



State of California

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

June 18, 2002

The Honorable Gray Davis
Governor of California

The Honorable John Burton
President pro Tempore of the Senate
and members of the Senate

The Honorable Herb Wesson
Speaker of the Assembly
and members of the Assembly

The Honorable James L. Brulte
Senate Minority Leader

The Honorable Dave Cox
Assembly Minority Leader

Dear Governor and Members of the Legislature:

To its peril, California has not come to terms with the extraordinary challenges of a large population of immigrants. Increasing globalization and the corresponding economic, political, and social uncertainties require California to strengthen its communities and ensure that newcomers become confident Californians. By not squarely dealing with these challenges, the State will ultimately increase public costs, and delay the enormous benefits that immigration can bring to individuals and communities.

Immigration in California – from the days of the Bear Flag Republic and evolving since September 11 – has spawned emotional controversies. Newcomers are blamed for the problems associated with rapid population growth. Poor immigrants increase pressure on the public safety net until they become self-sufficient. Cultural differences create tensions. And at least some of the anxiety over immigration is linked to the large numbers of immigrants who are in the country in violation of federal immigration law.

But these controversies do not diminish the need to deal with the challenges facing a modern California in which one in four residents is foreign-born. For these immigrants to be successful they must learn to speak English, improve their education and job skills, and understand the law and what is expected of them. But California has not aligned existing public and community efforts in ways that effectively integrates immigrants – and it must do so to accelerate the transition from newcomer to responsible community member.

This enormous task is greatly complicated – legally, politically and even practically – by public policies that are confusing and even contradictory. The challenge is further magnified by the nearly 25 percent of California's 8.6 million immigrants who do not have legal documentation.

Most of the immigrants who are here “illegally” had legal documentation at some point, or belong to families that include legal residents and even citizens. In reality, most “undocumented” residents are part of their communities in virtually every other way. They are employees and taxpayers. They are parents of schoolchildren. They are church members, volunteers and consumers.

But because of federal laws – which have failed to provide necessary workers or enable communities to engage all residents – many immigrants are living in a quasi-legal California. They may qualify for medical assistance, but are afraid to ask. They may want to learn skills that are in demand by California employers, but are not eligible for job training. They may want to become citizens, but may never be given the chance.

Many community leaders – including law enforcement officials – no longer distinguish between documented and undocumented immigrants. Clearly many businesses are not supporting laws against employing undocumented workers. And increasingly, to achieve public policy

goals, services are being provided to undocumented residents. It is not just that some immigrants are ignoring federal immigration law, but the law – because it is so flawed – is overlooked by political, civic, community and business leaders.

California did not create this problem. But it must impose some rationality on the confusion of policies that make it difficult to integrate newcomers into California's communities and has resulted in 2 million of its residents not having legal immigration status, even though they are contributing community members by so many other measures.

The Commission recommends that policies affecting immigrants be linked to community priorities. The Commission begins with basic principles: All persons deserve respect and dignity. All residents are obligated to be responsible community members. And new Californians need the same opportunities as their native-born neighbors to become self-reliant.

To put these principles into operation, the Commission believes the State should establish a residency program. This effort would give priority access to existing public services to immigrants who demonstrate commitment to becoming responsible citizens. The proposal, which is detailed in this report, would transform a set of now-inconsistent programs into a deliberate policy to accelerate the integration of immigrants – socially, economically and civilly.

Since public resources are always inadequate to meet demands, the residency program would reflect smart priorities, investing first in those who want to be responsible and contribute. Given the potential benefits, this program should be an imperative for the large majority of immigrants who are documented.

Because so many undocumented immigrants are effectively Californians, and intend to remain Californians, and would be documented if federal laws were meeting California's needs, eligibility in the residency program should be extended to them as well.

The State cannot quietly accept or suffer the consequences of federal policies that fail our families, our communities, and our businesses. California needs to work aggressively to reform federal immigration laws to serve California. In the meantime, the State should recognize that many undocumented immigrants are working, paying taxes, and belong to families that are setting new roots. Denying them services and opportunities only delays their integration, reduces their contributions and bloats state costs. So until federal policies are reformed, the residency program should include undocumented immigrants.

When federal immigration laws are aligned with California's needs, there will not be so many undocumented immigrants because there will not be a demand for undocumented workers. There will be fewer families with conflicting immigration statuses and there will be more "residents" advancing to "citizens." At that time, local law enforcement, employers and civic leaders would be expected to renew their commitment to immigration policies and California could focus solely on integrating documented immigrants.

Finally, public programs – such as education, job training, consumer protections – need to work for all Californians and that means working for immigrants. So in addition to access, administrators need to ensure that services efficiently help residents grow from where they are to where they want to be.

Prior to September 11, federal policy-makers were beginning to recognize the failures of federal immigration laws. Since the terrorist attacks, the focus has shifted to the failure of federal agencies to regulate borders, screen immigrants and enforce time limits. This is one more reason for California policy-makers – in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. – to work in concert toward policies that support our common goals of safe, healthy and prosperous communities.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Alpert
Chairman

We The People

Helping Newcomers Become Californians

June 2002

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Executive Summary

California history is enriched by the contributions of immigrants. Some newcomers arrived from across the sea; others journeyed from across the continent. Many arrived generations ago, and more arrive every day. Some 8.6 million first-generation immigrants live in California, representing about one in four residents.¹

Immigrants feature prominently in California's contemporary and future prosperity. Helping them integrate – meaning to develop a sense of belonging, to take responsibility for the quality of life in their neighborhoods, and to seize opportunities for success – is a key challenge for state and local leaders.

But California does not have deliberate policies to integrate immigrants into communities and capture their contributions. There are plenty of public programs. But eligibility rules are not consistent or aligned to a specific set of goals. The State has recently offered subsidized college tuition to undocumented residents, but those same people are not eligible for job training that will lead to skilled employment.

While there is never enough money to serve everyone who wants help, the State does not set priorities based on who wants to become a citizen, who is making contributions and who is a responsible community member. And while a growing number of people served by public programs are immigrants, little has been done to ensure those services are delivered in ways that are effective with people who are learning English or are unfamiliar with bureaucracies or American culture.

The greatest challenge – the byproduct of federal immigration laws that have not provided enough workers for California's booming economy – is how to treat an estimated 2 million undocumented immigrants. In the long run, many will become legal residents and citizens. But today, they are expected to live in the shadows.

All of these complexities make it difficult – yet essential – for California to develop a coherent strategy for accelerating the integration of immigrants into the economy and their communities.

Principles to Guide Policy

In recent years, immigration as a political issue has been divisive in California, inciting bitter debates.

In this study, the Commission distilled the following principles, which could guide a new public discussion.

- **All persons deserve dignity and respect.** Regardless of whether they are in the United States for a day or a lifetime, each individual should be free from abuse and threats to their physical safety and property.
- **All residents are obligated to be responsible community members.** These obligations include obeying the law, taking care of family members, becoming involved in the community, learning English and eventually establishing citizenship.
- **New Californians need the same opportunity as others to become self-reliant and responsible community members.** Newcomers deserve opportunities to get a job, find a home and provide for their families.

From Division to Potential

Discussions about immigrants often are shaped by immigration “status” – are they legal or illegal immigrants? But this distinction is problematic for many reasons. As an alternative, the Commission developed a set of principles that can guide public policy as it relates to immigrants and communities.

No Clear Line between Legal and Illegal Immigrants

Californians have great respect for hard-working immigrants who have come to the United States legally. Yet immigrants who have entered the country surreptitiously are often condemned. While the law is clear on who is in the country legally and who is not, the realities of that law are complex.

Immigration Status is Inconsistent. Many immigrants who entered illegally have since established legal residency. Others have lost their permission to remain. The majority of undocumented immigrants live in families with mixed status. The husband is legal; the wife is not. The children are legal; the parents are not.

