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Intelligence Squared U.S.

Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship

For the Motion: Marielena Hincapié, Angela Maria Kelley

Against the Motion: Steven Camarota, Rich Lowry

Moderator: John Donovan

AUDIENCE RESULTS	
Before the debate:	After the debate:
66% FOR	55% FOR
10% AGAINST	37% AGAINST
24% UNDECIDED	8% UNDECIDED

Start Time: (00:00:00)

Robert Rosenkranz:

Hi, John.

John Donovan:

So in terms of the "why now," I mean, we do have a presidential campaign going on in which immigration has come up. Is that any coincidence?

Robert Rosenkranz:

Not a complete coincidence. We -- obviously Trump made immigration its -- his signature issue.

0:00:29

And it was one of the few topics that they actually had a few substantive beats on in the course of presidential debates. I think it's a relatively low bar for us tonight.

John Donovan:

Right.

Robert Rosenkranz:

And I'm very pleased to see this audience preferring debate to the World Series.

John Donovan:

Yeah, that's pretty amazing. Or maybe this: It's a very -- very, very high nerd factor going here.

[laughter]

No. No insult intended. There's a point we want to make about the motion language itself in which we choose to use the term "undocumented immigrants." But we know that in this debate, that's not a neutral term.

Robert Rosenkranz:

No. The term "undocumented immigrants" does sort of tilt the language a little bit in favor of the resolution. A term that would -- might tilt it the other way would be "illegal immigrants" and/or "illegal aliens" even. So we can't satisfy both sides on this language. But the point is that this is a debate about people who are not here legally.

0:01:33

It's not a debate about immigration in general, which we've had in several different guises in the past.

John Donovan:

Given that, what do you think we want to be listening for tonight to gauge the quality of the debate and to help make our decision?

Robert Rosenkranz:

Well, I think different people approach -- have a different personal life experience with immigration. So for a lot of people they come with very positive attitudes. Maybe their parents or grandparents or great-grandparents have been immigrants, or they employ immigrants in very high, important technical jobs in their companies, or they work with immigrants that they like, or they employ immigrants in their homes and so forth.

Robert Rosenkranz:

But there are obviously people who live in communities that have been overrun with crime, where they've been sending their kids to school where Spanish is maybe the prime language and it used to be English, where they're competing for low-skilled jobs with a large number of immigrants, and they feel that their wages are being held lower. So different people have different life experiences with immigration. And I think the thing to do tonight, hopefully, is to set those life experiences aside because this is a very complicated issue. There are moral dimensions on both sides. There are economic dimensions on both sides. There are a lot of interplay of complicated facts. And I hope people will be open-minded and here to be informed and persuaded.

0:03:17

John Donovan:

And in the end they all get to vote.

Robert Rosenkranz:
They certainly do.

John Donovan:
Okay, thanks very much, Bob. And let's welcome our debaters to the stage.

Robert Rosenkranz:
Thank you.

[applause]

John Donovan:
It's 2016. One of the candidates for president hit a nerve when he said, "I'm going to build a wall."

0:03:36

And then the question of what America should do about the 11 million plus immigrants who broke immigration law to get here or to stay here became central to the presidential campaign. Well, the proposed responses to their presence revealed significant differences and Americans sense of right and wrong. They're here, these 11 million, but what is supposed to happen to them and what would be right or wrong. Well, that sounds like the makings of a debate, so let's have it. Yes or no to this statement: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. A debate from Intelligence Squared U.S. I'm John Donovan. We are at the Kaufmann Music Center in New York City with four superbly qualified debaters on this stage who will argue for and against the motion, Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. As always, we go in three rounds and then our live audience here in New York votes to choose the winner and only one side wins. The motion again: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship.

0:04:36

Go to the keypad at your seat. Go to the keypad at your seat and take a look at the motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. If you agree with this motion as you come in off the street, push number one. If you disagree with it, push number two, and if you're undecided push number three. And you can ignore the other keys. They're not live. If you press the wrong button just correct yourself and the system will lock in your last vote.

Our motion is: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. Let's meet the team arguing to get you to vote yes on this motion. Please, I'm going to say hi to Marielena Hincapié. Hi.

[applause]

And Marielena, you are executive director of the National Immigration Law Center. You started back there in 2000 as a staff attorney and went up to give your whole legal career to the issue of immigration rights, and my question for you is did you always have this goal? Is that where you saw yourself going?

0:05:34

Marielena Hincapié:

No. I actually started thinking that I wanted to be a DEA agent. And after graduating from college I went back to Rhode Island, which is where I grew up, and really found that being in the immigrant community that was my life's calling, and so that's what I've dedicated my life to.

John Donovan:

Okay, and you'll be arguing that side tonight.

Marielena Hincapié:

Absolutely.

John Donovan:

And can you tell us please who your partner is?

Marielena Hincapié:

Yes. My partner is the amazing, smart, and witty Angela Kelley, who is also a dear friend and colleague.

0:05:56

John Donovan:

Ladies and gentlemen, Angie Kelley.

[applause]

Angie, I've been invited to call you Angie. That's --

Angela Kelley:

Please call me Angie.

John Donovan:

Okay, Angie, so you're --

Angela Kelley:

Otherwise I'd be scared.

[laughter]

John Donovan:

You're executive director of the Center for American Progress Action Fund and senior vice president at the Center for American Progress. You were its first vice president for immigration policy, but you left the organization briefly in 2014 to work as an advisor to the White House. What was your area? What were you advising them on?

Angela Kelley:

Yeah, it was pretty wonderful. I got to actually be a fly on the wall in the West Wing and I was advising on the president's executive actions on immigration, and it was a pretty extraordinary time. It was really quite wonderful.

John Donovan:

Well versed in our topic then tonight.

Angela Kelley:

Yes.

John Donovan:

Ladies and gentlemen, the team arguing for the motion.

[applause]

Again, that motion is: "Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship."

0:06:51

We have two debaters who want you to vote "No" on the motion. And they're going to try to persuade you. Let's first welcome Steven Camarota.

[applause]

Hi, Steve.

Steven Camarota:

Hi.

John Donovan:

So, the nature of your work actually means -- and you're at the Center for Immigration Studies. You're Director of Research there. A lot of data. You do a lot of data work using data from Census Bureau. And a number of years ago, the Bureau actually called you in and asked you -- commissioned you to examine the quality of their data on immigration. So, what sort of grade did you give them?

Steven Camarota:

Well, we did that work for about five years, and we gave them basically a B+. And we made some recommendations, which they mostly accepted. So, the Bureau does a pretty good job of collecting data. And it's not easy.

John Donovan:

So your feeling is -- and when we hear data tonight that comes from the Census Bureau, we should -- we can take it pretty --

Steven Camarota:

Yes.

John Donovan:

-- seriously?

Steven Camarota:

You should -- that's the best data there is, and it's reasonably accurate.

John Donovan:

Okay. Thanks very much. And Steve, who is your partner?

Steven Camarota:

My partner is Rich Lowry from National Review.

John Donovan:

Ladies and gentlemen, Rich Lowry. Hi, Rich.

0:07:50

[applause]

So, as just pointed out, you are the editor of the National Review. You were handpicked 20 years ago -- nearly 20 years ago -- by William F. Buckley Jr. to lead the magazine. And all this year, the magazine has taken a very, very, very strong stand against a gentleman named Donald Trump. You put "Against Trump" on your cover last -- back in January. But when it comes to immigration, there is some overlap between the magazine's views and his. What is it? Like about 50 percent, 70 percent?

Rich Lowry:

It's a little hard to say with precision, because Donald Trump changes the details up so often.

[laughter]

But I agree 100 percent with the sentiment that in this area -- and every other -- we should be putting the national interest first.

John Donovan:

Okay. The team arguing against the motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship.

[applause]

We move now into Round 1. Round 1 are opening statements by each debater in turn. We will hear from all four of them. The motion, again, Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. And here to try to persuade you to vote "Yes" on the motion, Angela Kelley.

0:09:01

She is Senior Vice President at the Center for American Progress and Executive Director of the Center for American Progress Action Fund. Ladies and gentlemen, Angie Kelley.

[applause]

Angela Kelley:

Thank you. Thank you very much for the introduction and the opportunity to address and affirm the resolution to give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship. As a daughter of immigrants who came to this country with few resources but with big dreams, it is an honor to be on this stage and to talk about this topic. The issue hardly needs introduction. In this painfully long presidential race, the candidates have discussed the 11 million. Donald Trump has said he would aggressively deport them and their five million U.S. citizen children, and Secretary Clinton has said that she supports a path to citizenship for those who meet certain qualifications. So, the candidates have talked about it. And the American people have thought about it. Recent polls from the New York times, Washington Post, CNN, Gallup, even Fox finds that between 72 and 88 percent of Americans back either citizenship or legalization for the undocumented over deportation.

But tonight, you guys get to decide.

What's the right choice for the country? So, what I'm going to do is to address three questions that I think are really important for you all to understand the context of the resolution and the implications of your decision. The first is, who are the undocumented? The next is, why are they undocumented? And finally, what are the options for undocumented? My dear friend and partner Marielena is going to discuss the benefits for all Americans for a path to citizenship. So, let's get started with the "who." The undocumented are settled, long-time residents. In 2014, the average undocumented adult had lived in the United States for 13-and-a-half years. If they have a U.S. citizen child, they have lived here for 15 years. So, these aren't accidental tourists. They're not folks who decide to spend an extra day at Disney.

0:10:53

They are home. And so, when people say, "Send them home, they're missing the point. This is their home. They're settled. And like many of us, they live in families. Nearly three-quarters have children and two-thirds have a spouse or a sibling here in the U.S. Undocumented immigrants overwhelmingly live in the family, but they don't live with just each other. They live in mixed-status families. So, it's really common to have an undocumented father, a green card holder mom, a teenage son who is undocumented but qualifies for temporary deferral from deportation, and a U.S. citizen child. About 17 million of us live in families that are like that. So, aside from being in families, about seven million of the undocumented are workers. That's about 5 percent of our work force. They own homes. According to the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy, one in three undocumented families owns their own home, and they pay taxes, like all of us. They pay sales tax. They pay property taxes.

And many pay income tax. In fact, estimates are that local and state governments net about \$11.6 billion a year from undocumented workers. So they live with families, they have children, they work, they pay taxes, and they own their homes. That's the "who." The question that I get the most often, though, in talking about the undocumented is "why?" "Why are they just not getting in line and getting their green card?" I have one relative who insist that's there is a window at the post office that if they just went there, that they could get a green card. And I have to have Thanksgiving with this person soon, and I just can't convince her that there is no line, right? Everybody's got someone like that at the Thanksgiving table. Love them.

