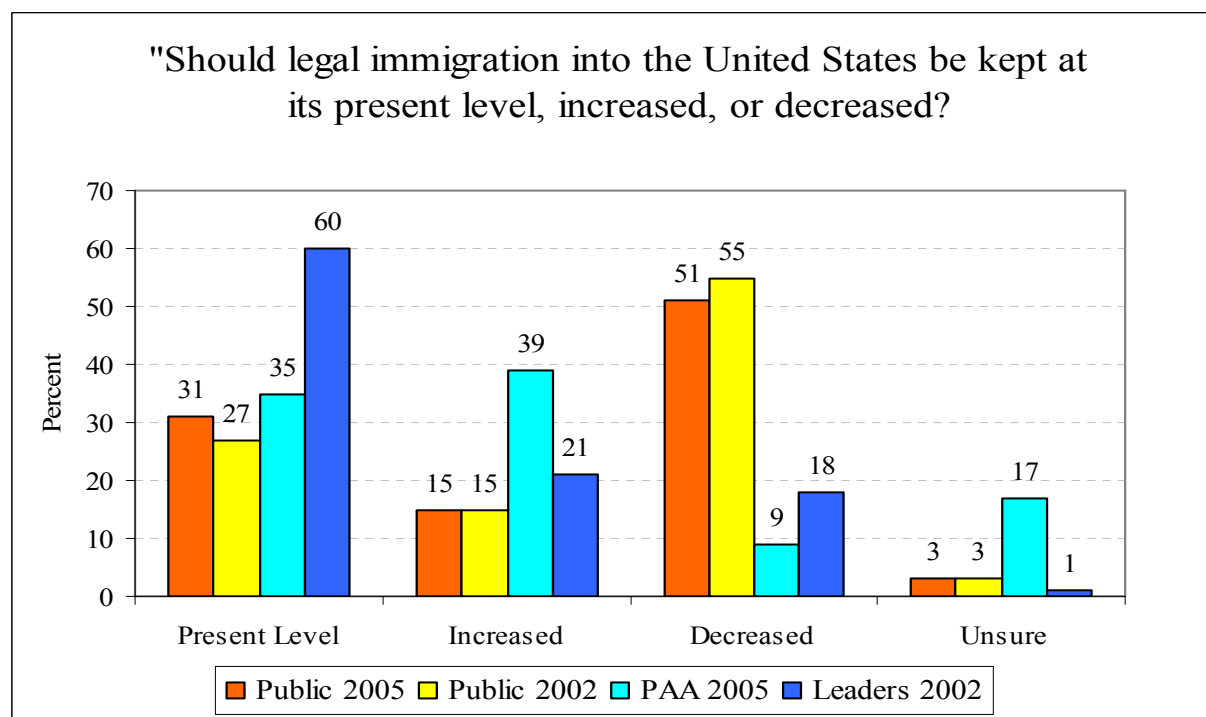
People who are illegal aliens are less educated than Americans; half of them have not completed high school, compared to 10 percent of Americans. Despite their low levels of education, close to two out of three illegal aliens are believed to be working, which amounts to about 5 percent of the U.S. working population (Passel, 2006). In 2000, it is estimated that about 4 percent of the illegal alien population worked in agriculture, 13 percent in construction, 16 percent in

leisure/hospitality, 20 percent in manufacturing, and 11 percent in professional or managerial occupations. Also, about two-thirds of them earn less than the minimum wage, compared to one-third of Americans (Van Hook, et.al., 2005).

### III. Opinion Polls

Before turning to opinion polls concerning illegal migration, it is instructive to note the views of the American public regarding legal migration. Recent national opinion polls report that the majority of the public (51 percent) think that immigration should be decreased (Figure 2). Similar results were reported in a national survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in its 2002 Worldviews Survey of the US public. Moreover, it is worth noting that no poll taken in the last fifty years has found a majority of Americans in favor of increased immigration (Stein 2005; Lee 1998).

Figure 2. Views on Legal Immigration: US Public, US Leaders and PAA Members



Sources:

A. CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll, Dec. 9-11, 2005, N=503 adults nationwide. Similar results reported in CBS News Poll, Oct. 3-5, 2005, N=808 adults nationwide and in Worldviews 2002 Survey.