Public Policy Also is Inconsistent. Consider the following:

- Federal and state laws conflict. Federal law excludes some immigrants from receiving social security benefits, but California offers them supplemental payments.
- Not even health care policy is consistent. Illegal immigrants are excluded from most Medi-Cal services, but are targeted for services through community medical clinics.
- Some policies punish legal and illegal immigrants alike. Welfare reform was crafted to help the most vulnerable residents become self-reliant, but many legal immigrants are excluded from participating, just like illegal immigrants.
- Law enforcement looks the other way. Local law enforcement officials complain that enforcing immigration policies hinder their ability to protect public safety.
- The public spends millions to patrol the U.S.-Mexico border, but even the INS looks the other way when otherwise law-abiding illegal immigrants come to their attention.
- Ironically, illegal immigrants are taxed. While it is illegal for them to have a job, the IRS and the State collect income tax, and will issue refund checks to legal and illegal immigrants alike.

Moreover, policies that focus on the distinction between documented and undocumented immigrants often frustrate the ability of communities to meet public priorities. With more than 8 million immigrants in California, some 2 million or more here illegally, goals for public health, education, welfare and safety are frequently compromised because communities are precluded from serving undocumented residents.

A More Meaningful Distinction

The Commission found that communities have begun to make new distinctions among their residents. Residents who are responsible community members can count on support from community leaders. Local sheriffs, for instance, make a distinction between law-abiding residents and bad actors, regardless of immigration status.

The Commission believes the distinction between responsible community members and those who flout state and local ordinances and community values is more significant than legal status. Three opportunities merit attention:

1. All residents, including immigrants, must recognize their responsibilities to support broad community goals.
2. Communities and the State must provide opportunities for all residents, including immigrants, to move toward and maintain self-reliance.
3. The State must call attention to barriers in federal policy that restrict the ability of communities and their residents, particularly immigrants, to meet shared responsibilities and build a high-quality life.

Immigration is Defined by Critical Tensions

Immigrants have made California strong, and they have engendered controversy. In California immigrants perform important, often vital roles in the workforce. They create new trade opportunities with their native countries and introduce innovation into the marketplace. And immigrants bolster the quality of life by being responsible community members, working hard and believing in the “American Dream.”

Yet immigrants also compete for scarce resources – whether it is land, jobs, or desks in a crowded classroom. California’s rapid population growth – through immigration and native births – has fueled rapid urban development, traffic congestion, and increased housing costs. Immigrants, rightly or wrongly, are targeted for aggravating already difficult fiscal, land-use and public benefit decisions.

Immigrants are pulled into ageless controversies over the public’s obligation to the poor. Many come to the U.S. to escape poverty. They struggle to find adequate employment, provide for their families and pay their bills. Some immigrants are eligible for public assistance because of their age, because they have U.S.-born children or for other reasons – magnifying the challenges of eliminating poverty with limited public funds.

Immigrants also have challenged social norms and altered community rhythms. Controversies erupt when immigrants are unfamiliar with local laws, such as limits on the number of inhabitants who can occupy a home, or the requirement to buy car insurance. Similarly, new neighbors challenge long-time residents by speaking different languages, practicing different religions and following different cultural norms. Differences breed mistrust and occasionally conflict.

Because of these tensions, political debates over public spending, resource limitations and the declining quality of life become debates over

Immigration and Public Security

Following the attacks of September 11, Americans and their leaders are increasingly aware of how a fluid immigration system frustrates efforts to protect public safety.

Building impervious borders would be expensive and limit essential trade. Fortifying federal law enforcement activities is only a partial answer. Law enforcement alone will have great difficulty ferreting out the few among millions who may bring harm to the nation.

The Commission’s recommendations in this report would improve national security in two ways:

1. ***More immigrants would become actively involved in local communities.*** The Commission envisions policies that create incentives for immigrants to become responsible community members and make a commitment to their communities.
2. ***The public would support immigration law.*** The Commission calls for aligning federal immigration and naturalization policies with community goals. This alignment would put the public on the same side of the law as immigration officials.

No one has all the answers to how California and the nation can best ensure safety while supporting essential movement of people and goods across our borders. But the public and public officials must ask difficult questions and devise practical strategies for seeking answers.

immigrants. These tensions become rallying points for anti-immigrant fervor and rubicons for immigrant rights advocates. Policy-makers, confronted by these conflicts, must maneuver this political minefield while attempting to meet the needs of their communities. In some instances policy-makers have allowed documented immigrants to receive some benefits while undocumented immigrants remain ineligible. In

other instances services are extended or denied to documented and undocumented immigrants alike.

***California Commission of
Immigration and Housing: 1913-1945***

At one point, California had an agency dedicated to integrating immigrants. For 32 years, the Commission of Immigration and Housing supported the “Americanization” of immigrants. Its goal was “to encourage the immigrant who regards this country as his home to become an American citizen.” The Commission oversaw complaints, conditions of labor camps, housing and immigrant education. Its functions were integrated into other state agencies and it was disbanded in 1945.

At the community level, in part because of the contributions immigrants make, civic leaders often do not distinguish between those with and those without documents. Local leaders are more concerned about immigrants who compromise public safety, who flout local ordinances or who otherwise undermine community goals, regardless of their immigration status. Some work deliberately to ensure that immigrants fit

into their new community and are able to contribute to their neighborhoods. They are helping families participate in the local economy and community activities, whether or not they carry a green card. Of course, in some communities, when tensions mount, the focus shifts to limiting the number of immigrants allowed to enter the country, or removing immigrants who are in the country illegally.

A Jumble of Immigrant-Related Policies

How immigrants are defined by public policies – and treated by public programs – is the result of a complex array of laws, rules, and regulations that have evolved over years. They have been put in place through legislation, ballot initiatives, court rulings and bureaucratic practice. Interpretation and application of these rules vary across the state, leading to confusion and apprehension on the part of immigrants, other residents and public officials.

Latino immigrants tell of being recruited into English-language classes by local community colleges, while simultaneously targeted by law enforcement officers who wait for them to drive to work or class. Immigrants working in high-technology fields are confused when job or family changes stress the web of local, state and federal rules that allow them to live and work in California. And immigrants from South East Asia and Africa express humiliation and fear when prosecuted for

conducting cultural practices that conflict with health and safety standards in their adopted communities.

Long-standing residents can be equally frustrated by ambiguity in public policies. Employers are told to enforce immigration laws that challenge their ability to recruit workers, yet are not enforced by local officials. Educators are distraught when meritorious students face unnecessary hurdles to their education. And others are angered when long-time residents are denied public assistance while scarce resources are shared with itinerant families.

Embedded in California's jumble of immigrant-related policies is a fundamental dichotomy - immigrants as assets or immigrants as a hindrance.

As assets, immigrants are credited for their contributions to the economy and community. As obstacles, immigrants - and federal immigration policies that allow them to enter the country - are blamed for social, economic and environmental woes. The choice is often cast as stem the tide of immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants, or fuel California's economic engines with immigrant labor and innovation.

This dichotomy fails to recognize the realities: Many families include a mix of immigrants, including undocumented immigrants and native-born citizens. In some areas immigrant labor is the backbone of the local economy. And they contribute beyond their tax payments and labor. They are parents and grandparents, mentors and neighborhood leaders. And more significantly, most immigrant families progress, from unskilled to skilled labor. Many include entrepreneurs.

Equally significant, this dichotomy does not reflect the full cost of immigration when immigrants fail to integrate into a community. When policy options are cast as either fewer immigrants or more rights for immigrants, policy-makers miss opportunities to explore how immigrant and immigration policies can work together to promote community goals.

Guiding Values

In previous reports on community-based services, the Commission has identified the importance of commonly held goals. In this project the Commission discovered that community goals for immigrants are the same as for native-born residents.

California's primary goal should be to support the ability of all residents, including immigrants, to:

- Be safe.
- Be healthy.
- Remain out of trouble.
- Live in safe, affordable housing.
- Be economically self-sufficient.
- Participate in self-governance.
- Have a sense of belonging and responsibility to the community.

A Policy that Promotes Quality Communities

A coherent immigrant policy should establish clear goals for immigrants and clarify how the State and communities should respond to their needs. By better meeting the needs of specific residents, this policy would improve the effectiveness of public programs for all. A consistent policy could better communicate public expectations for all residents, including immigrants, as well as the opportunities available to all residents.