[laughter]

So the U.S. immigration system is insanely complex. And it hasn't been updated in any meaningful way since 1990. So to understand how out of sync the system is, you just need to remember one number, and that's 5,000, because that's how many visas there are for workers, like the person who drove me to the airport this morning or the person who's going to clean up after us after we all leave.

0:12:57

So there's 5,000 legal channels, and that's it, for people who work in our hotels, in our restaurants, for the people who took care of my daughters when they were young, for the people who take care of my grandmother today. So what we might not be able to agree on what the number is, we can surely agree that our modern economy can't possibly satisfied bylaws that haven't been amended for 25 years. Okay. Beyond there not being legal challenge for workers, there's other obstacles, there's other limitations that are specially difficult for families. The visa backlog stretch for years. And I mean years. So we are now issuing visas to the adult, unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens from Mexico who filed for their visa in 1995. That's how long people are having to wait. And so if you're outside the U.S., you can't come visit because if you're trying to get a permanent visa, they won't give you a temporary one.

Beyond the long waiting time, our laws say that if you've been in the U.S. illegally for longer than six months, you're subject to a penalty, that you can't get legal status for 10 years. So the ironic thing is that we have a lot of undocumented people who have a qualifying family member who could petition for them, but this bar will kick in if they leave the U.S. to get their visa. They won't be able to come back in for 10 years. What do they do? They stay. So that's a question. The last question is, what are the options? There's four, but I think there's just one solution. So we can do nothing and be okay with 11 million people living without status, spend \$17 billion a year enforcing laws that don't work, knowing that folks are getting exploited, and know that it hurts us, right, because people don't come forward and report a crime, they don't come forward and report bad working conditions. Their inability to live free of fear is bad for us. We could aggressively deport them, and we could imagine what that would be like to go to schools and churches and ferret people out. Not the America we want to live in. We could give them something short of citizenship. We could just have them work here and never be able to belong.

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And that would undermine the fabric of our nation and lead to continued exploitation. The last, most realistic defensible option is tonight's resolution: A path to citizenship for those who qualify, clear background checks. They'll pay fees, they'll learn English, and they will be the best Americans that we could have. Thank you very much.

[applause]

John Donvan:

Thank you, Angela Kellie. Our resolution is "Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship." And here to try to persuade you to vote "no" on the resolution, Rich Lowry, editor of the National Review. Please welcome Rich Lowry.

[applause]

Rich Lowry:

Thank you, everyone, and thanks to Intelligence Squared for hosting this event, and to our counterparts for what will be a spirited debate tonight. As John mentioned at the outset, National Review earlier this year published an entire issue of our magazine devoted to attacking Donald Trump.

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Now, I know most of you probably would have expected Donald Trump to receive this issue with his usual sense of grace and calm equilibrium. It wasn't so. He didn't take it well. He lashed out. And it was right around this time that Trump infamously said that he could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue, shoot someone dead, and his poll numbers would go up. And that's when the all-staff memo went out at National Review for everyone to avoid Fifth Avenue until further notice.

[laughter]

And actually, even I, we were considering some Trump-like tactics. Tonight we are considering demanding that our counterparts be subjected to drug tests before being allowed on stage. We are thinking about interjecting the word "wrong" randomly throughout the entire evening. We are even considering stalking menacingly behind them when they spoke. Actually, to be honest, I really would have preferred to have Alek Baldwin as my debate partner tonight rather than Steve but in all seriousness, we're delighted to be here, and we do want to engage obviously the substance of this resolution.

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And we should just be clear at the outset what this debate is about. It isn't about whether there are illegal immigrants in this country who exemplary people and have moving stories. There are. It isn't about whether illegal immigrants come to this country and overwhelmingly work. They do. It isn't about whether we should give them amnesty or legalization to so-called dreamers who came here or were brought here illegally at a very young age. It isn't even about whether we should have a blanket amnesty or legalization for every illegal immigrant in the country no matter what. No. You can agree with every single one of those positions and still not support giving illegal immigrants the most prized possession in the world, one that tens of millions of law-abiding people all around the world covet, which is United States citizenship.

That's how radical our opponents' position is tonight. I submit to you that even if you disagree with Steve and I on some of the policy, you can still reject this resolution. I would go further. I would say even if you think Steve and I are heartless bastards or, to coin a phrase, "bad hombres," you can still reject this resolution. It is our position that we should oppose all radicalism on this issue. We should reject the radicalism of Donald Trump who has absurdly talked of mass deportation.

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And we should reject this resolution which is manifestly unfair to all the people who, like suckers, play by the rules of our immigration system, people who wait years to come here legally, people who come here on a work or a tourist visa and when it expires, actually go home. Remember, this resolution has been tried before. In 1986, we had an amnesty and a pathway to citizenship for 3 million illegal immigrants in this country. That was supposed to solve the problem. It actually made it worse. We have four times as many illegal immigrants in this country now, and if this resolution were to become policy, we would have millions more. By the way, the evidence from 1986 on the ground suggests, as a practical matter, even for most illegal immigrants, this resolution goes too far.

In 1986, illegal immigrants were happy to take the amnesty or the legalization. But most of them, at the end of the day, didn't take the incredibly generous offer of citizenship. So what's the better policy option here? It's very simple. It's enforcement. Now, we don't need to build a wall, even a big, beautiful wall. But we do need to do more on the border. And very importantly, we need to do more to stop employers from hiring cheap illegal labor that creates a jobs magnet to come here. If it's harder to work here illegally, fewer people will come, and fewer people will stay. And then we can finely get an immigration system that will serve the interests of our workers first, who are natives and also, by the way, legal immigrants.

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Now, Steve will go into more detail about the real fiscal and economic costs of this resolution. But suffice it to say if you care about income inequality, if you care about stagnant wages, you should oppose this resolution. And let me just leave you with one last thought. We are a big, generous country. But our citizenship is precious. And whatever else you think about immigration policy, if you think we should have a broadly open system, or if you think we should have a tightly restrictive system, or maybe you think it should be somewhere in between, the bare minimum requirement for becoming a citizen -- a citizen -- of the United States of America should be abiding by her laws. Thank you very much.

John Donovan:

Thank you, Rich Lowry.

[applause]

John Donovan:

And a reminder of where we are. We are halfway through the opening round of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate. I'm John Donovan.

0:21:54

We have four debaters, two teams of two fighting it out over this motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. You have heard from the first two debaters and now on to the third. Here to persuade you to vote yes, Marielena Hincapié. She is executive director of the National Immigration Law Center. Please welcome Marielena Hincapié.

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Thank you, John. Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to argue for this motion tonight. I'm an immigrant from Colombia, a proud naturalized U.S. citizen, and I'll be voting on November 8th. I firmly believe in the promise of America, a promise which my parents, Acturo and Theresa [spelled phonetically], believed in. They were

textile workers. They had a second and fifth grade education. They made the courageous and selfless decision to come to the United States. Why? For a better economic future for their children just like millions of immigrants before and after them have done, including many of you who are listening and watching tonight.

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We're asking you to vote for this motion to give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship for three reasons. One, we are a nation of laws. Two, we benefit economically, and three, it's good for our society. First, as a lawyer, I know that we are a nation of laws, but I also know that not all laws are created equal. We at the National Immigration Law Center work very closely with policy makers to draft and defend good laws, but we also sue over unjust laws like Arizona's infamous racial profiling anti-immigrant law SP1070. The rule of law is important, because it provides predictability, consistency, and when applied well, not discrimination. Unfortunately, our immigration law is none of that. Our immigration laws are dysfunctional and out of date.

We elect Congress to represent our best interests to solve the nation's most pressing issues and to update those laws when it's necessary. Immigration is so important that it's spanned political walls. Most Americans agree with Angie and me that the status quo on immigration is unacceptable and that a path to citizenship is the way to go, but Congress has failed to act in the last 25 years. Instead, we have a system which U.S. citizen children go to school not knowing whether they're going to see their mother or father at the end of the night. You have folks who as Angie described have lived here for decades, but they still don't know whether they're days, months, or years away from being deported. You even have people in Louisiana who can't marry the person they love simply because they lack the documents to do so. How many times have you heard people like our opponents say that undocumented immigrants "broke the law and therefore they should not be rewarded?"

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Not only is this false, but it overlooks our own role in complicity in creating this dysfunctional system. Here's the thing. We've been sending confusing and hypocritical messages for the last quarter century. We hang a keep out sign on our border while our economy sends help wanted messages. Similarly, our federal government says it's unlawful for you to work here without authorization, but if you're working and you're earning wages you must pay taxes. Undocumented workers can't get a social security number, but the federal government gives them a tax ID number to pay their federal taxes, which benefits all of us. This is dysfunctional. What we need instead is predictability, consistency, and laws that can be applied in a nondiscriminatory fashion. Congress must create a clear road map that shows restaurant workers, nurses, entrepreneurs, and all the citizens in waiting how to get into a line for citizenship, as well as to create a line for others.

The second reason to vote for the motion is that the economic benefits are clear. The road map we create should focus on the contributions that people who are here are already making to our communities, economy, and society. At a practical level, it's good for our bottom line. Recent studies show that when young immigrants who have been able to get work authorization and temporary protection from deportation like Martin Batalla Pedal who is here tonight, we all benefit from that. They're able to more fully participate in society. They're able to buy big ticket items like cars and homes. All of that helps our state coffers. People like Martin have been able to lift up their families, communities, and society as well. According to a recent study -- to recent surveys, their wages have increased by 42 percent.

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And many of them are also investing in themselves by pursuing their educational dreams. The Congressional Budget Office, in 2013, predicted that immigration reform would increase the GDP by 3.3 percent in 10 years. The greatest cost, perhaps, is that of unrealized potential. I'm talking about people like Chris Mercado, who is here tonight as well. He's an entrepreneur who dreams of using his technological expertise to address society's problems. Chris is a New Yorker. He's lived in Queens in the same house since he was age 6, when he arrived from the Philippines. He is an aspiring citizen and represents American innovation. Yet, there's no way -- no line to get in, no paper to fill out -- for him to become a citizen of this country. Finally, creating a path to citizenship is good for our society. It's in line with our American values of fairness, equality, and dignity. It recognizes the 11 million undocumented immigrants for who they really are -- Americans at heart and citizens in waiting.

0:27:56

Our opponents want you think of undocumented immigrants as outsiders, as others. You heard from Rich. They see citizenship as a prized possession. I would argue that such a viewpoint has led us down dangerous and exclusionary paths before. Our country has had plenty of experience excluding entire segments of our population. When we denied African Americans and women the right to vote, Congress acted. When there was rampant discrimination against African Americans, Congress acted and passed the Civil Rights Act. Your vote tonight is a message to Congress to act and provide a path to citizenship. Thank you.

John Donovan:

Thank you, Marielena Hincapié.

[applause]

And the motion again: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. And here to make his statement against the motion, Steven Camarota. He's Director of Research at the Center for Immigration Studies. Here is Steven Camarota.