B. Worldviews 2002 Survey of US Leaders.

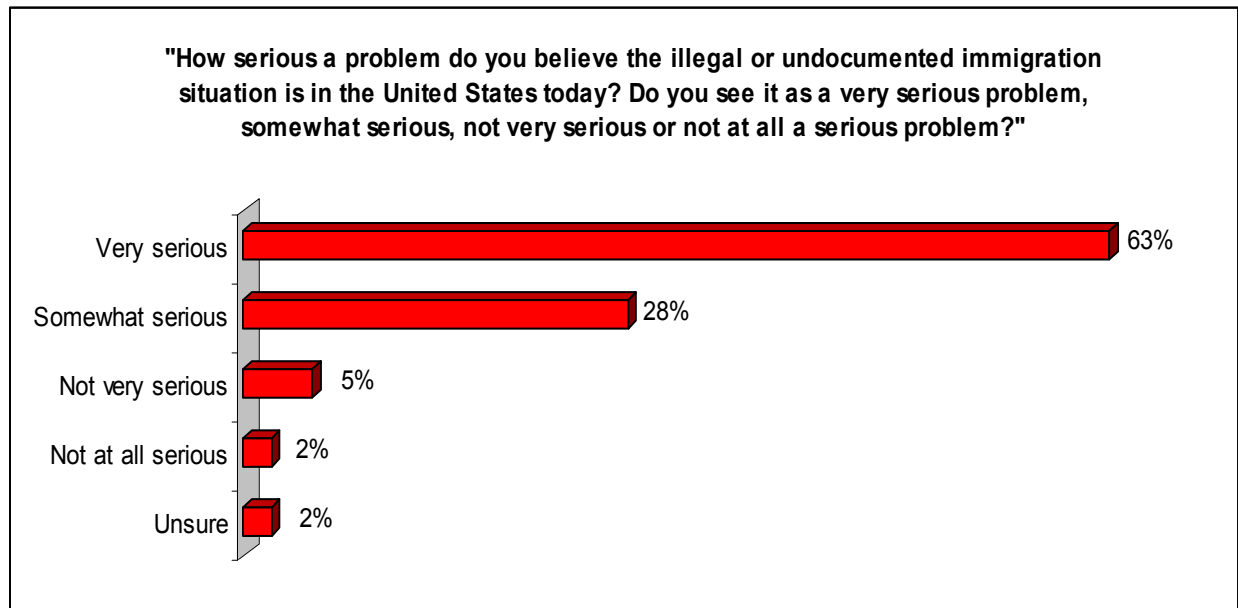
C. Chamie 2006, International Migration Survey of Members of Population Association of America, Dec. 2005-Jan.2006, N=134.

In contrast to the public's views, the majority of US leaders (60 percent) in the 2002 Worldviews Survey (i.e., leaders from business, media, religious groups, special interest groups, universities, members of Congress and senior staff in the Administration) thought that immigration should be kept at its present level; a minority (18 percent) felt that immigration should be decreased. Also,

a recent sample survey of members of the Population Association of America (Chamie 2006) found only 9 percent wished to decrease legal immigration; many more, 39 percent, wanted to increase immigration or keep it at its present level, 35 percent. (Details on the PAA survey provided in annex).

With regard to illegal immigration, the overwhelming majority of the American public considers illegal immigration to be a serious problem. A recent public opinion poll found that 90 percent of registered voters considered the illegal or undocumented immigration situation to be a serious problem; and nearly two out of three believed that it was a very serious problem (Figure 3).