Immigrant Responsibilities

Immigration should support the ability of California's communities to realize goals for a high quality of life. All residents, particularly immigrants, must make a commitment to being good community members. They should:

- Learn English.
- Obey the law and support public safety.
- Know their rights.
- Be responsible family members.
- Be engaged in civic affairs.
- Maximize their contributions to ensure a high quality of life in their community.

Immigrants and the communities in which they live are equally responsible for these goals. The Commission has identified three elements of a policy that will assist more immigrants to achieve economic self-sufficiency and improve the effectiveness of public programs for all residents.

1. Residents, including immigrants, must recognize their responsibilities to support quality communities.
2. Community leaders and members must recognize community responsibilities to respond to the needs of all residents, including immigrants.
3. The State must work to lower barriers – particularly in federal law – that restrict the ability of immigrants and their communities to meet shared responsibilities and to be successful.

Recognizing the Responsibilities of Immigrants

Finding 1: Immigrant policies fail to encourage immigrants to fully participate in their communities, be contributing community members, and become citizens.

Immigrants, as with other residents, have a responsibility to seek out opportunities, to take advantage of available programs and to make good use of limited public resources. The American Dream is the product of opportunity and initiative. The public sector can help provide opportunity; individuals are responsible for contributing initiative.

But newcomers often are unaware of how they can participate in their new communities and what is expected of them as responsible community members. California can explicitly recognize that immigrants make important contributions when they are successful. And it should proactively identify the avenues available to immigrants to help them

succeed and ensure those avenues are effective. But ultimately, immigrants are responsible for their success.

California can establish reasonable expectations for newcomers that help them understand what it means to be responsible community members, guide them to opportunities that can promote success and capture the contributions that individual success brings to communities.

And California can reinforce those expectations by rewarding responsible community members. Policy-makers can replace the inconsistent jumble of public policies that determine eligibility for public programs with a consistent policy that rewards immigrants who recognize their responsibilities and restricts benefits to others. California can make a commitment to invest in immigrants who are committed to helping improve California. Those who chose not to commit to be responsible community members receive lower priority to access public sector services.

More than three-fourths of immigrants in California are legal residents. California can establish a residency program that would give priority for public services to legal immigrants who make a commitment to California. The State must also advocate before federal officials to reform a system that results in so many undocumented immigrants. Until immigration policies are aligned with state and community goals, California should, where not in violation of federal law, extend benefits to undocumented immigrants who make a commitment to their communities.

Recommendation 1: California should establish goals for immigrant integration and create incentives for immigrants to achieve those goals. The Governor and Legislature should:

- ***Establish the Golden State Residency Program.*** The Governor and Legislature should establish a program that encourages immigrants to establish residency and become citizens. It should create incentives for immigrants to integrate and support those who contribute to their communities. Participation should be open to documented immigrants – and until federal policies are reformed, undocumented immigrants. Criteria for participation could include:
 - ✓ ***Commitment to establish citizenship.*** The program could be limited to immigrants who demonstrate they want to become U.S. citizens and enforce a time frame for establishing citizenship, once a person is eligible.
 - ✓ ***Responsibility to local community.*** The program could ensure that participants have a history of paying taxes, are law abiding,

and are employed or engaged in workforce development and training programs, where appropriate.

- ✓ **Proficiency in English.** The program could ensure that participants have practical English skills or are actively engaged in English-language training where appropriate.
- ✓ **Participation in civic affairs.** The program could ensure that participants are actively involved in local civic affairs through public, volunteer and community-based organizations and other opportunities.
- ✓ **Responsibility for children and other family members.** The program should ensure that immigrants are fully responsible for the needs and nurturing of their children and care of other dependent family members. Children should be enrolled in school, in a health plan and have adequate housing.

Participants in the Golden State Residency Program would be eligible for a range of benefits comparable to those afforded citizens. The program should take adequate measures to ensure that information pertaining to the legal status of immigrants is kept confidential and that participation in the program does not expose participants to an increased risk of adverse actions by federal immigration officials. Finding 2 discusses the opportunities available to participants in detail.

- **Develop a public awareness campaign on the rights and responsibilities of immigrants.** The State should develop – or encourage foundations and civic organizations to develop – a series of public awareness campaigns on the following issues:
 - ✓ The importance of proficiency in English, and the value of bilingual skills.
 - ✓ Immigrant rights, including freedom from abuse and harassment, and protection from fraud.
 - ✓ Immigrant responsibilities to their communities, including the need to pay taxes, be law abiding, secure employment and establish and maintain economic self-sufficiency.
 - ✓ Parental and family responsibilities and child welfare laws.
 - ✓ Avenues to civic involvement and ways to promote community improvement.
 - ✓ Current and historic contributions of immigrants to California and individual communities.

Supporting Immigrant Success

Finding 2: California has an obligation to help immigrants succeed. But policies that ration access to public services hinder many from becoming responsible, successful community members.

Public programs can help poor immigrants live above minimum standards and develop the skills to be economically self-sufficient. Communities have a stake in ensuring that immigrants access those programs and benefit from them. Without conscientious attention to helping immigrants become self-sufficient, communities face larger and more enduring costs associated with unemployment, inadequate health care, overcrowded and unsafe housing and other concerns.

But a number of barriers limit the effectiveness of public programs. Language and cultural differences, migratory tenancy, and the lack of shared expectations and respect confound efforts to serve some residents. Eligibility restrictions dictate who can be served with public funds and who cannot. A number of communities are working around these barriers. Local leaders recognize that public goals in health care, education and employment are undermined when large numbers of residents are prevented from receiving assistance.

The bottom line is that the public sector cannot afford to ignore the needs of immigrants. But neither can it afford to offer unbridled access to public services. A prudent investment in immigrants is necessary to safeguard the future of a state with one-quarter of its residents who are newcomers.

Where not in violation of federal law, California can reform its eligibility rules to offer public services to immigrants who are enrolled in the Golden State Residency Program. Those immigrants who have demonstrated a commitment to be responsible community members merit an investment in their future.

Community Responsibilities

California's communities must not squander the opportunities that all residents, including immigrants, represent to enrich the quality of life.

Each community should ensure that residents have adequate opportunity to be self-reliant and receive appropriate assistance to quickly achieve and maintain self-reliance.

Communities should:

- Be aware of the needs of residents, including immigrants.
- Provide adequate housing.
- Ensure health care.
- Inform all residents of their rights.
- Offer English training that works for immigrants.
- Provide job training and assistance.
- Hire sufficient staff who are culturally proficient to work with community members.
- Maximize the opportunities for all residents, including immigrants, to be self-reliant and successful.

Recommendation 2: California must prudently invest in immigrants who make a commitment to become citizens and support their communities. Policy-makers and the public must ensure that public programs effectively address community needs. The Governor and Legislature should:

- **Align public policy with community goals through the Golden State Residency Program.** Immigrants who commit to the residency program described in Recommendation 1 should be given priority over other immigrants to receive public services.
- ✓ **Education.** Participants should be eligible for all education benefits afforded citizens, beyond what is currently available under federal and state law. Educational providers should assess barriers that may prevent immigrants from benefiting from educational programs and ensure that those programs effectively and quickly promote self-reliance.
- ✓ **Health Care.** Participants should be eligible for all health care programs available to citizens, including Medi-Cal. State health officials should ensure that health programs focus on prevention and efficiently address the health needs of immigrants in the residency program.
- ✓ **Welfare and Social Services.** Participants should be eligible for all welfare and social service programs available to citizens. State administrators should ensure that welfare and social service programs quickly provide the support and guidance necessary to move families quickly toward self-reliance.
- ✓ **Workforce Development.** Participants should be eligible for all workforce development programs that promote employment and economic self-reliance. State administrators should assess the effectiveness of existing programs and propose reforms necessary to effectively serve native-born and immigrant residents.
- ✓ **Civic Participation.** Participants should be eligible to serve on all non-elected boards and commissions that are open to citizens. The right to vote should remain an exclusive right of citizens.
- ✓ **Driver's License.** The Governor and the Legislature should enact legislation to make participants in the residency program eligible for a driver's license or state identification card.