[applause]

Steven Camarota:

Well, I just want to thank IQ-squared for inviting me.

0:28:55

This is exactly the kind of unemotional, fact-driven debate that we'd like to have and we need more of. So, my hats off to you for an excellent program. And your goals seem to be unassailable. Let's start with some facts about the illegal immigrant population. Rich talked a lot about general principles -- rule of law, it repeats the mistakes of the past. I'm going to give you a little bit more information to help you think about this question. One of the most important facts we know about illegal immigrants is that, on average, they have about a 10th grade education. There are some less-educated immigrants than that -- illegal immigrants -- and some are more. But on average, that's what it is. The overwhelming majority have only a high school education or they didn't graduate high school. Actually, we think a majority didn't graduate high school in their home countries before they came. This tells us a lot. It tells us what their likely income is going to be in the modern American economy. It tells us, equally important, which Americans are going to be competing with illegal immigrants for jobs.

Now, we think there are about seven, eight million illegal immigrants currently holding jobs in the United States. And the good news is, the vast majority of Americans don't compete with them for jobs. They're at the very bottom of the labor market -- on average, given their skills. But the problem is that it's the poorest Americans who do compete with them for jobs -- Americans who -- getting out of prison, Americans with a disability, Americans who themselves didn't graduate high school. And that also includes a lot of less educated legal immigrants. My opponents tonight identify strongly with illegal immigrants, and I understand that, and I think that's some to their credit. But we also have to keep in mind that Americans, even if they're not well-represented in this room -- the roughly 13 million who don't have a high school education, who research shows compete directly with illegal immigrants -- if we let every illegal immigrant stay, the job competition stays. Now, you might say, "Well, they might not undercut the native-born anymore," but the bottom line is, you still fundamentally increase the supply of labor precisely among the most vulnerable part of the labor market.

0:31:02

Just to give you one statistic -- of high school dropouts in the United States who are of working age, only 42 percent have a job right now. It's a historic low. Their real wages have declined. We don't have a shortage of people without a high school education. And they have done extremely poorly. Let me talk very briefly about the impact on taxpayers. Again, what we know is people who don't have a lot of education don't make a lot of money. They use a lot in services, including illegal immigrants. The National Academies of Science just released a study indicating that even if you project out 75

years, people who come to America with a high school degree or less are an enormous fiscal drain. On average, about \$150,000 during their lifetime. And amnesty, a legalization or citizenship, will make immigrants eligible -- illegal immigrants -- for even more programs, likely increasing that. Legalization doesn't change the underlying demographics about educational attainment and the moderate American economy.

The total cost of letting all illegal immigrants, saying -- giving them citizenship is likely to be about a trillion dollars to taxpayers. No, it's true. Illegal immigration does make the economy bigger. More people is a bigger economy. But there's no evidence it makes the native-born richer. What it mainly does is benefits the illegal immigrants themselves if all of them get to stay, and it tends to come at the expense of taxpayers and the poorest and most vulnerable American workers at the bottom end of the labor market. Now let me talk about something very briefly. And this is important. There's no administrative capacity to even process 10 million applications. Our immigration service just gave out citizenship to 900 criminal aliens. They were all due to be deported. But the system is so screwed up. The bureaucracy is so overwhelmed they all got citizenship instead. When we had our last amnesty in '86, between one-third and one-quarter of the people who got it then did so fraudulently.

0:33:02

Now, in the real world, any legislation that passes will be a massive undertaking, a huge giveaway to special interests. In 2013, the legislation that would have amnestied the illegal immigrants was longer than the New Testament and was filled with all kinds of special interest perks be and giveaways. It was so complicated no one read it. Everybody admitted they hadn't read it. And that's exactly what we're debating here. If we were to move to give citizenship to illegal immigrants, not only can't we process all those applications, but it would be the kind of legislation that we pass so often in Washington where I live, one that no one reads and few people understand. Now, what's the alternative here? Well, the alternative is to start with something sensible, not rewarding everyone no broke the law. The alternative is they actually begin by enforcing the law. We're not doing that right now. Do you know that we have over 900,000 people in the United States who've actually been ordered deported by immigration court, but we never followed up, so they're all still here basically.

That's our immigration system. You know how many employers -- there are about a hundred thousand employers that hire illegal immigrants. Do you know how many got arrested in 2015? Maybe 50. That's our enforcement regime. So I'm proposing we actually try something we haven't tried before, which is enforcing the law. We control the border, we go after the employers who hire the illegal immigrants. We get the cooperation of local law enforcement. If even some illegal immigrants go home, it's good for American workers, it's good for taxpayers. It restores the rule of law and it avoids this kind of radical idea that we should be handing out citizenship. And we don't

need some big piece of legislation. Just enforcing current law would go a long way to moving the ball forward. Thank you.

0:34:57

[applause]

John Donovan:

Thank you, Steve Camarota. And that concludes round one of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate where our motion is "Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship." Now we move on to round two. And in round two, the debaters address one another directly, and they also take questions from me and from you in our live audience here in New York. The team arguing for the motion that want you to vote "yes," Angie Kelly and Marielena Hincapié, have said that they have portrayed undocumented immigrants as "citizens in waiting," Americans at heart, that this is their home, that they are contributors. They pay taxes, they want to be Americans, but the process makes it nearly impossible. There are long waits to become citizens, that -- they talk about a system that is needed. The system that would be needed would be one that would be predictable and consistent. And they say that Congress needs to pass laws to show these people how to get in line and to show them where the line is.

Like their opponents, they think that the current system is not functioning very well, but for different reason. And their opponents, Rich Lowry and Steve Camarota, they portray citizenship as the prized possession in the world, and they say that it is manifestly unfair to give it to people who have not played by the rules and waited in line like many have already. They argue that enforcement of the current laws is the solution. That to the degree that the system is not working, it's because the rules that are in place are not being enforced. And they also say that to try to offer a path to citizenship to 11 million immigrants now would cost a fortune and that those who would pay the highest price would be the most vulnerable among native-born Americans, the poorest and the least educated because they would be competing for jobs. I want to go to the team that's arguing for you to vote "yes" and bring to you your opponents' argument that it's just basically unfair to those who play by the rules already to let others kind of skip to the head of the line, and it's a coherent, cogent, quite clear argument.

0:37:05

And I would like to know -- I'll start with you, Angie Kelly. What's your response to that direct argument, that it's just not fair?

Angela Kelley:

Yeah, no, it's not fair to lots of folks because the laws haven't been updated, as I said, for 25 years. And we have a lot of people in this country illegally who are living with someone who has a green card or is a U.S. citizen. They have a qualifying family member. But as I tried to describe -- maybe not too clearly -- what happens is that because they've been here without status, we punish them. There's a penalty. There's

a bar; 10 years without status. So, let's say I have a green card, and I marry Steve because he's so super handsome. Steve, we're madly in love, right? You've been living here illegally, but I have a green card so I can apply for him, right? Now, it's a two-year wait. But let's say that's okay. Now, he has to leave the U.S. to get the green card at the embassy in La Paz, Bolivia, because he's actually Bolivian.

0:38:00

He doesn't look it. And when he tries to do that, they say, "Mm. No. No, sorry. You were here illegally. Ten-year bar, Steve. You're not coming back to Washington to live with your beautiful wife, Angie." That's the problem, right? So it's not so clean, right? It's not as if we've got all the undocumented people living in one apartment building just being undocumented and breaking the law. It's because we have a broken system.

John Donovan:

All right, let me take it back to Rich Lowry who made the point originally. And so your opponent is saying that the situation is more complicated than your position allows for.

Rich Lowry:

Well, first of all, let me say, Steve is a very lucky man.

[laughter]

Angela Kelley:

Thank you.

Rich Lowry:

Look, of course it's unfair. Gallop did a survey recently around the world, and there are about 120, 150 million people who want to come here. And our opponents' position is, yeah, you get not only just to stay, but to become a citizen if you jump the border or if you overstay your visa.

0:39:01

Now, in every -- you know, in particular instances, there may be complications, there may be sympathetic cases. But to have that general rule as a matter of category, you're going to make it possible for all these people to be citizens is manifestly unfair. And we've all known people who have grappled with the immigration system, which is a nightmare. But most of the people we know do everything they can to stay within the rules. And the idea that illegal immigrants are Americans at heart I think is a little hard to take. They're workers at heart. They come here to earn more money than they can at home, and they oftentimes send a lot of it home. But 1986, they were given the opportunity, "You can be a citizen." What mattered more to them? Staying and working. So this is a key weakness in our opponents' case. Every single problem they

identify can be dealt with an amnesty or a legalization without going all the way to citizenship.

John Donovan:

Let me take it to Marielena.

Marielena Hincapié:

Sure. And a couple of things I would point out, one is this notion I think what you're saying, Rich, about citizenship. It's not as if people were to become citizens tomorrow; they would apply and then become citizens tomorrow. Look, the last bill that the Senate passed by bipartisan vote included a 13-year wait. This -- what we're saying is create a line, create a path to citizenship. Let people know what the criteria is. That bill in particular and every bill that's been out there has included a penalty, background check. People have to show that they pay taxes. There are all of these things that people would need to do to earn citizenship. And they would be on this path which, again, the last bill, would be a long and arduous task.

0:40:43

John Donovan:

What I think I hear Rich saying, though, is that for people in that position -- and part of the problem here is we're generalizing about a lot of people.

Marielena Hincapié:

Yes.

John Donovan:

Okay? Let's acknowledge that. So everybody's in different situations.

Female Speaker:

Sure.

John Donovan:

But I think that the bottom line principle he's saying that if you got to -- if you're here now in that status, you're farther up in the line than somebody who is, you know, sitting in Guatemala --

Female Speaker:

[unintelligible]

John Donovan:

-- who would like to come here.

Angela Kelley:

Well --

Marielena Hincapié:
Yeah.

Angela Kelley:
-- that's a great point. But you know, this is what's been contemplated in legislative proposals, is that we clear out the family backlog, right, so that Steve and I can be reunited much more quickly. And there isn't a single undocumented person who gets legal status until that family backlog is cleared out.

Angela Kelley:
Because that's, again, the complexity and how these are interlocking.

Marielena Hincapié:
Yeah.

Rich Lowry:
But these requirements you mention, they're almost always entirely window dressing. The penalty that illegal immigrants are going to pay, are you really going to make a poor illegal immigrant pay a \$10,000 fine here she can't afford? Or --

Female Speaker:
I [unintelligible] a \$10,000 fine.

Rich Lowry:
-- learning English, there's never a requirement they actually learn, they have to go to class. I went to a lot of German classes. I don't speak a word of German. And the idea they have to pay back taxes when most of them don't earn enough to actually owe a federal income tax liability.