Figure 3. U.S. Public's View of Seriousness of Illegal Immigration, 2005



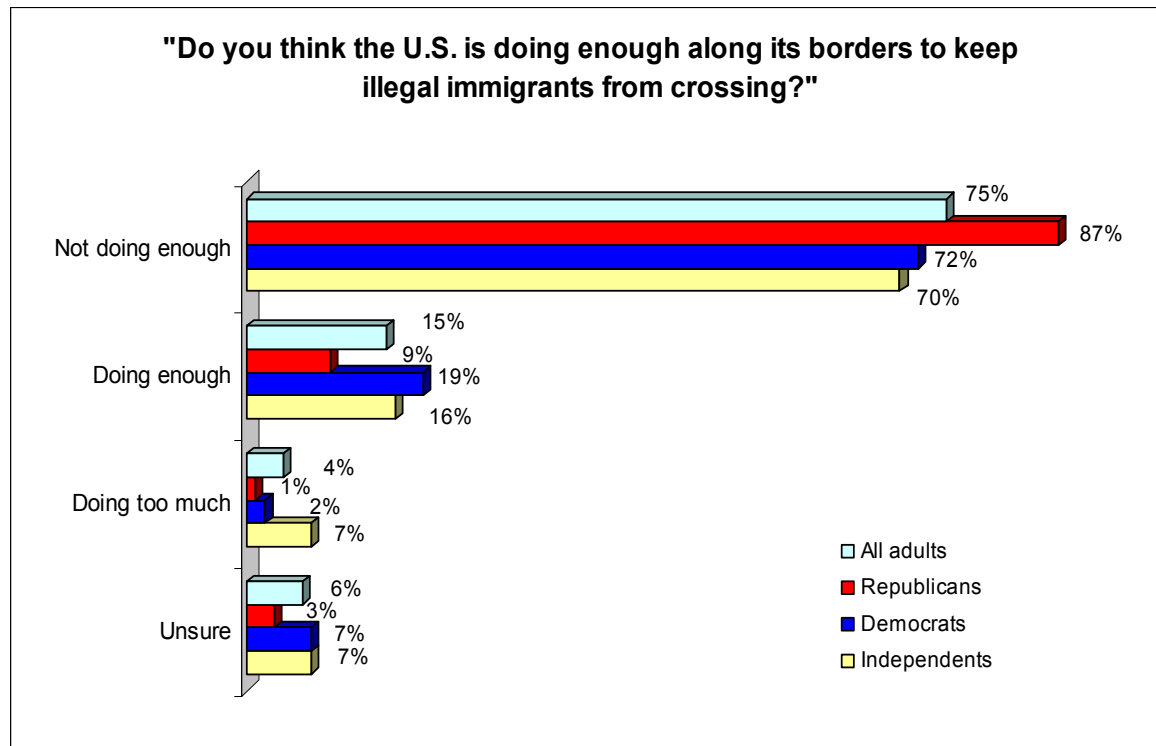
Source: Fox News/Opinion Dynamics Poll, 25-26 April 2005, N=900 registered voters nationwide.

Again, as seen with legal immigration, the views of the general public on illegal immigration differ greatly from those of PAA members and American leaders. Among the PAA respondents, for example, 19 percent indicated illegal immigration to be a serious problem. The national opinion survey done by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in 2002 found that 70 percent of the U.S. public said that reducing illegal immigration should be a very important foreign-policy goal, compared to 22 percent of American leaders. The large difference between public and elite opinions on illegal immigration sheds light on the political impasse and difficulties currently being faced by Congress and the Administration on this issue.

Recent public opinion polls also show that Americans are dissatisfied with the Administration on the subject of illegal immigration. The overwhelming majority of the U.S. public - 75 percent - do not believe the Administration is doing enough along the borders to keep illegal immigrants from crossing in the U.S. (Figure 4). Moreover, among major political parties, Republican respondents had the highest proportion saying that the U.S. is not doing enough, 87 percent versus 72 percent for Democrats and 70 percent for Independents. Among PAA members surveyed, about a third thought that the U.S. was not doing enough to keep illegal immigrants

from crossing into the country; and somewhat surprisingly, about a quarter of them felt that the U.S. was doing too much.

Figure 4. U.S. Public's View of Whether U.S. Is Doing Enough along Its Borders to Keep Illegal Immigrants from Crossing, 2005



Source: CBS News Poll. Oct. 3-5, 2005. N=808 adults nationwide.

With respect to how to deal with illegal flows into the U.S., the large majority of Americans - some 80 percent- believe that local and state police should help federal authorities enforce the laws against illegal migration (Table 1). In addition, 53 percent agree that the federal government should deploy troops on the Mexican border as a temporary measure to control illegal entry. Also, 51 percent favor the building of a 2,000-mile-long security fence along the US-Mexico border to stop illegal migration. Moreover, in a recent national survey a majority (55%) thought that the U.S. would be “better off” by deporting all illegal immigrants and toughening security at the borders; one-third (35%) thought the U.S. would be “worse off”. (Time Magazine, 24-26 January 2006)

Again, the views of the PAA respondents on these issues are in striking contrast to those of the public (Table 1). Most PAA respondents (81%) opposed the deployment of troops on the Mexican border as well as the building of the security fence along the US-Mexico border. Also, half of them opposed having local and state police help federal authorities enforce laws against immigration. In addition, nearly three-fourths (72%) supported the proposal to give millions of illegal aliens guest worker status and the opportunity to become citizens.

Table 1. Views of Public and PAA Respondents on Illegal Immigration

Panel A.

Do you agree or disagree that local and state police should help federal authorities enforce laws against illegal immigration?

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Total
Public	81%	14%	5%	100%
PAA	36%	51%	13%	100%

Panel B.

Do you agree or disagree that the federal government should deploy troops on the Mexican border as a temporary measure to control illegal immigration?

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Total
Public	53%	40%	7%	100%
PAA	9%	81%	10%	100%

Panel C.

Do you favor or oppose a proposal to build a 2,000-mile-long security fence along the U.S.-Mexico border to stop illegal immigration?