While the residency program should be open to all immigrants, participation should be limited to those who make a commitment to California. Other immigrants would receive lower priority for services through public programs.

- ❑ **Ensure that state programs effectively support community goals.** Each state agency should review how effectively it supports the self-reliance of immigrants. The following agencies should pay particular attention to the needs of immigrants and community goals:
 - ✓ **State and Consumer Services Agency.** The agency should assess the effectiveness of efforts to protect immigrants from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation. It should review credential and license requirements to ensure that well-trained immigrants can work in their professional fields while upgrading or assessing their skills to meet current standards.
 - ✓ **Department of Finance.** The department should annually report the number of immigrants who have established naturalized citizenship, the number of non-citizens in the state, and trends in the percentage of citizens and non-citizens living in poverty and participating in publicly funded health and welfare programs.
 - ✓ **Labor and Workforce Development Agencies.** California's labor and workforce development agencies should ensure that immigrants have access to the training and skill development resources needed to become or remain economically self-sufficient. They should ensure that immigrants fully understand workplace rights and responsibilities and receive adequate protection on the job.
 - ✓ **California Community Colleges and Adult Schools** Programs that provide English-language training should develop and implement plans to increase the number of students who become proficient in English each year for the next 10 years.
- ❑ **Create the California Commission on Immigrants.** The Commission should be charged with three fundamental challenges:
 - ✓ **Create a statewide dialogue.** The Commission should promote public awareness of the contributions of immigrants and how immigration can support community goals.
 - ✓ **Advocate for effective programs.** The Commission should work to improve the performance of public programs that promote immigrant responsibilities to their communities and community responsibilities to immigrants. It should pay particular attention to growing the role of community-based organizations in promoting the integration of immigrants and addressing barriers to citizenship.
 - ✓ **Monitor progress.** The Commission should identify ways to define and measure immigrant integration and self-reliance and report progress to policy-makers and the public. The Commission should identify ways the naturalization process and INS services could be improved to better serve new Californians.

Components of a California Residency Program

A California Residency Program that provides incentives for immigrants to integrate and supports those who contribute to their communities should be made up of the following components.

Participation should be open to documented immigrants and undocumented immigrants – until federal policies are reformed. Criteria for participation could include:

- ✓ ***Enrollment in English-language training.*** The program could ensure that participants are actively working to develop functional English ability where appropriate.
- ✓ ***Commitment to establish citizenship.*** The program could be limited to immigrants who demonstrate they want to be an American and enforce a time frame for individuals to become citizens, once they are eligible.
- ✓ ***Participation in civic affairs.*** The program could ensure that participants are actively involved in local civic affairs through public, volunteer and community-based organizations and opportunities.
- ✓ ***Responsibility to local community.*** The program could ensure that participants have a history of paying taxes, are law abiding and are employed or engaged in workforce development and training programs, where appropriate.

Participants should receive the following benefits:

- ✓ ***Eligibility for public services.*** The program should allow participants to access the full array of public services available to citizens.
- ✓ ***Eligibility for naturalization support.*** The program should assist immigrants to quickly and efficiently navigate the naturalization process. It should develop working agreements with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to develop a “fast track” naturalization process for participants and include a revolving loan program to help immigrants pay naturalization fees.

The program should take adequate measures to ensure that information pertaining to the legal status of immigrants is kept confidential and that participation in the program does not expose participants to an increased risk of adverse actions by federal immigration officials.

Align Immigrant and Immigration Policies with Community Goals

Finding 3: Efforts to build strong communities are undermined by federal policies that limit prudent investments in immigrant self-reliance, fail to create incentives for immigrants to become citizens and forgo opportunities to ensure immigrants are responsible community members.

Federal, state and local policies often hinder the success of immigrants and the subsequent success of communities. California can address barriers in state and local policies through a residency program that creates opportunities for immigrants to benefit from public investments. But federal immigration policies will continue to frustrate state and community goals.

Federal immigration rules limit the ability of California employers to attract adequate numbers of legal immigrant workers. Some 2 million undocumented immigrants in the state, with the majority gainfully employed, is evidence of a flawed immigration policy. The State is restricted by federal law from supporting high-achieving students who could benefit from higher education. The public benefits of universal health care, workforce development, and adequate housing are beyond reach because federal regulations exclude a significant portion of the population from benefiting from public programs.

And extensive waiting periods and an impenetrable federal bureaucracy prevent immigrants from efficiently moving through the residency and naturalization process, delaying their ability to become committed citizens.

California can promote the alignment of federal policies with broad public goals for immigrants and communities. California should seek the support of the President and Congress to address those federal policies that limit the benefits of immigration in California.

The Governor, the Legislature and community leaders can solicit support in Washington to ensure that immigration and immigrant policies reflect the following values:

- Legal immigration should provide an adequate supply of workers to meet workforce needs that cannot be met by existing residents or workforce development programs.
- The federal government should ensure access to high-quality, efficient assistance throughout the immigration and naturalization process.
- Immigration, residency and citizenship decisions at the federal level should reflect state and community interests in recruiting and retaining individuals who contribute to their communities. The naturalization process should create incentives for immigrants to learn English, participate in civic affairs and contribute to their communities.

Recommendation 3: California should advocate for federal reforms that link immigration policies to community goals, create incentives for immigrants to be responsible community members and encourage immigrants to work toward citizenship. The Governor and Legislature should:

- ❑ **Advocate for immigration reform.** The Governor and legislative leaders should work with California's congressional delegation to motivate the President and Congress to craft an immigration policy that ensures the country admits adequate numbers of immigrants to meet workforce needs and supports strong communities. Immigration policies should encourage immigrants to become citizens.
- ❑ **Advocate for naturalization reform.** California's state and federal representatives should work with the President and Congress to align naturalization policies with state goals for immigrants. The naturalization process should create incentives for immigrants to meet their responsibilities to be good community members and clearly communicate the obligations that citizens have to their communities.
- ❑ **Advocate for federal support of community priorities.** California's state and federal representatives should work with the President and Congress to align federal policies to community goals for immigrants. State leaders should pursue two options:
 - ✓ **Immediate steps.** State leaders should seek additional federal funding to provide services that support the ability of immigrants to become responsible community members, maintain self-reliance and establish citizenship.
 - ✓ **Long-term reform.** State leaders should work to reform federal policies that govern eligibility criteria for public programs, particularly programs that address education, health, welfare and job training needs. Federal policies should make eligible those immigrants who make a commitment to be responsible community members and become citizens.
- ❑ **Advocate for more efficient and effective immigration and naturalization services.** California should pass a resolution asking Congress to ensure that immigration and naturalization services in California are customer-oriented, continuously improving and at least as available and efficient as services in other states. The delegation should work with the President and Congress to identify strategies for the INS to immediately reduce backlogs, improve customer service and provide responsive information to the public and state and federal policy-makers on progress.

Introduction

The Commission initiated this study with the trust that the State will continue to prosper and mature because of the talents and ambitions of all of its residents, regardless of where they were born. The Commission's inquiry is premised on the narrow but undeniable common ground: The future of California lies in the future of its children. The economy is the sum of its workers. And our communities – whether vibrant and hopeful, or filled with despair – are defined by the people who are here, not where they are from.

And the unavoidable question – and perhaps the largest untapped opportunity of the day – is how state policies and programs will help or hinder California's immigrants to become productive and contributing residents, and in most cases, citizens. The Commission understands that by improving the ability of immigrants in California to succeed – to be self-reliant and to take on the responsibilities of caring for their communities – we have the potential to dramatically impact the quality of life for all Californians.

Through public hearings and discussions with experts, meetings with immigrants and community leaders, and a review of existing research, the Commission examined the integration of immigrants, with emphasis on the potential that immigrants bring to communities. The Commission did not focus directly on whether California should limit immigration or increase immigrant rights, but on how the State can promote quality communities through a coherent set of policies toward immigrants.