0:42:00

In fact, are probably owed money by the federal government in the form of the subsidies we give low income workers. All that is boo bait for Bubba to kind of dress up this proposal and make it sound more appetizing --

John Donovan:
Let's let Angie respond.

Angela Kelley:
Well.

[laughter]

I'm not sure who Bubba is. Look, you don't need to learn German to go to work every day. You don't need to learn German so that you can call a doctor when your baby is sick, but immigrants who are here, they want to learn English. They know that that is their ticket to a better life and that is a ticket for their children for a better life.

Rich Lowry:

So you're saying it is window dressing--

Angela Kelley:

So what I'm saying is --

John Donovan:

But let's bring Steve next.

[talking simultaneously]

Rich Lowry:

That requirement in law is window dressing.

[talking simultaneously]

Angela Kelley:

The requirements of the bill learning -- pay taxes. Absolutely that we have to go through background checks, that we will know who is in this country.

Rich Lowry:

You're contradicting yourself.

John Donovan:

Rich, hang on.

Angela Kelley:

Makes a lot more sense than the status quo where we don't know and they're subject to exploitation and it makes us all more vulnerable.

John Donovan:

Steve.

Steven Camarota:

Right. Rich has a really great point. What advocates have done --

Rich Lowry:

At least Steve thinks so. If I lost Steve I'd be in real trouble.

0:43:11

Steven Camarota:

But the bottom line is, advocates for the amnesty have focus groups and they know the public likes the idea of saying hey, they're going to learn English. That's not something that's actually in the bill. It's something the advocates say is in the bill. All you have to do is sign up for a class. They're going to pay taxes and it's even implied they'll pay back taxes. As Rich said, given the income of illegal immigrants, they don't owe any. In fact, we'd probably have to pay them through the earned income tax credit. This is just the kind of thing -- the bill actually put people on a path to citizenship. Some of them got it very quickly. Some of them had to wait a long time and some of them would've gotten it much earlier than 13 years, but the talking point is 13 years. Remember, the bill, as I indicated, is this thick. It's got many more words in it than the New Testament.

0:43:58

No one in this room, including myself, can read the whole thing and even understand it, and that's what we're talking about here.

John Donovan:

Okay. Marielena.

Steven Camarota:

A bill that's impenetrable.

Marielena Hincapié:

So as someone who has read that bill from front to end.

John Donovan:

Oh, show off.

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Let me say a couple of things. This is not just about what the bill and all the various bills that have been out there. This is about immigrants who are indeed paying. Look, the institute for taxation and economic policy, not immigrant advocacy group, right, ITEP [Institution on Taxation and Economic Policy], talked about at the state and local level immigrants are actually paying 50 percent compliance. They pay more in income, 8 percent of their income, more than the top 1 percent in our country. So immigrants are indeed paying taxes at the federal, state, and local level. Every single bill, immigration bill, that has been out there has excluded immigrants from having access to federal public benefits, even to Obamacare.

0:44:56

This is the center of capitalism and even under this administration an undocumented person can't pay out of their pocket to have access to Obamacare. So, this notion that immigrants are taking more from our country is not what the facts are saying.

John Donovan:

Would you like to respond?

Steven Camarota:

Look. There's a lot of research on this question, but the government actually collects a survey and it does identify the illegal immigrants. It's called the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the fraction of those households receiving various forms of welfare benefits is extremely high. It's over 50 percent. That said, that high welfare use rate is not because the immigrants are all lazy and it's not because the illegal immigrants all came to get welfare, rather as I indicated, it reflects their educational attainment, income, family size. That's what causes it. If you decide to let every illegal immigrant stay, you have to understand that given the education there's an enormous cost for taxpayers.

Marielena Hincapié:

This reminds me --

John Donovan:

Angie... Sure.

Marielena Hincapié:

Just one really quick thing on the benefits.

0:45:56

Again, facts really matter and the social security administration's actuary says undocumented immigrants are contributing into the social security and Medicare system \$13 billion a year, 13 with a B, billion dollars a year. Between '96 and 2003, undocumented workers paid \$90 billion into the social security and Medicare system, benefits that they will not access, they will not be able to access.

John Donovan:

Okay. Let's let that point land and let your opponents respond. Rich, do you want to respond to that?

Rich Lowry:

Well, look, we have a tax system in this country that is set up to benefit two categories of people. One, Donald Trump who doesn't pay any federal income taxes.

Marielena Hincapié:

Undocumented workers pay more than him.

Rich Lowry:

And two, low skilled workers who are working but aren't making a lot. The tax and the welfare system are set up to help exactly those kinds of workers. Remember, you know, most illegal immigrants from Mexico are high school dropouts. They don't have a high school degree. It's -- they come here.

0:47:00

They want to work hard, but it's very hard for people with that level of education to thrive in our society, let alone to contribute to the upkeep of our federal government through their taxes, when, again, most of them aren't earning enough to actually pay federal income taxes. So, this fiscal argument completely falls down.

John Donovan:

But which of the two --

Angela Kelley:

So --

John Donovan:

-- Angie, --

Angela Kelley:

Yeah. So, here's the good news, guys --

John Donovan:

Angie Kelley.

Angela Kelley:

-- is that if people get legal status and they are able to naturalize and become citizens, then they are able to get jobs that better match their skills. The person who drove me to the airport is probably, like, a doctor in Nigeria. And he drove me to the airport. And we know people like that. So, you will have a better complementary -- where workers will actually be doing the jobs that they are trained for if they are able --

John Donovan:

Okay.

Angela Kelley:

-- to get citizenship.

John Donovan:

But that's very tightly put question --

Angela Kelley:

Right now --

[speaking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

I'd like to hear your response to that.

Rich Lowry:

-- real quickly.

John Donovan:

Yeah.

Rich Lowry:

Even if I accept that argument, that's no reason to give that person citizenship.

And that's, again, the weakness of your case, is you're not actually defending the resolution. You've come up for -- reasons for legalization. You're not telling us why citizenship is imperative or good for the country.

0:48:15

John Donovan:

Well, go ahead --

Angela Kelley:

Okay. So, let's talk about --

John Donovan:

-- and take it.

Angela Kelley:

-- what the alternatives are, right? So, what would you do -- to --

Rich Lowry:

There's one person out there who really --

[laughter]

Rich Lowry:

Yes. I got Steve and that guy.

[laughter]

Angela Kelley:

So, what are the alternatives, right? Do we round them up and deport them all? You said you didn't want to do that, right? Do you like the status quo? Do you think that makes sense? Steve seems to be really upset about it, because of the impact that you claim it's having. Do we give them less than citizenship and have them be in second-class status? What we know about that is that people actually earn less. It's not good for you to be in a second-class status where you can't -- you're at the mercy of your employer. That's not a good thing either. So, just tell me, guys. What is the answer? What are we going to do?

Marielena Hincapié:

And we have a dark history in our country of having people in second-class citizen status.

John Donovan:

Steven?

0:48:56

Steven Camarota:

Look, we tried this before. The reason that an amnesty, and legalizing everyone, and giving them citizenship doesn't work is we know it doesn't work. We did it in '86. We gave almost three million people citizenship, and we ended up with 12 million or 10 million illegal immigrants now. The solution here is to begin not with something radical, like citizenship for everybody who broke the law. The solution is to actually enforce the law. That's what we need. If we can get some illegal immigrants to go home on their own, some will be deported -- it's good for American workers. It's good for taxpayers. On the question of whether illegal immigrants pay taxes, absolutely. My own research shows they pay well over \$10 billion, and that was years ago. That number has got to be \$50 billion illegal immigrants likely pay in taxes. But based on the evidence we can collect, they're using about \$100 billion in services. And again, it's not their laziness. It's not that they all came to get welfare. It's -- it reflects their education level. And I should put out, when we look at legal immigrants with that level of education, we get basically the same numbers. When we look at the native-born with that level of education, we get basically the same numbers. Legalization doesn't solve the problem for taxpayers.

0:50:07

John Donovan:

Okay.

Steven Camarota:

We know that for sure.

Rich Lowry:

And let me take -- let the record show when I asked why we needed citizenship, she asked, "Oh, are you going to deport everyone?" And the only argument for citizenship

that I can discern is there might be some small hypothetical wage benefit to the illegal immigrants themselves. But again, every single problem they are surfacing and pointing to can be dealt with a policy short of citizenship. It might be a policy that Steve and I --

John Donovan:

Okay.

Rich Lowry:

-- disagree with --

John Donovan:

Your --

Rich Lowry:

-- but short of citizenship --

John Donovan:

-- this team now gets two turns in a row because --

[laughter]

Female Speaker:

Okay. Thank you.

John Donovan:

Enjoy.

Angela Kelley:

You first --

Marielena Hincapié:

I wanted to go to the issues that Steve mentioned in your opening, Steve, about the alternative being enforcing our laws. Well, you heard from Angie and I that what -- we have not updated our laws in 25 years. The only thing we have done is enforced our laws. In 2012, the federal government spent \$18 billion on border and interior enforcement, more than all federal law enforcement agencies combined, more than the DEA, ATF, FBI, Secret Service, U.S. Marshals. I can go on and on.

0:51:08

That is not where we should be spending our law enforcement dollars. But we have been. And this administration has actually deported more people than every previous administration in the last -- since Eisenhower, basically.

John Donovan:

Angie --

Marielena Hincapié:

And then separately -- I'm so sorry. Just one last thing --

John Donovan:

No, go ahead. Go ahead.

Marielena Hincapié:

-- is they seem to -- actually, you know what? I'll save this argument for later.

Angela Kelley:

Okay.

[laughter]

John Donovan:

Okay. Okay. The --

Marielena Hincapié:

-- concerned about workers --

John Donovan:

The reason I'm bringing it --

Female Speaker:

Sure. Don't forget it, yeah.

John Donovan:

-- I do want to take it to you, Angie, is because Marielena's answer didn't respond to the point that was made, that I want to just know what the response is. And your opponents are saying that while indeed -- as a whole, the 11 million undocumented immigrants pay taxes, they require a great deal more than they're paying in taxes, in terms of public services. And I want to ask you --

Angela Kelley:

Yeah. I mean --

John Donovan:

-- for a response to that, Angie.

Angela Kelley:

-- first of all, they're not eligible for public service. So what Steve generally is really pointing to is their children who, yeah, they cost.

0:52:04

God knows my kids cost, right? So we count them as a cost, the immigrant household, where kids are expensive, but then they grow up and they --

John Donovan:

But why doesn't that hurt your argument?

Angela Kelley:

Sorry?

John Donovan:

Why doesn't that hurt your side's argument?

Angela Kelley:

Because -- because all children -- I mean, what would be the alternative, right? And all children are costly because we spend money educating them. The parents are not eligible for any benefits. We're investing in the kids --

Marielena Hincapié:

Who are U.S. citizens.