	Favor	Oppose	Unsure	Total
Public	51%	37%	12%	100%
PAA	8%	81%	11%	100%

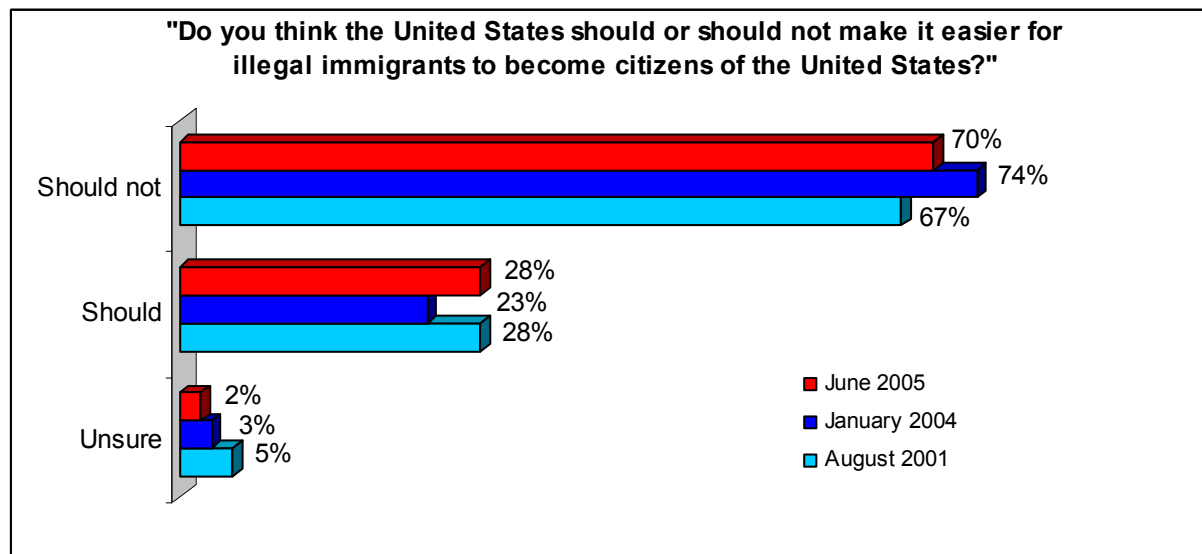
Sources: For PAA: Chamie 2006. For public: Zogby International 2005 Panels A & B, and Fox News 2005 Panel C.

## IV. Policy Options

Returning to the basic question of what should be done about the population of illegal aliens currently residing in the U.S., broadly speaking four options – not mutually exclusive and each having some variants - appear to be available to policy makers. At one extreme is the option granting amnesty to persons who are illegal aliens. With the necessary checking, screening, clearance, payments, etc., the amnesty option would allow illegal aliens to remain in the country legally and then have the opportunity to become U.S. citizens. Amnesty has been done in the past in the US. For example, some 3 million illegal aliens were granted amnesty in 1986, which was intended to be the last amnesty. However, granting amnesty this time around would certainly be much harder than previously given past experiences and the current political climate in the country as well as the sizeable number of illegal aliens –and their close family members - potentially eligible in an amnesty.

Many strongly believe that the amnesty option would be a mistake because granting amnesty to those who are in the country illegally would invite others to come to the country illegally as well as keep pressure on the border. President Bush has made this point on numerous occasions, including his last three *State of the Union* addresses. Moreover, public opinion polls conducted over the last five years have consistently found that the large majority of Americans -around 70 percent- think the United States should not make it easier for people who are illegal aliens to become citizens (Figure 5).

Figure 5. U.S. Public's View on Whether or Not to Make It Easier for Illegal Immigrants to Become US Citizens, 2001, 2004, and 2005



Source: Gallup Poll. June 6-25, 2005. N=2,264 adults nationwide, including over samples of Blacks and Hispanics weighted to reflect their proportions in the general population.

However, many groups, including those in the business community, unions, major news outlets, ethnic associations and many religious organizations, have indicated that they would support legislation to: (a) legalize illegal aliens; (b) institute a guest-worker program; and (c) reunite families separated by immigration laws (Goodstein, 2006). Moreover, most of these groups have announced their opposition to the bill recently passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Act of 2005, which *inter alia* would stiffen enforcement and restrict immigration.

At the other extreme is the option to repatriate illegal aliens, i.e., sending them or have them return back to their homes. The repatriation option would involve millions of illegal aliens deciding to return home on their own as well as government authorities sending them back to their homes involuntarily.