In undertaking this study, the Commission drew upon the knowledge and experience gained from studying various state programs. The Commission has found that public programs are most effective when they are managed to respond to the diverse and evolving needs of individuals and their communities. In California, immigrants are members of nearly every community.

Based on its previous work, the Commission explored strategies for navigating the differences between legal and illegal immigrants. The Commission chose not to mask these differences, but came to recognize that they are borne of federal policies that undermine state and community priorities. The task is made much more complex by the emotional, economic and political tensions that immigration and immigrants evoke.

Ultimately, the Commission concluded, a deliberate policy toward immigrants would improve the effectiveness of public programs, clearly communicate public expectations for all residents, including immigrants, and remove barriers to self-sufficiency and self-governance.

The Commission began this study in March 2001 with a public hearing that provided an overview of issues important to immigrant integration. A second hearing was convened in May 2001 to explore the State's potential role in immigrant integration. At a final hearing in August, testimony concentrated on specific strategies the State could employ to improve the quality of life for immigrants and the communities that receive them. Those hearings were complemented by numerous conversations with local officials, clergy, business owners, community organizations, researchers and of course, immigrants themselves.

The Commission was particularly inspired by conversations in Salinas with community leaders, employers, advocates, and immigrants, several of whom welcomed Commission members into their homes. The opportunities and obstacles that the Salinas community is confronting reflect the challenge facing all of California: how to address immediate needs of residents and ensure a resilient, prosperous community in the future.

The Commission also benefited from the time and energy of many experts from state departments, advocacy organizations, universities, and elsewhere who advised the Commission throughout this project. The Commission formed an advisory committee that met twice to discuss key issues. Several advisory committee members and other experts lent on-going advice as the project unfolded. Appendix B includes a list of people consulted on this project. The Commission enjoyed particular support from immigration officials from Canada. Hans Johnson from the Public Policy Institute of California provided the bulk of the demographic information presented in the report. And Peter Skerry, of Claremont College and the Brookings Institution, consistently shared his insights and was enormously generous with his time. As always, the Commission greatly appreciates this assistance, but the conclusions are those of the Commission alone.

Background

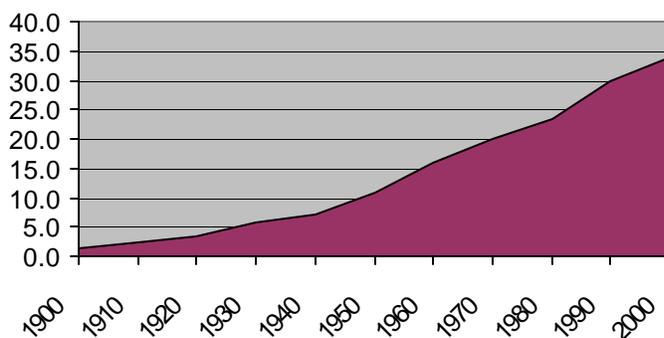
Immigrant policy in California is defined by a number of tensions, often driven more by powerful rhetoric than sound research. Immigrant advocates and their adversaries argue over how many immigrants California can accommodate. They debate the costs and benefits of immigration. And they go head-to-head over restricting or expanding immigrant rights and eligibility for public benefits. Immigrants are depicted as illegal aliens who disrespect the rule of law, and as noble individuals braving hardship for their families and future.

As a result, the programs and rules that determine how and how well immigrants integrate into California are inconsistent and confusing. This background describes the demographics, the tensions and the existing policies that influence the immigrant experience in California.

California's Immigrant Population

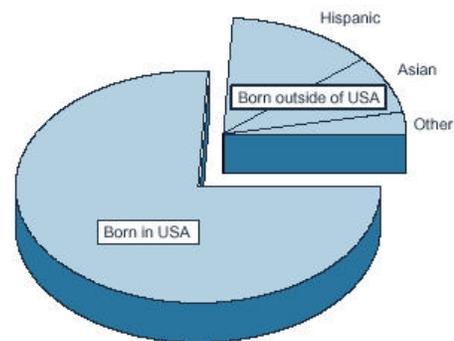
California has experienced tremendous population growth in recent years. In 1950 the state's population was about 10 million residents. It surpassed 30 million in the 1990s, and is anticipated to grow to 50 million by 2025.² Much of California's population growth is attributed to immigration. During the 1990s, approximately 41 percent of population growth was attributed to the foreign-born.³ Between 1980 and 1997, the percentage of California's population that was born outside of the United States increased from around 3.5 million to over 8 million. Today, approximately 1 in 4 Californians is foreign-born.⁴

Population Growth in California (in millions)



Source: California Department of Finance.

1 in 4 Californians is Foreign-Born



Source: Legislative Analyst's Office. "2000 Cal Facts: California's Demographics." December 2000.

**From Around the World
to California**

Immigrants come to California from nearly every country in the world. And they settle in every county.

There are over 60 countries that have each sent 10,000 or more immigrants to California. They include: Italy, Romania, Belize, Iran, Australia, Turkey, Poland, Syria, Burma, England, Cuba, Denmark, France, Sweden and Brazil.

The leading source countries of immigrants in California are:

Mexico	2,524,000
Philippines	525,000
El Salvador	282,240
Vietnam	276,000
China	216,000

Each of California's 58 counties is home to recent immigrants. Counties with the largest immigrant populations:

	1990-1998 Total Legal Immigrants
Los Angeles	661,341
Orange	170,099
Santa Clara	142,248
San Diego	122,917
San Francisco	99,956
Alameda	90,357

Sources: Hans P. Johnson, PPIC. Based on 1990 Census. Department of Finance. Legal Immigration to California by County, 1990-1998.

Immigrant Diversity. The Bay Area and Los Angeles stand out for their large immigrant populations, but all regions of California are home to immigrants.⁵ California's immigrant population is as diverse as the overall state population. In Los Angeles County more than 50 foreign-language newspapers serve the information and cultural needs of residents.⁶ And throughout the state, Californians speak over 250 distinct languages.⁷ Approximately 40 percent of Californians speak a language other than English in the home.⁸

Some foreign-born residents arrive with little or no education or formal training, others are internationally recognized in their professional fields. Many are completely fluent in English; others have no English-language ability.

For instance, Asian immigrants between the ages of 25 and 29 have high school completion rates that are comparable for U.S.-born Asians who are the same age.⁹ In contrast, Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, are less likely to have completed high school than U.S.-born Hispanics.¹⁰

Acquiring English-language skills is perhaps the most enduring challenge for immigrants. Approximately half of all Mexican immigrants in California have difficulty speaking English. With the exception of those from the Philippines and India, between 25 and 40 percent of Asian immigrants also struggle to communicate clearly in English.¹¹

Research suggests that immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean are slightly more likely to live in poverty than their U.S.-born counterparts.¹² One study found that 27 percent of foreign-born Hispanics were poor compared to 18 percent of U.S.-born Hispanics.¹³ A similar yet smaller difference holds true for Asian immigrants.¹⁴ Hispanic and Asian men are equally likely to be employed regardless of

their immigrant or native-born status. Hispanic and Asian immigrant women, however, are somewhat less likely to work than their native-born counterparts.¹⁵

Labor Force Participation. The contributions of immigrants are felt throughout the nation. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan reports that both skilled and unskilled immigrants contribute to national prosperity.¹⁶ Immigrants make up some 13 percent of the total U.S. workforce. Immigrants founded an estimated 12 percent of the 500 fastest growing corporations in the country.¹⁷ One in five new patents in the United States is awarded to an immigrant.¹⁸

Despite popular conceptions, the majority of immigrants are employed outside of agriculture. In California, immigrants make up approximately one-third of the labor force.¹⁹ While over 70 percent of agriculture and related jobs are held by immigrants, they also make up over 20 percent of the labor force in construction, manufacturing, transportation and commerce, trade, financial, professional and health services.²⁰