Angela Kelley:

-- who are U.S. citizens. And then when the kids grow up, guess what? They do well. They earn money, right? And so that you have to look at the ledger on both sides. That's one. Two -- give me another second here.

John Donovan:

Sure.

Angela Kelley:

Because they keep --

John Donovan:

No, take it.

Angela Kelley:

They keep wanting to -- the 1986 law known as IRCA [Immigration Control and Reform Act], right? And what IRCA said -- this is signed by Ronald Reagan, and it gave legal status, eventual citizenship for those who took it, for people who had been here since 1982.

0:52:58

The law was passed in 1986. You already had four years of people who were here that weren't even eligible. And it set up something called "employer sanctions," where employers had to start asking you for a document, which you guys still have to do, right? When you go to a job that you've been accepted for, you have to fill out an I-9 form. But what the law didn't contemplate is that people will continue to come. That was the failing. It didn't anticipate a future flow. So people would come with smugglers, not with visas. That's what has to change. And this notion that that was some kind of a magnet, that's not true. There was a lot of research done after IRCA passed. The numbers of illegal crossings actually initially went down --

John Donovan:

Okay, Angie, I'm going to break --

Angela Kelley:

-- and then they leveled out.

John Donovan:

I'm going to break in because you've made some good points shall and I want to let your opponents respond. Steven Camarota.

Steven Camarota:

Kids do cost money. But the bottom line is, with the children of illegal immigrants, an enormous fraction get all the food assistance from our -- are enrolled in Medicaid. The family is allowed to live in public houses in many cases. And they do get cash benefits on behalf of their U.S.-born children. In the survey research, they admit this.

0:54:02

They don't -- they don't even realize that that's an issue. Many children -- many immigrants do not get those things. The reason that illegal immigrants are so costly is because of their educational attainment and resulting income. That's the bottom line. Here's the -- here's the take-home point. If you're a native-born person who doesn't have a high school education, you too are a fiscal drain. But it's your birth right to stay here. When we're talking about illegal immigrants, that's a very different question. And to Rich's point, even if you want them all to stay, does that mean they all have to get citizenship? One of the things to think about, about even legalization is programs like the EITC, the earned income tax credit, and the additional child tax credit. Our two biggest cash programs, illegal immigrants right now can't get them. Once legalized, the previous bill that we just talked about, that supposedly barred folks, clearly made them eligible. And that's in the tens of billions. That program is pushing a hundred billion dollars, those two programs, together in total cost. That's a very big deal, and that's an added cost we get from legalization.

John Donovan:

Okay. Marielena -- I want to go to audience questions in a moment, but one other point that your opponents brought up in their opening was that the -- it's the most vulnerable native-born Americans who are vulnerable -- who would be hurt by a mass amnesty or path to citizenship. What about that?

Marielena Hincapié:

Yeah. So listen, I am all for ensuring that our labor laws are enforced, that we increase minimum wage. I mean, if our opponents are so concerned about native-born workers and documented immigrant workers, we should be increasing minimum wage, providing a living wage, making sure that workers have a right to organize unions and have collective bargaining, right?

[applause]

It is all of the different tools we have as a country to lift the floor for everyone. This argument by opponents all the time, including Jeff Sessions, who appears to be the best advocate for U.S. workers when it comes to immigration, constantly being against the raising of the minimum wage.

0:55:58

That is what will make a difference. If employers knew that they were not going to be held accountable -- I'm sorry, if employers knew that they would be held accountable and would have to pay, be penalized for violating the discrimination laws, for violating overtime laws, minimum wage laws, they would not hire undocumented workers.

John Donovan:

Rich Lowry.

Rich Lowry:

Can I just address this quickly? The problem with minimum wage, certainly at the level the left wants to go, a \$15 minimum wage, is, at the margins, you are discouraging employers from hiring people. So these are people trying to get their first foot on the ladder of economic success in this country, and you're cutting it out from some margin of them. I'm open to the idea we should subsidize low-wage workers in this country, but you can do it through the program Steve mentioned earlier, the EITC, which is a subsidy for work and doesn't actually cut anyone off from entry-level jobs. And just very quickly on the deportation numbers, because this is a very important point. These numbers are bandied about, that President Obama is the, you know, chief deporter in American history.

0:57:02

They are manifestly nonsense. They're based on an accounting gimmick. Even President Obama has admitted as much when he was getting hit by advocacy groups on this. He said, "You know what? Those numbers are misleading," because it used to be

that people are stopped at the border, turned around, sent back to their native country, and they weren't counted as deportations. All of a sudden, the Obama administration started counting them as deportations. And interior enforcement has been gutted in this country. The former --

John Donovan:
All right, let me --

Rich Lowry:
-- head of the ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] has, on the record said, "If you're -- once you get inside the country, you have very little to fear --"

John Donovan:
Let me let Marielena respond. Can you do it briefly so we can get to questions?

Marielena Hincapié:
Yes. Two things --

John Donovan:
Sure.

Marielena Hincapié:
-- on the minimum wage. In California, we have increased the minimum wage. And guess what? Farmworkers -- guess who's applying for farm worker jobs now in California? U.S. workers. Because it now pays a living wage. And farmworkers have access to overtime, so that's one piece. Second, on enforcement --
[applause]

-- if -- let's forget about the system for a minute.

0:57:58

But there's a reason why, in the immigrant community, families have been separated, children have been put into foster care because there has indeed been an increase in interior enforcement. That is a reality on the ground. That is why the immigrant rights community has gone against President Obama and has called him deporter in chief. It is the reality on the ground. It is happening. It has devastating --

John Donovan:
Okay.

Rich Lowry:
Our interior department -- the deportations have been declining pretty much every year.

Steven Camarota:
Every year of the Obama administration.

Rich Lowry:
There's a reason why he said, "Don't pay attention to the statistics."

Marielena Hincapié:
Then I'm seeing, leave us out of the numbers.

Rich Lowry:
Because you can actually look it up. You can actually look this one up.

Marielena Hincapié:
This year the numbers have decreased. But the numbers have in fact increased because of the appropriations that Congress has provided.

John Donovan:
Okay. I'm going to go to audience questions. I just want to mention that on our app you can listen to our debate on the minimum wage available through the Apple store and Google Play.

Female Speaker:
Who wants --

John Donovan:
It's very --

Rich Lowry:
Nice segue. This is why John's the moderator.

John Donovan:
Yeah, there you go. Ma'am, you're wearing an orange scarf. If you stand up, the mic will come down from your right-hand side.

0:58:54

And I suppose California excepted, migrant workers have been exempt from minimum wage. And so we pay, I don't know what, \$2 an hour or 50 cents a day or whatever it is for migrants to pick our crops. And if we don't have illegal immigrants who hold these jobs, who is going to provide us with food that we're growing?

John Donovan:
Thank you. Very well-phrased question. And let's take it to the side that's arguing "yes" on the motion. Marielena.

Marielena Hincapié:

I think the reality of undocumented workers probably without a path to citizenship will continue to pick our crops, and that is the status quo that many of our opponents want. Look, a lot of it, at the core of the status quo is corporate greed, employers who want to keep earning a profit off of paying substandard and poverty wages.

Rich Lowry:

I entirely agree with that --

Angela Kelley:

And estimates in that --

Rich Lowry:

I entirely agree with that sentiment.

Angela Kelley:

-- particular industry are that, look, the vast majority of people who are picking our crops are undocumented, right?

0:59:55

And when they pass these very restrictive state laws in Georgia and Alabama, "Oh, my God, who's going to pick the Vidalia onions? What about the peaches?" And they waited, and they waited for U.S. workers to show up. And guess what? They didn't. So we need to get real here. We benefit, guys. We benefit from what we spend in the grocery store every single day. And so it's a question of, like, I don't know, it gets down to the morality of it, John.

John Donovan:

It sounds like you're --

Angela Kelley:

What are we going to do?

John Donovan:

It's sounding like your opponents are agreeing with you.

Rich Lowry:

Let Steve disagree first, and then I'll agree.

John Donovan:

All right.

Steven Camarota:

Okay.

John Donovan:

Oh, a split --

Steven Camarota:

No, no, no. Let me say this: About 5 percent, maybe 4 percent of all illegal immigrants work in agriculture. When you think of illegal immigrants, the one group you should never think of -- and this is from the Pew Hispanic Center, but I agree with them, it's farmworkers. It's a trivial fraction. 30 years ago, it was a fascinating question. But the vast majority of illegal immigrants compete with natives for service jobs, construction jobs, things like that, in light manufacturing and so forth.

1:01:00

We know -- we have a pretty good idea what the labor costs are. So I would like to see wages rise a lot for agricultural workers. It's hard work. I did some of it as a kid when I was young. I think it would be great. We know that when you buy fresh fruit and produce, only about 6 percent of the cost is actually goes to the person who picked it. So if we did let wages rise and reduced immigration and encourage more illegal immigrants to go home, and wages doubled in that sector and all of that was passed on to you, the most increase you could have was about 6 percent. And that would be a good deal. Now, obviously we'd probably see a lot of mechanization. We'd move away from head lettuce, which is mostly done by hand, to bag lettuce, which is now mostly done by machine. But I think if you want agriculture workers to make a decent wage, you can't tolerate constantly adding more workers.

1:01:52

John Donovan:

Rich.

Steven Camarota:

You want those workers to be scarce.

John Donovan:

Did that cover it for you?

Rich Lowry:

Clearly Steve is a leafy green expert on our side of the question.

[applause]

I was just going to say this is exactly the right point. Employers love illegal labor, because they can pay them less. And the idea that the American economy would grind to a halt if we had less illegal immigrants is completely false. Almost every single occupational category I can come up with is dominated by natives and if you can't find

someone to cut your grass or to drive your cab or whatever it is, you know what you can actually do? Now, this is a radical concept. Hold on to your seats. You can pay your workers more.

Angela Kelley:
That's right. On that we agree.

[applause]

John Donovan:
You agree?

Angela Kelley:
Yeah.

Marielena Hincapié:
It's the one area we agree – we think the solution is different, though.

John Donovan:
Right down the front here. Mic's coming down the aisle for you.

Male Speaker:
Hi. My name is Naseed, a recent immigrant from Syria, a legal one.

[laughter]

My question is for the --

John Donovan:
No one was going to ask.

[laughter]

Male Speaker:
I'm just saying. My question is for the side arguing for the motion.

1:02:54

Let's say if there was an amnesty for next year, what happens in 2050 when there's 30 million undocumented immigrants? Do we also give them citizenship?

Angela Kelley:
Say it again. If we --

Male Speaker:

Let's say if there's an amnesty next year. What do we do in 2050 if we have more illegal immigrants? We have 30 million illegal immigrants.