While government authorities could certainly repatriate some illegal aliens, would millions of illegal aliens decide to return home voluntarily? Some argue that consistent, across-the-board enforcement of immigration laws would shrink the number of illegal aliens as they would give up and deport themselves (Krikorian 2005). In addition to quickly returning illegal aliens caught at the border to their home countries, strong law enforcement would remove opportunities for



employment and social and related services to illegal aliens. In addition, such an approach is believed to act as a deterrent, discouraging others from becoming illegal aliens.

For a variety of social, economic, administrative and especially political reasons, the repatriation option - except when illegal aliens are captured near the border or have been arrested - is not being seriously considered by the Administration and most political leaders in Washington. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, for example, has stated that it would be costly and impractical to deport the millions of foreigners in the country illegally:

“The cost of identifying all of those people and sending them back would be stupendous. It would be billions and billions of dollars.”(Fox News Channel: Hannity & Colmes, 2005).

In addition, prominent political figures from both parties have also expressed their opposition to repatriation. Among Democrats, for example, Senator Hillary Clinton recently stated:

“The suggestion that enacting stricter and more enforceable deportation laws alone can solve this problem ignores reality ...” (Hernandez, 2006).

Among Republicans opposing repatriation is Senator John McCain. In a conference call with reporters on 21 February 2006 on the eve of his nationwide tour to sell the Kennedy/McCain immigration bill, McCain said:

"We believe that sending them back is something that is not only not humane, but not possible." (Bunis, 2006)

The third option appears to be a kind of compromise between repatriation and amnesty. The Administration proposes to issue temporary guest-worker permits to illegal aliens holding jobs for a fixed period of time, e.g., six years, after which they would return to their home countries. The temporary guest-worker option is basically the core of the plan being proposed by the White House, as well as some in Congress, to address illegal immigration. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has explained the Administration's program as follows:

"One of the reasons I think that we've been focusing on the idea of a temporary worker program as part of a larger strategy for border security is because it would be a way to siphon off people who really want to do nothing more than work here, put them into a regulated program – we would know who they are – we would then be able to send them back at the end of a period of three years or six years. They would have made some money, they could take it back home, and then we could focus our other resources on the people that don't want to do it the right way, and we could get those people sent out." (Fox News Channel: Hannity & Holmes, 2005).

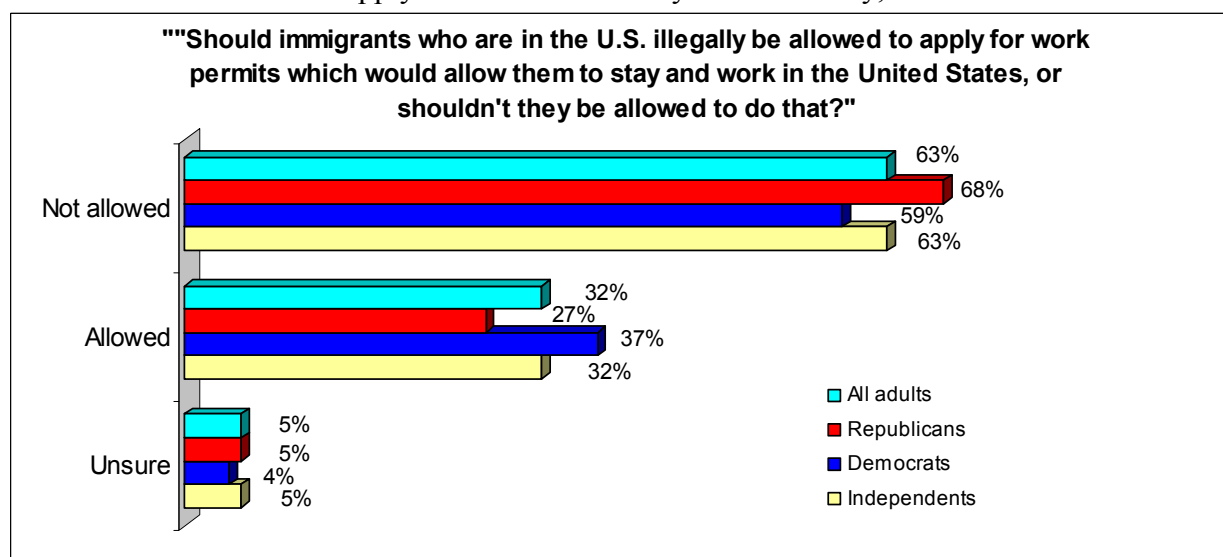
Important Congressional alternatives or variants to the Administration's guest-worker plan, such as the Kennedy/McCain immigration bill (S.1033), have been introduced in the U.S. Senate. The Kennedy/McCain bill includes a guest-worker program and an earned legalization program that allows paths to legal residency and eventual citizenship, and would not require guest workers to return home at the end of the work period. According to their proposal, after paying a fine of

\$2,000, learning English and American civics, and successfully passing background checks, an illegal alien who has been residing in the country for the required number of years would have an opportunity to obtain permanent legal residency and citizenship.