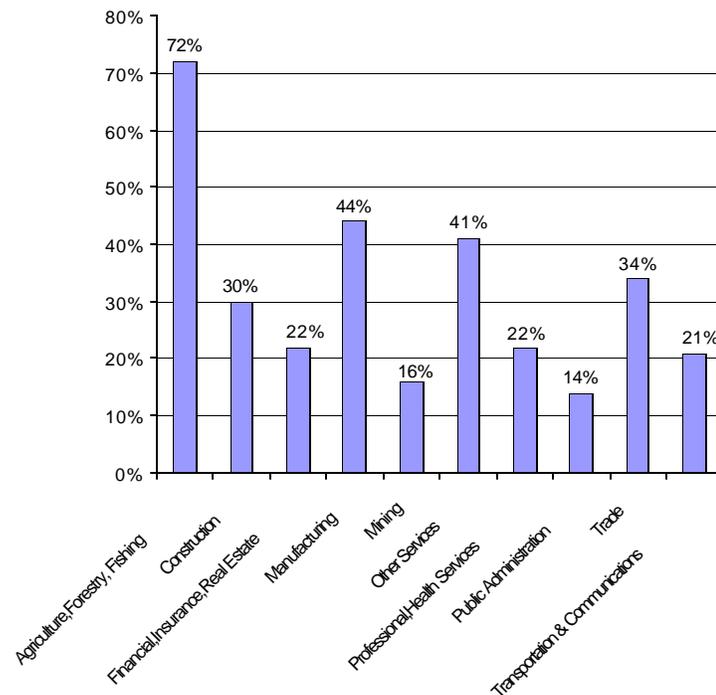
California's high-tech boom greatly benefited from the innovation and hard work of immigrants. Immigrants have founded as many as one-quarter of Silicon Valley firms.²¹ A 1998 study found that businesses in the Silicon Valley owned by immigrants from China and India employed over 58,000 residents and generated nearly \$17 billion in annual sales.²²

In short, California's economy has become dependent on immigrants and the state has greatly benefited from their economic contributions.

No Clear Line between Legal and Illegal Residents

California's foreign-born population includes those who arrive for short periods – such as foreign students, temporary workers and others who do not intend to stay. These visitors hold non-immigrant visas. The foreign-born also includes permanent residents, refugees and people who have sought asylum. And California's population includes undocumented immigrants, people who are in the country without legal authorization.

Immigrant Labor Force Participation in California



Source: Hans Johnson, PPIC. Based on 1990 Census.

Legal Status and Related Terms

Permanent Resident: This legal status does not expire and authorizes a person to work, receive many benefits and eventually apply for citizenship.

Visa: A passport stamp that permits entry to the country. Immigrant visas are issued to people approved for permanent residency. Tourists and others are issued nonimmigrant visas.

Naturalized Citizenship: The granting of citizenship to a person who is not a citizen by birth.

Refugee: Refugees have the right to live and work in the United States indefinitely. After one year, refugees can apply for a green card.

Asylee/Asylum: Unlike refugees, people seeking asylum after arriving in the country. An asylee can apply for a green card after remaining in the country for more than one year.

Alien: Any person not a citizen of the United States.

Undocumented/Illegal Immigrant: A person who does not have legal authorization to be in the country.

Those who enter the United States with legal authorization are awarded a legal status based on their reason for admission. The box to the left defines the legal distinctions a non-citizen might hold.

People in the United States without a legal status are referred to as undocumented or illegal residents. Some entered illegally and thus were not granted permission to be in the country. Others entered on a visa or other form of permission, but have overstayed their visa and lack legal authorization to remain. A majority of illegal immigrants entered legally, but overstayed their authorization. Less than half of undocumented immigrants in the country entered illegally.²³

It is difficult to determine the number of undocumented residents in California. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates there are 8.7 million undocumented immigrants in the country, based on the 2000 Census, although that figure is in dispute. Estimates range as high as 9 million to 11 million undocumented immigrants nationally, with an estimated 2 million in California.²⁴

One challenge in separating documented and undocumented immigrants is the fluidity of their

Documented and Undocumented Immigrants in California

Francisco. When Francisco was 21 he jumped the fence that separates his Mexican homeland from the United States. Today he is a permanent resident, married, with four children. All his children are destined for college and he is working to become a citizen. In 1997 and 1998, 157,548 people adjusted their immigration status to become permanent residents, some initially entered the country illegally.

Nazanin. At age 10 Nazanin came to the United States with her parents. Her small family escaped from Iran during the night and sought refuge in Turkey and then Israel. In 1984 they received permission to immigrate to the United States and were granted green cards. Ten years later, Nazanin established U.S. citizenship. Less than half of all permanent residents in California establish citizenship. In 2000, 849,807 immigrants were admitted to the country, with 217,753 planning to reside in California.

Beatriz. Beatriz crossed the desert into the United States with her 5-year-old daughter. She is 36 and has been in the California for three years. She is here illegally, but finds work easily. In Mexico, she says, there is no work and no way to get ahead. In California, there is plenty of work, although without legal documents she really has no way to get ahead. She earns enough to rent a room, buy a used car, purchase nice outfits once in awhile and get by. She would like to stay in the country and establish citizenship, although her parents and another child are back home.

legal status and the nature of their households. Many immigrants who are in the country legally today will overstay their visa then would be reclassified as illegal immigrants. Others entered the country illegally but “normalized” their status and obtained legal permission to stay, through amnesties or other legal petitions. And finally, approximately 85 percent of immigrant families include a mix of documented and undocumented adults and children.²⁵

The fluidity of legal status makes it virtually impossible to verify in any reliable way who is in the country legally and who is not.²⁶ Migration between home countries and the United States further complicates efforts to count immigrants. An estimated one-third of immigrants from western Mexico stay in the United States for more than ten years.²⁷

Two-thirds of all immigrants in California – regardless of their legal status – live with U.S. citizens, although not all such households are made up purely of immediate family members.²⁸

Somewhat surprisingly, many immigrants have not actively sought citizenship. In 2001, an estimated 47.5 percent of immigrants who had been in the country legally for six years or more had become naturalized citizens.²⁹ Undocumented immigrants are ineligible to apply for naturalization. Of those who are eligible, the reasons for not obtaining citizenship vary. Some plan to return home and are in the United States for a lengthy, but temporary period of time. Others decide not to apply because the process of naturalization is bureaucratic and expensive. For others, the naturalization process can result in termination of their permanent resident status without resulting in citizenship, creating a disincentive to apply.

INS Fees		
In February 2002 the INS increased its fees.		
Activity	Old Fee	Current Fee
Application to Register Permanent Residence	\$220	\$255
Application for Naturalization	\$225	\$260

Critical Tensions

Immigrants make dramatic and significant contributions to California, and they have fueled long-standing controversies. One study estimated that undocumented immigrants alone contribute \$77 billion to the Gross State Product of California.³⁰ But they also increase public costs. One study estimates that immigrants increase public sector costs in California by \$3 billion each year.³¹ Tensions over immigrants in California are often framed by concerns over population growth, access to public benefits and immigrants speaking English.

Population Concerns. A number of scholars have projected population growth for California. Despite significant variation, all estimates suggest that California will continue its dramatic growth. Some commentators argue that the United States should curtail immigration to arrest population growth. They argue that population growth is the driver of social and community challenges, including:³²

- **Housing.** California faces a shortage of affordable housing in most communities. The Central Valley is losing approximately 15,000 acres of farmland each year to development.³³
- **Education.** Schools are overcrowded. Los Angeles Unified School District alone is slated to add 3,222 additional classrooms between 2000 and 2006.³⁴
- **Traffic.** Traffic congestion is a persistent and increasing challenge as more vehicles crowd onto an overtaxed freeway and roadway system.

Access to Public Programs. As many immigrants are poor, they often qualify for public assistance. Some qualify for Social Security Insurance because they meet age and disability criteria. Others can receive welfare benefits because their U.S.-born children are eligible for support. An estimated 23.2 percent of all immigrant households receive some form of government benefit, including cash benefits, health insurance or food stamps.³⁵ Elderly immigrants in particular are more likely to use safety net services, including Medicaid, than their native-born counterparts.³⁶ And all children in California, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status, are eligible for a free public education.