Angela Kelley:

That's a great question. And this is where the interconnectedness of this issue is really important to understand. What we need to do is to update our legal immigration system. We want people to come with visas, not with smugglers. Remember the 5,000 number. We need to create wide enough channels so that people come here legally for jobs that we need them to do. We need a dynamic system that isn't just a fixed number that's picked literally out of the air 25 years ago about how many visas we're going to have in different employment categories, and we do need to make it so that employers pay a price if they hire someone that's without authorization.

1:03:50

And we do need to have border security, but we still have the 11 million who are here now and the question is what are we going to do about them.

Steven Camarota:

Look, the bill that passed -- passed the Senate in 2013 didn't just give citizenship to illegal immigrants, it doubled the flow of new immigrants into the United States and that's one of the reasons it died in the House and that's one of the reasons there was so much public opposition. It doubled the number of guest workers and the number of green cards. Why do we have limits on immigration? Is it because we're mean and ignorant? No. It's because we worry about the absorption capacity of our schools, of our physical infrastructure. We want to assimilate and integrate immigrants. We want to think of them as our fellow Americans. We want them to think of themselves and you have to have those things at a manageable level. Right now there are about 33 million legal immigrants in the United States and maybe 10 to 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States. Angie's position is not only do we give citizenship to everybody here, but we have to dramatically increase the level of legal immigration. What does that mean for workers at the bottom end of --

Angela Kelley:

Absolutely not my position. That is not what I said.

1:04:57

Steven Camarota:

That's exactly what it sounded --

Angela Kelley:

What I said is that the system we have now --

Steven Camarota:

We need to make sure that we have to bring in --

Angela Kelley:

No. Remember, we're married.

[talking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

Wait a minute. We're going to -- we're going to -- we're going to --

[talking simultaneously]

Steven Camarota:

This is going like a typical marriage.

[laughter]

[talking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

Hold it. Hold it. Hold it. Hold it. We're going to rewind the tape and see what you actually said. No, let's -- can you in two sentences say what you said she said and then let her say what she said she said?

[laughter]

Two sentences.

Steven Camarota:

Yeah. She endorsed the bill in 2013 that doubled the number of immigrants coming into the country.

Angela Kelley:

I did. Yes, I think the bill from 2013 was an important and smart move. That was a bill that the Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO, organized labor supported that legislation. And you don't think that they're not worried about American workers? And yeah, the number of green cards increased because guess what? We propose that over time they go to the undocumented, and I don't think that's a bad thing, right?

1:05:53

So it wasn't like fling the doors open, anybody gets to come in. No. Absolutely not. We have a right, sovereignty to control our borders and to bring folks in who want to belong. Absolutely. But we do not have that system in place now. Employers don't have that opportunity to find a needed worker and they have to show that they can. I mean, that really was the genius of this bill, and I'll tell you guys, it didn't fail. The House

of Representatives controlled by Republicans didn't say no to a bill from the Senate that Barack Obama wanted to have passed. It wasn't because of the numbers of green cards. It was for a lot of other reasons that gets much more to the heart of the dysfunction of our Congress. But you guys have a chance to vote now, dispassionate, and really think about what do we do about the 11 million.

John Donovan:
Rich Lowry.

Rich Lowry:
First of all I have to dissent with my colleague on how I handle this exchange. Clearly, the right answer in this circumstance is always, "Honey, you're right."

1:06:54

[laughter]

Angela Kelley:
There you go.

Rich Lowry:
But look, this was a very acute question, because you're never going to have enough visas to satisfy everyone who wants to come here. Again, that Gallup survey -- 120, 150 million people around the world want to come here. And the U.S. job market, no matter what, is always going to be more alluring than the job market in Mexico, or Guatemala, or Honduras. And there will always be employers -- and by the way, the Chamber of Commerce does not care that much about American workers. I'm shocked I have to tell you that.

Angela Kelley:
No. But AFL-CIO does--

Rich Lowry:
But there will be employers who want to go the cheaper, more exploitative route. So, there will always be illegal immigrants. And what we know from experience, your functional answer to this question -- which you didn't really answer, is that when more illegal immigrants will come here, you will say they're Americans at heart. They've been here for a month. They've been here for three months. They've been here for a year -- they must stay, they must get amnesty, and they must get citizenship. That's why the cycle never ends. It's wrong, and this resolution should fail.

1:07:53

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Yeah. So, the reason the cycle never ends is because we have not updated our laws in 25 years. Our laws haven't kept up with the global reality of which we're in. Tonight's motion is only about the path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. It is not about the complexity of our entire immigration law, which is what this recent exchange is. And we should have a separate debate on that -- which really does address your question about legal immigration, and refugees, and how do people come in the future. Tonight we are talking about, what do we do about the mothers, and brothers, and parents, and workers who have been here for more than 10 years -- in the majority of them who are contributing to our society, and who have no way -- there is no path. There is no line. There is no process. That window in the Post Office does not exist. So, we need a path to citizenship to address the folks that are here. And separately, we should be updating our immigration laws on a regular basis, based on what's happening in the world. We should be looking at our foreign policy and making sure that our foreign policy isn't creating more people having to come.

1:09:00

Same thing with our economic and our free trade policies. All of those things contribute to migration flows.

John Donovan:

Okay. I need to step in.

[applause]

I need to do a little bit of business. I want to remind you that we are in the question-and-answer section of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate. I'm John Donovan, your moderator. We have four debaters, two teams of two, arguing it out over this motion: "Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship." And I also want to draw attention to our earlier debate on -- two debates we've done on immigration policy that are available, also, through our app at any time. Let's see. Sir in the blue neck -- red necktie and blue shirt. Thanks.

Male Speaker:

Hi there. I am a child of immigrants. My father came in 1968, more than 25 years ago, and applied for a visa, got a visa, worked nights, went to school during the day, sent me to college, sent me to law school -- after which I worked in the U.S. DOJ Executive Office of Immigration Review, helping on asylum cases.

1:10:05

My dad did it the right way. And the question I have is about fairness. Shouldn't we reward that path to citizenship? Isn't that the right way that we should be rewarding?

Angela Kelley:

Absolutely.

Marielena Hincapié:

Yeah.

Angela Kelley:

And my parents actually followed a very similar path.

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Same here.

Angela Kelley:

I completely agree with you.

John Donovan:

Let's see what the other side says --

Angela Kelley:

Which is why every proposal that --

John Donovan:

Well, let me [inaudible] an agreement.

Angela Kelley:

I'm sorry I thought that one was directed at me.

Female Speaker:

Look -- oh --

Steven Camarota:

It's a great question. The fairness question is absolutely spot-on. And consider this. Once you've amnestied 10 million people -- maybe 12 million -- assuming we don't have the kind of fraud we had before, then it could be many more -- how do you then enforce the law after that?

1:10:49

Doesn't it make it seem arbitrary? It seems like you're just picking on people, because the last time you had 10 million illegal immigrants, you let them all stay and gave them citizenship. Why would -- how can you make the case for enforcing the law once you've done this?

John Donovan:

Okay.

Male Speaker:

And I think that's a key question --

John Donovan:

Angie --

Male Speaker:

-- which is very hard.

John Donovan:

Angie, I cut you off. So, you move forward.

Angela Kelley:

That's okay.

[laughter]

I'm used to it here. So, at the risk of repeating myself, in contemplating this very basic issue of fairness, there has not been an immigration bill that has been written in the last many years that I've been a part of, that doesn't first address the backlog, that doesn't first reunite family members first -- and not a single undocumented person gets a green card or gets on that path to citizenship until that backlog is cleared out. And I just want to go another point, though, because --

John Donovan:

What -- wait --

Angela Kelley:

-- I feel a little bit -- may I just say something?

John Donovan:

No. Wait No. No, no, no. There's something that's not making your sense to me in your answer, and I may just not be getting it.

01:20:06

Angela Kelley:

Okay.

John Donovan:

He's not asking a question about whether it's fair for family members who are waiting to be reunited with their families. He's talking about, I'm assuming, somebody who's

starting cold in another country, doesn't have a family member. That person, your father, you're saying, had to come second under the system -- under the solution you're talking about would have to come second to a family reunion -- reunification happening here.

Angela Kelley:

Yeah, no.

John Donovan:

So that's why I'm not getting your answer as an answer to the question.

Angela Kelley:

Exactly. Okay. So when you look at the proposals to revamp our immigration laws, there is a recognition that there are people who are waiting outside the United States for their visa to come due. I told you that, you know, folks from Mexico who have an adult child, that they've applied for, 1995 is when they applied for that visa. And they have been waiting, absolutely. So what the proposals do is they say, we're going to -- we're going to increase these green cards for people who already qualified, right? They have a family member here. And we'll bring them in first. And then over time, that eight to 10, 12-year line that Marielena described, the people who are undocumented can then get their green cards.

So they do have to wait in line behind the folks that are part of the backlog. Let me just get back to a point, though, because I think it's very inaccurate, and frankly unfair, the characterization that we think that anyone who comes after one month or three months, ooh, ooh, you get -- no, you get amnesty. That's not true. I'm not sitting here defend --

John Donovan:

That was a little glib. Did you mean that clearly?

1:13:25

Rich Lowry:

Look, if everyone who comes here is currently an illegal immigrant, is an American at heart, there's a limitless number of Americans at heart living abroad who will come here again.

Female Speaker:

No.

Female Speaker:

No.

Rich Lowry:

And you -- your solution has to be deportation, in your terms, or letting them all stay or become citizens. So which is it?

Angela Kelley:

They should get on a path to citizenship.

Rich Lowry:

So every -- you're making my point. Every new person who comes, every new illegal immigrant that comes is American at heart, will get a job, will get embedded very quickly in a community and can stay --

Angela Kelley:

No, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

1:14:00

I am not saying that everybody who gets to come -- to who comes to this country without status with-- illegally is going to be able to get on a path to citizen ship. What we've described are people who have been here for many years, people who are committed to this country. They'll show a work history, they'll show that they've been paying taxes, they'll show that they're learning English. Just because -- just because --

John Donovan:

Wait, Rich. Let her finish.

Angela Kelley:

Let me finish.

John Donovan:

Take 15 more seconds.

Angela Kelley:

Just because a person says, "Yeah, I'd like to go to the U.S. one day," that doesn't mean that they're going to pick up and move, right? I'd love to go to Paris, but I'm not going to like pick up and move there. I don't want to live with the French people. Hope nobody in the audience is French.

John Donovan:

Okay. Rich Lowry.

Rich Lowry:

Really quickly.

Angela Kelley:

But so -- so you're -- that's an exaggeration.

Rich Lowry:
But --

Angela Kelley:
It's to make --

Rich Lowry:
I got it. So -- please. This gentleman asked the question, new illegal immigrants -- illegal immigrants are going to come unless we establish some Utopian system that will never exist, where no one violates the law and comes here illegally. What are you going to do with those people?