Here again, the majority of the American public opposes the guest-worker option, many because they see it as simply “back door amnesty”. When asked should immigrants who are in the U.S. illegally be allowed to apply for work permits which would allow them to stay and work in the U.S., almost two-thirds of the respondents in an opinion poll conducted in August 2005 replied that they shouldn’t be allowed to do that (Figure 6). Many have expressed scepticism about the chances of guest-workers returning to their homes at the end of the six year period, certain that those workers will end up as illegal aliens again. Opposition to this proposal cuts across major political parties. The largest opposition comes from Republican respondents, 68 percent versus 59 percent for Democrats and 63 percent for Independents.

Also as observed earlier, the views of PAA members differ markedly from the opinions of the American public. In contrast to the general public, the large majority (72 percent) of PAA respondents support the proposal to give millions of illegal aliens guest-worker status and the opportunity to become U.S. citizens. Moreover, a large proportion (42 percent) of PAA respondents opposes requiring guest-workers to return to their homes countries after their period of work expires.

Figure 6. American Public’s View on Whether to Allow Illegal Immigrants to Apply for Work Permits by Political Party, 2005



Source: CBS News Poll, 29 July-2 August 2005. N=1,222 adults nationwide.

The fourth broad option to address the presence of increasing numbers of illegal aliens in the U.S. is to maintain the existing status quo. Under the status quo option, illegal aliens would retain their current “illegal” statuses. However, except near the borders themselves, little if any law enforcement would be taken against illegal aliens or their employers. In other words, the roughly 12 million illegal aliens living in the U.S. would not be repatriated to their home countries. They would continue to work, live, form households and raise families in the U.S. as they are currently doing. Moreover, and importantly, the status quo option means that illegal

aliens would not be required to register themselves in a proposed guest-worker program that would likely have them return home after their work permits expire.

## V. Discussion

What should be done about illegal aliens in the U.S.? Reaching a politically acceptable answer to this question is likely to be a difficult and time-consuming undertaking. At the least, it requires reaching a democratic consensus that takes into account economic, social, cultural and political factors relating to the presence of some 12 million illegal aliens in the U.S. Such a consensus will involve coming up with a delicate balance among the many competing groups over a broad range of critical issues: (1) justice, law and constitutional order; (2) social cohesion and national unity; (3) economic growth, employment and wages and labour force needs; (4) demographic changes; (5) environmental concerns; (6) human rights and responsibilities; (7) compassion and decency toward illegal aliens; (8) foreign affairs; (9) national security; and (10) global message and image.

In brief, attempts to answer to the central question posed in this paper will be faced with the four broad options. These options, which are not mutually exclusive and have important variants, may be classified as follows:

1. Amnesty
2. Repatriation
3. Guest-worker program
  - with return to home country
  - with path to legal residency and citizenship
4. Status quo

As noted earlier, amnesty is not an acceptable option for most of the American public as well as many elected officials. Opinion polls have consistently shown that the large majority of Americans are opposed to granting amnesty to illegal aliens. In addition, President Bush, as well as high ranking members in his Administration, has indicated on numerous occasions, including State of the Union addresses, opposition to amnesty on the grounds that it would encourage further illegal immigration and unfairly rewards those who break U.S. laws.

Many opposing amnesty recall past decisions and assurances concerning illegal migration, such as the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which was to be “the last amnesty.” They point out that IRCA intended to control and deter illegal immigration by providing amnesty and temporary status to all illegal aliens who had lived in the United States continuously since before January 1, 1982. They also note that IRCA extended a separate, more lenient amnesty to farm workers, imposed sanctions on employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens, and increased inspection and enforcement at U.S. borders.

Some opponents to amnesty also recall the experience with the 1965 Amendments to Immigration and Nationality Act (Hart-Celler Act). In particular, given his prominent role in the immigration debate today, a statement of Senator Edward Kennedy from 40 years ago when he

was the Senate's subcommittee chairman dealing immigration has often been cited as an argument against another amnesty:

"First, our cities will not be flooded with a million immigrants annually. Under the proposed bill, the present level of immigration remains substantially the same ... Secondly, the ethnic mix of this country will not be upset ... Contrary to the charges in some quarters, [the bill] will not inundate America with immigrants from any one country or area, or the most populated and deprived nations of Africa and Asia ... In the final analysis, the ethnic pattern of immigration under the proposed measure is not expected to change as sharply as the critics seem to think. ... The bill will not flood our cities with immigrants. It will not upset the ethnic mix of our society. It will not relax the standards of admission. It will not cause American workers to lose their jobs." (U.S. Senate, Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization of the Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, D.C., Feb. 10, 1965. pp. 1-3.)