The additional costs that immigrants represent have fueled political debates over public spending and declining quality of life. Immigrant advocates argue that newcomers, including illegal residents, should have the opportunities and benefits of native-born residents, including the right to obtain driver's licenses and receive public benefits.³⁷ Their adversaries counter that increasing benefits will lure more immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants, and overwhelm public programs.

English Skills. The number of Spanish speakers in California is growing dramatically, and their impact on California is broadly felt. The Bay Area supports five Spanish-language television stations, up from just two during the 1990s.³⁸ Marketers are tuning into the needs and preferences of this growing population, but many others are tuning out.³⁹ Immigration critics cite lack of English skills – for Spanish speakers as well as other immigrants – as a leading concern in many communities. Nationally, the 1990 census found that 14 million foreign-born residents were not proficient in English. Research suggests that limited English skills cost businesses more than \$175 million because of work-related

miscommunication. And lack of English skills keep many immigrants in low-wage jobs.⁴⁰

Because of these debates researchers have attempted to document how immigrants benefit the economy and communities and their impact on public programs. Their analyses have, in some ways, guided public policies.

The Costs and Benefits of Immigration

A central issue in debates about immigrant and immigration policies is whether immigrants create more costs or more benefits for public agencies and the economy. Generally, researchers have looked at the taxes that immigrants pay and the additional demand on public services, particularly education, welfare, and health care. Some researchers have found that immigrants cost the public sector more than they pay into public coffers.⁴¹ Others have found the reverse, that immigrants are a net fiscal gain to the United States.⁴²

The following summary of this research distills what is known and describes how the research findings can guide state and federal policies concerning both immigration and the integration of newcomers.

Immigrants do increase costs. The National Research Council found that immigrant families increase public sector costs in two primary ways:⁴³

1. Because immigrants have more children on average than natives, they use more educational and other services for children. In California the numbers are large. California has 6 million K-12 students.⁴⁴ The 2001 Current Population Survey reports there are 678,548 foreign-born Californians between the ages of 5 and 17. California spends an average of \$7,000 to educate a student each year.⁴⁵ Without calculating the costs associated with specialized language training and other services, the education bill for students who are immigrants equals over \$4.7 billion.
2. Because immigrant households are poorer than other families, they appear to be more likely to tap poverty-related programs such as welfare. One study found that elderly immigrants are three times as likely to rely on public “safety net” programs than their native counterparts. That same study found that non-elderly immigrants are no more likely to use public services than their native counterparts.⁴⁶ A second study, however, found that immigrants are more likely to use welfare. Harvard economist George Borjas has

found limited evidence that welfare benefits act as a magnet for immigrants, potentially further increasing public expenditures.⁴⁷

In short, immigrants do use public services, and in some cases they rely on public services in greater percentages than natives.

Immigrants, however, also pay taxes. In 1997 immigrants paid an estimated \$133 billion in taxes. But overall, because immigrant families tend to earn less and own less property than native families, they pay less in taxes than their native counterparts.⁴⁸

Do immigrants pay enough taxes to cover their costs? Some research has found that immigrants pay more in taxes than they consume in benefits. Other studies conclude that immigrants consume more in public services than they contribute in taxes. The conclusions differ largely because of the different ways that costs and benefits are measured.⁴⁹

Some researchers calculate the annual costs and benefits of the immigrant population alone. In these studies, immigrants present a net benefit to the United States. One study found that on average immigrants paid \$1,400 more in taxes than they received in services.⁵⁰

Critics point out that focusing on the services provided to immigrants alone leaves out the services provided to their U.S.-born children, which can be substantial. To capture these costs, other studies look at immigrant “households.”⁵¹ One study reports that the average immigrant household consumes \$600 more in services each year than it pays in taxes.⁵²

Still other researchers criticize those household studies for not considering the benefits derived when those educated children mature into working adults. Researchers have attempted to capture the changes in costs and benefits as individuals age. UC Berkeley researchers Ronald Lee and Timothy Miller concluded that if the costs and contributions of immigrants and their living descendants are calculated, the annual fiscal impact is a \$1,000 net gain to public coffers.⁵³ An alternate approach to calculating costs and benefits over generations confirms this general finding.⁵⁴ These studies show that in the long run, immigrants pay for the services they receive, and then some.

But the costs and benefits accrue to different levels of government. Because state and local governments pay for most social, health and educational programs, they bear most of the costs of immigration. Similarly, because the federal government receives a greater share of tax payments, it receives most of the fiscal benefits.⁵⁵ The Berkeley

researchers found that immigrants annually provided a \$51 billion net gain for the federal government, but imposed \$27 billion in net costs for state and local governments. Even studies that conclude that immigration provides a net benefit to public coffers demonstrate that immigration is a net loser for most state and local governments, particularly in the short-term. Researchers have calculated that native-born taxpayers in California pay an additional \$1,200 in taxes each year because most revenue flows to the federal government, while services to immigrants are provided by state and local government.⁵⁶ That number is far larger than in other states, because of the large numbers of immigrants and the large percentage of immigrants in California's population. Nationwide, the average taxpayer pays an additional \$124 in state and local taxes because of the federal state imbalance.⁵⁷

Education is the key to lowering costs and raising benefits.

Research suggests the greatest determinant of the economic impact of immigrants is their level of education when they first enter the country and over time.⁵⁸ Educational level accounts for most income disparities between immigrants and natives. And many immigrants have a limited educational background. Just 45 percent of Hispanic immigrants graduated from high school by age 20, compared to 88 percent of natives. And the children of parents with low levels of education may need several generations to “catch up” with their native counterparts in terms of educational attainment and corresponding earnings.⁵⁹

Public policy could be guided by how immigrants contribute. The policy implications of this research are significant. For example, research has found that changing the number of immigrants who come to the United States would have little impact on the balance of costs and benefits. The greatest fiscal impact would be associated with increasing the number of skilled workers, which would increase net fiscal gains.⁶⁰ More skilled workers and fewer unskilled workers will result in higher tax payments and lower demand for services. Canada, New Zealand and Australia have immigration policies that give priority to immigrants who would make fiscal contributions.⁶¹ Harvard's Borjas notes that immigrants with few employment opportunities receive a significant share of welfare benefits, even if they do cover some or all of those costs.⁶² Establishing skills-based standards for immigration is one strategy that has been proposed to reduce economic costs and increase benefits.⁶³

A second policy option would be to improve the availability and effectiveness of education and training programs, particularly where California faces worker shortages. The public sector has long recognized that education and training programs increase employment

opportunities. Improved access to training could enable immigrants to make greater contributions more quickly.⁶⁴

Finally, immigration has fiscal impacts beyond public coffers. Peter Skerry, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, points out that economic analyses fail to include costs and benefits that are more difficult to assess.⁶⁵ The methodologies used by economists limit how California can assess the impact of immigrants.