1:14:59

Angela Kelley:
People who want to come to this country who have a qualifying family member, people who want to come to this country who have an employer who can show that they have an opening for that person, that they're qualified for, then absolutely, those people should come to --

Rich Lowry:
You're not answering -- you won't answer the question. You -- but --

Angela Kelley:
-- but --

Rich Lowry:
The question's not been answered, John.

John Donovan:
I agree, you haven't answered the question. He's talking about --

[applause]

John Donovan:
And that's not because I'm on anybody's side. I'm just on the side of questions being answered. And to me --

Rich Lowry:
I feel a little bit like this is what Mitt Romney used to do in this case. He's like, "This is so unfair. The moderator, please." But you haven't answered the question.

John Donovan:
No, no, but --

[talking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

If I understand the question, I'm not hearing your answer addressing it. As I understand this question is, if, in the future, there is a very large number of immigrants coming in who then establish themselves relatively similarly to the same status with the 11 plus million we're talking about now, what are you going to do about those?

1:15:49

Angela Kelley:

We have an enormous amount of resources going into our border, right? So there are, at this point, the lowest rates among authorized immigration in 30 years. If people come to this country and they don't follow the rules, then yes. If they don't have --

Rich Lowry:

What's "yes"? What's "yes"?

Angela Kelley:

-- the kinds of equities, then yes.

Rich Lowry:

What's "yes"?

Angela Kelley:

We should -- we could -- absolutely --

Rich Lowry:

Do -- we should do what?

Angela Kelley:

-- can move to deport those people.

Rich Lowry:

Deport them. Oh. Talk about --
[applause]

Angela Kelley:

Now, though, you're being --

Rich Lowry:

She wants to deport illegal immigrants.

Angela Kelley:

We are talking about the 11 million who are in the country right now.

John Donovan:

We are talking about the 11 million who are in the country right now.

Angela Kelley:

And we are not talking about people coming in the future.

Rich Lowry:

But they can all stay, even --

Angela Kelley:

People who will come in the future will have to come with legal visas. We have a much tighter border now. And absolutely, at the point of hire, where a person has to show that they are here legally, and we go after that employer who goes ahead and hires that person, we have an electronic verification system which I know Steve supports, that makes a lot of sense. But it has to be combined with legal visas and wide channels enough for people to come to this country and we have to deal with the people who are here.

1:16:57

John Donovan:

So what Angie is saying is that the situation does not have to repeat. It does not have to be 1986 all over again. We can -- we're talking about one group of 11 million immigrants now. And once their status is resolved, reform would keep the problem you're talking about from repeating itself. And that does not seem implausible. Rich Lowry.

Rich Lowry:

I take her sincerity and earnestness as given. But we've had this experience in 1986 when we were supposed to have a system of enforcement. It never worked. It was never truly implemented. We have a new population of illegal immigrants. And the solution is to do exactly what we did in 1986. Inevitably, that's gentleman points out, there will be more illegal immigrants to come. The population will build. And then how can we deport 500,000 people? That's -- I mean, how could we deport --

[talking simultaneously]

John Donovan:

I'll give you 15 seconds because I want to hear from Marielena.

Steven Camarota:

Okay. We actually did what Angie wants to do. In 1990, we doubled the number of green cards.

1:17:54

Used to be 500,000 here, now it's over a million. So we not only legalized everyone, we doubled green cards, and we still ended up with 12 --

John Donovan:
Marielena.

Marielena Hincapié:

So listen, 1986 included employer sanctions. They were not enforced. Completely agreed. But they were employee sanctions. But what we saw was rather than a raid by INS going after the employer, the raid resulted in the workers being deported and the employer got off scot-free. What we didn't do in 1986, and we must do, is actually labor law enforcement. Look, when an employer knows that they are going to have to pay overtime and minimum wage and comply with workers' compensation laws and anti-sexual discrimination laws, et cetera, they will stop hiring and exploiting undocumented workers. We do not enforce our labor laws. That is really what is truly needed, not simply deportation or this threat of sanctions against employers.

Rich Lowry:

So we can agree on enforcement at the point of employment.

1:18:55

What we should do, though, is do that first, actually make it happen, because there have been false promises over and over again about this. Then the people who are most loosely connected, who came here relatively recently and 2, 3 million illegal immigrants have come during the Obama years, they'll leave. It'll be harder for them to get jobs. The number of illegals coming to this country declined during the recession because it was harder to get jobs. These are people. They respond to incentives like we all do. And then maybe if we reduce the population, we can think about other --

John Donovan:
But --

Rich Lowry:

-- but we don't just hop immediately to --

John Donovan:

I want to try to squeeze in one more question.

Marielena Hincapié:

[unintelligible] I'm so sorry, just really quickly.

John Donovan:

Very quickly.

Marielena Hincapié:
Two seconds? Yeah.

John Donovan:
12 seconds.

Marielena Hincapié:
You're talking about -- you're pretending that these undocumented workers are coming to take jobs. They are here. They're all already in those jobs. So it's not that they're somehow going to leave on their own if we're enforcing laws. You need both. You need to both have undocumented workers have legal status and be able to enforce the labor and immigration laws.

John Donovan:
Okay. Sir, against the wall over there, and then mic's coming down the aisle for you. If you could stand up, thanks.

Male Speaker:
Hello. My name's James.

1:20:05

I just have a question about the question of fairness of, you know, the people currently waiting outside the country versus other people in the country.

John Donovan:
Let me ask you, will your question get us to a place that we haven't already been to, do you think?

Male Speaker:
I hope so.

John Donovan:
Okay. Let me hear it. But I might pass on it because we want to --

Male Speaker:
If a path to citizenship was created for undocumented immigrants, could that possibly also benefit people waiting outside the country, that they now have an easier path to citizenship --

John Donovan:
Yes, I think -- I think that this side has actually made that argument quite strenuously, so I am going to pass.

Angela Kelley:

Yes. There are a number of undocumented people here who have --

John Donovan:

Ma'am, right there.

Angela Kelley:

-- a close family member that would benefit.

John Donovan:

If you could stand up. And a mic's coming. Yep. Yep. You have the pad in your hands. Thanks. Thanks for the question anyway.

Female Speaker:

Hello. My name is Shirley. I think that -- do you think that more people get the citizenship can help to build a more reasonable immigration system, or just a few of them get the citizenship and the rest be sent home can help to be more reasonable system.

John Donovan:

Can you understand the question actually -- sure. Sure.

1:21:08

Marielena Hincapié:

Sure. As I understand the question is basically it's a numbers question, right? There are 11 million undocumented immigrants here. If we legalize a large number of them will that benefit the system or if it's only a small number and the rest get deported, would that be a better option.

John Donovan:

Is that your question?

Female Speaker:

Yes.

John Donovan:

Great. Thank you. Thanks very much.

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Sure. So listen --

[applause]

-- the immigrant among the panelist understands. So listen, --

[laughter]

It all comes down to criteria. We believe that we should come up with criteria to decide who is eligible and undocumented workers would then have to come forward and prove that they're eligible and that number, whoever is eligible based on the criteria that we have come up with. Now, we believe that is probably the majority of undocumented immigrants that are here and not only will that make our system, our immigration system more reasonable, but we believe that it will help our economy. It'll help our society. And frankly, we believe that that is part of the fairness.

People have been here contributing and waiting for 25, 10, 20, 25 years without any way to become citizens.

1:22:14

John Donovan:

Response from the other side?

Steven Camarota:

Look --

John Donovan:

Steve Camarota.

Steven Camarota:

-- the reason someone is here illegally is basically two reasons, always remember this. Somebody either purposely snuck across the U.S. border. That's called entrance without inspection. We think that makes up 50 to 60 percent of the illegal immigrants. Or they came on a long-term temporary visa guest worker, foreign student, after promising at the Consulate overseas that they would go home after a certain amount of time. They broke that promise and chose to stay in the United States. Now they may have subsequently married someone. They may have gotten a job. They may have done lots of things. They certainly did put down roots, but the reason for that situation is their own behavior. Now there might be an exception that you could think of, but all the research suggests that that's 98 percent of the illegal immigrants.

1:23:06

John Donovan:

But Steve --

Steven Camarota:

They are responsible for their behavior and that's why I think Rich has so emphasized why would you reward them with citizenship even if you think --

John Donovan:

But, Steve, how is that an answer to her question? Because I think the sense of her question was if things work out that with the current 11 million that most are deported or most stay which would be the better scenario for the country.

Steven Camarota:

Okay, if we could encourage more people to go home of illegal immigrants then that would be good for workers and taxpayers. It would be fair and it would restore the rule of law. So, it would be good for workers, good for taxpayers, the public and it would restore integrity to a system badly lacking in it.

Rich Lowry:

Just very minor point. The way you're getting people to leave does not have to be deportation. Now deportation is a legitimate tool of enforcement. Both sides apparently agree on this point, but if you make it harder to work here and to get a job, people will leave. There's been a lot of talk about how the levels of illegal immigration from Mexico now are sort of netting out to zero. People are still coming, but people are also leaving. People will leave.

1:24:12

John Donovan:

Okay. I want to give the last word on this to Marielena.

Angela Kelley:

Okay.

Marielena Hincapié:

People will not leave. That strategy -- let me tell you. That strategy is called attrition through enforcement. Arizona, Utah, Indiana, Georgia, South Carolina, and Alabama all tried it. We at the National Immigration Law Center sued every single one of those states. It got struck down in federal court. People did not leave. They have roots in our communities. That approach has been deemed unconstitutional by our federal courts, because the way it happens in reality is through racial profiling. The way it happens in reality is ripping apart families and our main plaintiff in Arizona was a U.S. citizen of Spanish and Chinese descent. We -- Steve's comments reminded me of something else, the profile of who is undocumented immigrants. They keep talking about the poor and uneducated, et cetera, et cetera. The majority of undocumented immigrants and actually the growing number of undocumented immigrants are from China and India, very, very well educated who are overstaying their visas because they now have deep ties to our country and because of political and economic reasons in their home countries.

John Donovan:

And that concludes round two of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate --

[applause]

-- where our motion is: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship.

1:25:29

And now we move on to round three. Round three is comprised of brief closing statements by each debater in turn. They will be two minutes each. Again the motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. Here making her closing statement in support of the motion, Marielena Hincapié, executive director of the National Immigration Law Center.

[applause]

Marielena Hincapié:

Thank you, John, and thanks to all of you for sitting so patiently through this debate and our arguments. While you wouldn't know it from listening to the anti-immigrant, anti-refugee, anti-Muslim rhetoric during this presidential rhetoric during this presidential debate.