As with amnesty, repatriation does not seem to be an acceptable option. In addition to the Administration and many in Congress, business groups, religious institutions, labor and trade unions, human rights groups, many in the news media, ethnic associations and other special interest groups are opposed to the repatriation of illegal aliens. Given this strong opposition, as well as pragmatic considerations, i.e., cost, implementation, and economic and social disruptions, repatriation does not at all seem to be a likely option.

Given the considerable political problems with both amnesty and repatriation, many elected officials are seeking a compromise. Notable among these compromises is the guest-worker program. Key differences between the Administration's guest-worker proposal and some in Congress, e.g., Kennedy/McCain bill, center on (a) the requirement to return home after a period of time and (b) the possibility of obtaining legal residency and citizenship while remaining in the country. Here again, however, the majority of public opinion does not appear to support a guest-worker program, at least for the time being, especially one that permits illegal aliens to obtain legal residency and citizenship.

Consequently, what remains is the status quo option, which is precisely what is being followed in Washington. Clearly, the status quo option is politically advantageous, at least in the short run. It postpones making important and possibly painful decisions, thereby avoiding alienating voters and important special interest groups in an election year. It also gives "bullet-proof" political cover to elected officials by permitting them to publicly acknowledge and recognize the "complex and difficult" issue of the growing population of illegal aliens without having to choose between options that are generally unpopular, opposed by many politically important groups, and likely to have significant economic costs.

However, it would be a mistake to conclude that nothing is happening in Washington. For example, as noted earlier, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Act of 2005, which among other things would stiffen enforcement, restrict immigration, make illegal immigration a felony, and criminalize giving assistance to illegal aliens.

In addition to the proposal of the Bush Administration, there are currently a host of bills being considered by the U.S. Congress. For example, some of major immigration legislation pending in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress are Kennedy-McCain (S.1033); Cornyn-Kyl (S.1438); Tancredo (H.R.333); Jackson-Lee (H.R.2092); Hagel (S.1916-1919) and Specter (Chairman's Mark). These various proposals for comprehensive immigration reform include a diverse range of suggestions concerning illegal aliens, including:

- increased law enforcement, security and detention at the borders;
- sanctions and fines against employers knowingly hiring illegal aliens;
- guest-worker programs, some allowing and others denying paths to legal residency and eventual citizenship;
- construction of a fence along the entire Mexican-U.S. border;
- deployment of military forces to patrol the border;
- creation of a volunteer marshal program to help patrols;
- ending the automatic granting of citizenship to U.S.-born children of illegal aliens;
- replacing the current "catch and release" policy with expedited removal of all caught entering illegally, with the goal "...to return every single illegal entrant, with no exceptions";
- imposing penalties on countries that refuse to take back illegal aliens;
- increased legal immigration, in particular unskilled workers, to meet the country's labor needs.

Given the high level of contentiousness, polarization, sensitivities and political risks running throughout the country on this issue, especially among border-states, it does not seem at all likely that the political debate in Washington concerning illegal aliens will be resolved in the short term. Especially relevant in this regard are two noteworthy considerations. The first concerns the significant gaps between the views of the general American public and U.S. elite leaders regarding illegal aliens and immigration. Across a variety of immigration issues, including both legal and illegal immigration, opinion polls have shown that the views of the American public differ greatly from those of their elected officials as well as leaders in major spheres of American life.

The second noteworthy consideration is election year calculations. For many concerned with election politics, the question of illegal aliens is a no-win issue, being simply too hot to handle. Neither the Republican nor the Democratic Party is prepared to risk alienating large blocks of voters by taking a strong position on illegal aliens, such as recommending amnesty or repatriation.

In the long term, however, political and electoral realities, past US experiences with illegal aliens, and the sizeable and growing number of illegal aliens, all point to the amnesty option, or some variant of it. Of course, given the resistance to amnesty among the general public, this will involve political finesse and public relations campaigns aimed at convincing Americans that this is the appropriate course of action for the country. To some extent, this is already underway, as witnessed by the avoidance of terms as amnesty and the proliferation of new terminology believed to be more acceptable to public, e.g., "earned regularization" and "earned legal status".

Between the short term and the long term, considerable debate, much of it acrimonious, will take place across the country, and possibly some civil disorder may arise, especially in localities in states along the border. Also, during this period, it is highly likely that the population of illegal aliens will continue to grow and become increasingly distributed across the country as well as progressively more integrated within the various economic, social, cultural and political sectors of American society.

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**Annex**  
**Survey of Members of the**  
**Population Association of America**

A. Methods

During December 2005–January 2006, a two part survey of PAA Members was conducted. The total PAA membership listed on its website was 2,715.

The survey consisted of 10 questions focusing on illegal migration. The questions were taken from recent US public opinion polls, with the original wording retained. The survey was conducted by email, with one mailing in December and a second follow-up email in January.

**PART I**

The first part was a survey of all PAA members who indicated a specialization in international migration. The total number amounted to 134 members, with 125 of them having listed email addresses. The survey was emailed to these 125 members on 16 December, with a follow-up email reminder on 18 January 2006. Of this sample, 13 emails were immediately rejected by the system due to invalid email addresses. The number of emails delivered is 112.

Total members:	134
With emails:	125
With deliverable emails:	112

As of 31 January 2006, 44 members replied, yielding a response rate of 39%.

**PART II**

The second part was a survey of PAA members with specializations other than international migration, i.e., 2,581 members. From this group a simple random sample of 301 members was compiled, with 278 of them having listed email addresses. The survey questionnaire was emailed to these 278 members on 16-20 December, with a follow-up email on 18 January 2006. Of this sample, 27 emails were immediately rejected by the system due to invalid addresses. The number of emails delivered is 251.

Total members:	2,581
Random sample:	301
With emails:	278
With deliverable emails:	251

As of 31 January 2006, 90 members replied, yielding a response rate of 36%.

**COMBINED**

Combining the two parts of the survey produces a total of 363 emails sent out; 134 replies were received, yielding a response rate of 37%.

## B. Preliminary results

(Total emails sent out=363; replies received=134; response rate=37%)

1. Should legal immigration into the United States be kept at its present level, increased, or decreased?

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| a. Present level: | 35% |
| b. Increased:     | 40% |
| c. Decreased:     | 9%  |
| d. Unsure:        | 17% |

2. Do you think that the large numbers of immigrants and refugees coming into the U.S. is a critical threat, an important but not critical threat, or not an important threat at all to the vital interest of the United States over the next 10 years?

- |                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| a. Critical threat:                   | 1%  |
| b. Important but not critical threat: | 22% |
| c. Not an important threat:           | 72% |
| d. Unsure:                            | 4%  |

3. How serious a problem do you believe the illegal or undocumented immigration situation is in the United States today? Do you see it as a very serious problem, somewhat serious, not very serious or not at all a serious problem?

- |                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| a. Very serious:       | 19% |
| b. Somewhat serious:   | 46% |
| c. Not very serious:   | 29% |
| d. Not at all serious: | 5%  |
| e. Unsure:             | 1%  |

4. Do you think the U.S. is doing enough to keep illegal immigrants from crossing into the country?

- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| a. Doing enough:     | 25% |
| b. Doing too much:   | 25% |
| c. Not doing enough: | 31% |
| d. Unsure:           | 19% |

5. Do you favor or oppose a proposal to build a 2,000-mile-long security fence along the U.S.-Mexico border to stop illegal immigration?

- |            |     |
|------------|-----|
| a. Favor:  | 8%  |
| b. Oppose: | 81% |
| c. Unsure: | 11% |

6. Do you agree or disagree that local and state police should help federal authorities enforce laws against illegal immigration?

- |              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| a. Agree:    | 36% |
| b. Disagree: | 51% |
| c. Unsure:   | 13% |

7. Do you agree or disagree that the federal government should deploy troops on the Mexican border as a temporary measure to control illegal immigration?

- |              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| a. Agree:    | 9%  |
| b. Disagree: | 81% |
| c. Unsure:   | 10% |

8. Do you support or oppose the proposal to give millions of illegal aliens guest worker status and the opportunity to become citizens?

- |             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| a. Support: | 72% |
| b. Oppose:  | 14% |
| c. Unsure:  | 14% |

9. As you may know, President Bush has proposed a plan that would allow some illegal immigrants currently in the U.S. to legally stay in this country for several years as long as they hold jobs that no U.S. citizen wanted to do. The plan would require these immigrant workers to return to their countries after their time under this program had expired. Do you favor or oppose this plan?

- |            |     |
|------------|-----|
| a. Favor:  | 31% |
| b. Oppose: | 42% |
| c. Unsure: | 27% |

10. Do you support or oppose the Bush Administration's plan to admit foreign workers to take jobs in America if employers say they cannot find American workers?

- |             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| a. Support: | 57% |
| b. Oppose:  | 21% |
| c. Unsure:  | 22% |