1:26:06

This is an issue that does not matter whether you are a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent. It's an issue about people, about economic opportunities and our values as Americans. Let me level with you -- and several of you asked this question. My family and I also came to the United States with a green card. I could argue that we came in, quote unquote, the right way, and be fine with closing the door behind us. But I'm also painfully aware that if my parents migrated today instead of the 1970s, I wouldn't be here with you. My siblings would not be teachers, biochemists, health professionals, or small business owners. But I continue to believe in the promise of America. I believe that people like Mercedes Garcia, an aspiring citizen who has been in the United States for 18 years, should have the same opportunities that my family did. Mercedes is a single parent because her husband was deported five years ago, and she hasn't seen him since then. She's raising three American daughters.

The oldest is 18 and will be voting in Colorado for the first time on November 8th. Mercedes is a registered nurse in Mexico and wants so much to contribute and give her skills to this country. When we've been on the right side of history, we've updated our laws to include people, not to exclude them. Tonight's debate boils down to this. The difference is Angie and I want Mercedes Perez and her family to stay together. They want her citizen children to grow up without their parents or to also be deported. The

difference is we recognize that America as a whole benefits when people like Mercedes can fulfill her full potential and pay even more taxes. Our opponents want to deny Americans those contributions. Providing a path to citizenship sends a powerful message to undocumented immigrants that we are one community, one country. They are part of us, and we should have the ability to be fully invested in the country we all call home. Please vote "Yes" for the motion to provide undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship.

1:28:08

John Donovan:

Thank you, Marielena Hincapié. And here to persuade you to vote against the motion in his closing statement, Steven Camarota, Director of Research at the Center for Immigration Studies.

Steven Camarota:

Well, thank you. And again, I want to thank Intelligence Squared. Look, I've spent a lot of time talking to you about data and why I think that the case is -- it should not be that we should let all illegal immigrants stay and give them citizenship. But instead, I'm going to tell you a quick story. It's a true story. I knew someone in this situation. I actually knew two people in this situation. Imagine, two people came from India as guest workers to the United States, and these two people worked as guest workers for the six years that they were allowed. Now, remember, before coming, they promised a consul officer that they would go home after six years. Both of them had girlfriends. Both of them wanted to stay. Who can blame them, right? But one said, "Well, look. I've given my word. I have to go home. I have to abide by the rules."

And he went back to India. The other one didn't. He didn't get married. He just hung out with his girlfriend. He got a job. He delivered pizza. And the point is, he's still here. He's been here for a long time. He's had several girlfriends in that time period. Now, the thing about it is, if you buy the argument of our opponents, the right thing -- the morally right thing to do is to allow the person who violated what he said he was going to do -- the person who has consistently violated the law for about eight years, in this case -- that person not only gets to stay, but he gets citizenship. And the poor slob who did what he promised, who obeyed the rules -- is stuck back in India, thinking, "Well, I'm a sucker. If I had only broken the law, if I had only broken my promise, if I had only violated the law" -- if our opponents are successful -- "I could have stayed too, and not just be allowed to stay as a guest worker. I'd get American citizenship at the end of this process." So, when you think about people, think about those people, and think about that poor slob in India, who did what he was supposed to do and now is so much worse off -- if our opponents did get their way.

1:30:21

John Donovan:

Thank you, Steve Camarota.

[applause]

The motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship. And here making her closing statement in support of the motion, Angie Kelley, senior vice president at the Center for American Progress.

Angela Kelley:

Thank you. So, I want to give a brief summary, I think, of what policy we've been talking about. And I also want to get a little bit personal. So, the good news is that we can do this, right? We don't have to choose between having border security or having an unlimited number of people coming into this country, and a path to citizenship. The best way is to enact reform that transforms what we all agree is a chaotic and broken system into an orderly and controlled one, if we combine enforcement at the border and at the workplace with legalization and citizenship, then we can actually have a sensible system that works for our country.

1:31:15

The three legs of legal immigration, dealing sensibly with the 11 million and robust security at the border and the place of employment will actually solve the problem. And it is a question of fairness, absolutely. People who've been waiting in line, absolutely, we should -- if they still qualify -- have them come to the United States, have them reunite with a family member, have them contribute. But it's also a question of fairness of the people who have been in this country because they didn't want to be apart from their loved one, because they had to send their kid here because of the violence in their country. And so what are we going to do with those folks? That's the question you have to answer today. It's the 11 million. So my husband's an ESL teacher, and he has a lot of immigrant students who come here from Central America. And about a year ago, his student was a senior, Esteban, came into his classroom and started crying. And he said, "I was sent to this country because I was being targeted for being in a gang."

He wasn't in a gang. He was being targeted to join a gang. "My father just got pulled out of our shop and was shot in the middle of the street. My father is murdered." So Esteban didn't know what to do except to keep on working and studying. And he did graduate, and he did go to college, and he did so because people surrounded him and said, "This is someone that we want to invest in." So the question is, what are we going to do? Are we going to deport the Estebans, or are we going to invest in them and they'll contribute back --

John Donovan:

If you can wrap it up right there.

Angela Kelley:

-- it's just a fundamental question of fairness all overall.

John Donovan:
Thank you, Angie Kelly.

[applause]

John Donovan:
Rich Lowry, in fairness, I'm going to give you two and a half minutes if you need it.

1:33:12

Rich Lowry:
Well, if you all will allow me --

John Donovan:
Let me first introduce you just for the record. Here making his closing statement against the motion, "Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship" -- here making his closing statement against the motion, here is Rich Low -- Row -- here making his closing -- see, the clock gets off, and I lose everything.

Angela Kelley:
Sorry.

John Donovan:
No, it's okay. Here making his closing statement against the motion, Rich Lowry, editor of the National Review.

[applause]

Rich Lowry:
Well, if you all allow me one last Donald Trump-esque point, I'm sure all the polls are going to show that Steve and I won this debate tonight. But let me say how much I appreciated this exchange. You guys were awesome, and it was great being up here with you tonight.

Female Speaker:
Yes, right back at you.

Rich Lowry:
And we have a very diverse audience here tonight, all sorts of points of origin, all sorts of points of view.

1:34:10

But submit to you there's likely one respect in which this audience is pretty uniform. I imagine people here are overwhelmingly have college degrees and are doing pretty well in life or you wouldn't be in Manhattan in the first place. And I submit to you it's -- it

can be difficult for people like us to realize how hard it can be for someone actually to get a low-skilled job in this country if he or she is down on her luck. I used to do some work with an outfit here in Manhattan helping men who might have been temporarily homeless, might have had a drinking problem, might have had a problem with addiction, get back on their feet and get a job again.

These guys were applying to be janitors. They would have been so grateful to go somewhere and sweep a floor and get paid something for it. And what we are doing in effect is importing a massive amount of foreign labor to compete with those guys. Why? Of all the people in the country are we going to have an immigration system that makes it harder on them? We're not doing that to CEOs. We're not doing that to lawyers. We're not doing that to accountants. And there is no other country in the world that does it this way, that just willy-nilly let's people come and stay if they happen to get here. Canada, nice open Canada, what do they do? They actually emphasize skills. They have a system that emphasizes bringing the people they want to bring who can thrive in this country and not make it harder for the people further down the income safe -- scale.

1:36:02

So I say, for that reason and all the others that we have deduced this evening, this resolution should, must, and has failed.

John Donovan:

Thank you, Rich Lowry. And that concludes round three of this Intelligence Squared U.S. debate where the motion is "Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship." Okay. We're going to have you go back to the voting now. Now, what I want to explain is the way that victory is determined in one of our debates is it's the difference between the first and the second votes. So we're looking to see how the votes have moved, how they have changed. And it's the team whose numbers change the most in percentage points who will be declared our winner. So take a look again at the screens. Push number one if you want to vote yes for the motion, push number two if you want to vote no, and push number three if you became or remain undecided.

I said at the beginning what we aspire to at Intelligence Squared is a -- is just a respectful but robust argumentation where the two sides bring facts and logic but they bring a civility to it. But that doesn't mean they can't get tough. And in terms of what we aim for here, tonight may have been one of the best nights we've ever had. I want to congratulate all four of you for doing this.

[applause]

John Donovan:

Really. It was even done with a sense of humor. And also to everybody who got up and asked a question, including the gentleman with the question that I passed. There's no

disrespect meant whatsoever in passing on a question. It takes a lot of guts to do that. And the questions were -- really served the conversation tonight. So thank you to everybody who got up and asked a question.

1:37:42

[applause]

John Donovan:

I want to -- I want to say this: You know, this app I've been talking about and the fact that we've done more than 120 debates, and we have many, many, many more to come, we're very proud of that record and of our library debates already. And you really can see all of them on our website, and they really are going into schools now. But I want to say this, that we do all of this as a nonprofit organization. Intelligence Squared is a nonprofit organization, and we depend enormously on donations from members of the public. So -- and we really mean it, and I know it's a cliché and no donation is too small. Really, no donation is too small. So you can -- you can make a donation by going to our website, and it'll be obvious there where you can donate. And it would help, you know, our plans for the future are just to do more and more of these and potentially more in a year.

And we love having audiences like you connect with us this way. So check out also our web -- our website now has a way that you can log in and join the debate and actually get a score from us on your level of debate and civility, not just from us but from your fellow participants. It's a website where we're trying to actually crystallize the idea of civil debate and that everybody can take part, and that's all of you. So take a look at that. After the election, we're going to be going to Washington, D.C., for our second debate there this season in partnership with the National Constitution Center. And the issue we're going to be looking at gerrymandering. We're going to be looking at what the impact on the political center is of gerrymandering. And we know that President Obama has recently talked about the issue. And he says after he leaves office, redistricting reform is going to be one of his top priorities. Among our debaters, we're going to have Chris Jankowski. He is the former executive director of the Redistricting Majority Project, known as REDMAP.

1:39:30

And also David Daily who's author of a book, "Raf **ck" I can't actually say it in front of everybody. But the -- the last part of it ends in u-c-k-e-d. And it's a book that examines the particular effort made in -- after the 2010 election, a very deeply reported book on how the Republican party attacked the issue of redistricting to its benefit. On November 29th, we're going to be back here at the Kaufman. The motion we're going to be debating will be "Obama's foreign policy is a failure." And we think that's going to be quite a hot ticket also. And to get tickets, you can go to our website and find out the rest of our season lineup there. Okay. So I now have the final results. The motion is this: Give undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship. Remember, it's the team

whose numbers change the most between the first and the second vote that determines our winner. In the first vote on the motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship, 66 percent voted yes, agreed with this motion, 10 percent were against voting no, and 24 percent were undecided. That's the first vote. Let's look at the second vote. The team arguing for the motion, their first vote was 66 percent. Their second vote was 55 percent. They lost 11 percentage points. Let's look at the team against the motion. Their first vote was 10 percent. Their second vote was 37 percent. They went up 27 percentage points.

[applause]

The team arguing no to the motion: Give Undocumented Immigrants a Path to Citizenship are our winners. Our congratulations to them. Thank you from me, John Donovan, and Intelligence Squared U.S. We'll see you next time.

1:41:22

[end of transcript]