There is widespread agreement that the business community benefits from immigrants who often are willing to work for wages that are unattractive to other potential employees. Consumers also benefit when low-wage labor keeps prices low. Immigrants also buy consumer products and help fuel the economy.⁶⁶

Other analyses have found immigrants to be beneficial in other ways. Stephen Moore of the Cato Institute found that cities with large immigrant populations outperformed cities with few immigrants. Immigrants were associated with cities that were creating more jobs, had higher incomes, less poverty, a lower tax burden and less crime. Moore does not say that immigrants bring prosperity, but his analysis cautions those who associate large immigrant populations with large social costs, although some researchers question his conclusions.⁶⁷

Researchers seem to agree that new immigrants compete with earlier immigrants for low-skilled jobs, but have limited impact on the earnings and employment of U.S.-born workers.⁶⁸ Employers benefit because wages are kept low. But the conventional wisdom that immigrants hold jobs that natives will not take may be too simplistic. Some evidence suggests that natives are just less willing than immigrants to take those positions at the wages that are offered.⁶⁹

Other researchers have attempted to document non-economic impacts, with little success. For instance, immigrants have historically been blamed for increased crime rates. One study found limited evidence that immigrants are more likely to be convicted for drug offenses than citizens, although it is unclear why.⁷⁰ Another looked at crime reports and population surveys and found no evidence that local crime rates are linked to increases in the immigrant populations.⁷¹ Immigrants also have been linked to increases in tuberculosis, but at the same time they have introduced new approaches to health care that are slowly making their way into mainstream culture, such as acupuncture and yoga.⁷²

In the end, the impact of immigration is enormously complex and is not well represented in broad economic analyses that smooth out the real

and important wrinkles in how different people with diverse needs and abilities impact their communities.⁷³

Key Policy Debates

The economic debate focuses public discussion on which benefits should be available to immigrants, and often forces distinctions between documented and undocumented immigrants. Policy-makers are more likely to grant benefits to documented immigrants. But they also have recognized that undocumented immigrants make contributions to their communities and that public services can improve the opportunities available to them and particularly their children, many of whom are U.S. citizens. Some examples:

Driver's Licenses. Policy-makers are currently discussing whether to grant undocumented immigrants access to driver's licenses. California has an estimated 2 million undocumented immigrants, and most undocumented adults are likely working and driving in California. But under current law they are ineligible to drive.

In 1993 California statutes were amended to require the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to verify legal residence of all applicants for a driver's license. The goal of the legislation was to reduce the number of illegal immigrants who fraudulently obtained public benefits using their driver's license as a "breeder" document to qualify for other programs.⁷⁴

DMV currently requires applicants to produce valid documentation proving legal residency from a list of approved sources. Citizens can show their passport, birth certificate, military identification or other forms of identification. Non-citizens must present a green card, visa, border crossing card or other official documents.⁷⁵

Security concerns following the terrorist attacks of September 11 have increased concerns over how California verifies identity before issuing a driver's license or identification card. DMV verifies social security numbers with the Social Security Administration, but does not have the capacity to confirm the validity of birth certificates, military identification cards or other forms of identification issued in California or elsewhere in the United States.

The events on September 11 also have magnified the call for all residents to have valid, reliable forms of identification. Even prior to September 11 local law enforcement officials argued that residents who lack proper identification complicate their ability to ensure public safety – during domestic violence calls, loitering, theft or other calls for assistance.

Immigrants who lack identification, officials assert, are often reluctant to call for assistance when victimized or to provide information on crimes they might have witnessed.

Immigrant advocates argue that adult undocumented immigrants are generally employed and often must drive to get to work, attend school, shuttle their children to doctor's appointments and address other needs. Denying them a license invites people to drive without being certified as capable drivers and without obtaining insurance.

Concerns have been raised that a license would grant a privilege to people who have violated U.S. immigration laws. Granting licenses to all immigrants would create a weaker standard for issuing licenses. A driver's license can be used to validate the holder as a California resident.⁷⁶

Subsidized Tuition. Legal California residents receive subsidized tuition at the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU) and the community colleges. Until recently, undocumented residents were charged fees equivalent to those charged students who come from other states or countries to attend school in California. Legislation passed in 2001 allows undocumented residents to pay in-state tuition if they attended a California high school.⁷⁷

Resident and Non-Resident Tuition	
University of California	
Resident	\$3,964
Non-Resident	\$10,000+
	(per semester)
California State University	
Resident	\$1,839
Non-Resident	\$7,380
	(per semester)
Community Colleges	
Resident	\$11
Non-Resident	\$130
	(per unit)
Source: AB 540 Assembly Floor Analysis.	

California residents pay reduced fees because the college and university systems are supported with state taxes. Advocates for undocumented residents pointed out that these parents and students have paid taxes and so should be charged less than out-of-state students.

The rationale for reducing tuition is that many undocumented immigrants have lived in California for years. Many attended public schools since they were young children and have graduated from California high schools. They are poised to enter college and have the potential to make lasting contributions to the state and their communities as tax-paying professionals. Attending college provides them that opportunity.

Surprisingly absent from public debate over in-state tuition is whether undocumented immigrants should be eligible to attend public colleges and universities at any tuition level. California colleges and universities are impacted. More students want to attend than can be accommodated. Access to public colleges is rationed based on a range of factors. Public debates over the tuition legislation also highlighted – but failed to resolve

– the multiple financial barriers that prevent many students from attending colleges, not just undocumented immigrants.⁷⁸

Welfare and Health Benefits. Perhaps the most enduring controversy has been whether to allow undocumented immigrants to receive welfare and health benefits. Federal welfare reform reduced federally funded services to immigrants, but allowed states to use their own funds to cover immigrants.⁷⁹ Under the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program, or CalWORKs, families can receive cash aid and services. Under CalWORKs, lawful permanent residents and some other immigrants can receive benefits after they have been in the country for at least five years. Undocumented immigrants are ineligible.⁸⁰

Federal reforms also made most non-citizens ineligible for Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payments (SSI/SSP) payments. In place of that support, California operates the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI). CAPI provides cash benefits to aged, blind and disabled non-citizens. It is available to documented but not undocumented immigrants.⁸¹

Many immigrants also can receive health benefits through a variety of public programs. California has approximately 700 licensed community health clinics that serve anyone who does not have adequate medical coverage. The State provides \$8.2 million a year through the Rural Health Services Program, which can be used to serve all residents, including undocumented immigrants.⁸² Local clinics supplement state funding with federal grants, reimbursements from insurance policies, foundations and other sources.

Immigrants also may be eligible for other health programs. This is a partial list:

Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal provides health coverage to low-income families. Under Medi-Cal, documented immigrants are eligible for the same benefits available to citizens. Undocumented immigrants are eligible for limited services, including prenatal and emergency care.⁸³

Healthy Families. The Healthy Families program provides low-cost health care to children under the age of 19 with family incomes less than 250 percent of the federal poverty level. Children who are eligible for Medi-Cal cannot receive services through Healthy Families. Services are available to documented immigrants only after they have been in the country for five years. Services are not available to undocumented immigrant children.⁸⁴

County Medical Services Program. Provides health, dental and vision services to indigent adults in 34 counties who are not eligible for Medi-Cal. The services available to documented immigrants are the same as those for citizens. Undocumented immigrants only are eligible for emergency services and limited follow-up care.⁸⁵

Family PACT (Planning, Access, Care and Treatment). This program provides reproductive health services, including screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, prevention education and counseling. It is available to residents who have no coverage and meet income eligibility requirements. Immigration status is not a factor in determining eligibility.⁸⁶

Many immigrants avoid using public health programs or enrolling their children because they fear the use of public benefits will count against them when seeking to become permanent residents. A century-old “public charge” policy discourages immigrants from relying on public benefits. The INS has stated that use of public health benefits does not constitute a public charge.⁸⁷ Despite this assurance, many immigrant families have been reluctant to enroll their U.S.-born children in health care programs out of fear that undocumented members of the family will be reported to immigration authorities. Others fail to enroll because the application process is confusing. And some who do enroll lose eligibility when they move from one county to the next following agricultural jobs.⁸⁸

Many immigrants can and do receive health benefits from their employers. But California’s small businesses in particular often cannot afford to provide health benefits and many rely on immigrant labor.⁸⁹

Approximately 20 percent of Californians are without health insurance.⁹⁰ Research among farm workers suggests that very few farm worker families have even basic medical, dental and vision coverage.⁹¹

Policy by Proposition

During the 1990s the issue of illegal immigrants receiving public benefits raised the profile of immigrant policies in the state. Largely in response to frustration with federal policy, propositions have played a significant role in shaping the state’s responses to immigrants. Propositions 187 and 227 monumentally changed the services available to immigrants and influenced public opinions.

Proposition 187: “Save Our State Initiative.” Proposition 187 was passed in 1994 by 60 percent of California voters. It amended the California constitution to deny illegal immigrants access to public

services, non-emergency health care and public education. When challenged in U.S. District Court, a majority of the provisions were found to be unconstitutional because they would regulate immigration, which is governed by federal law. Some sections of the proposition were retained, including criminal penalties for the manufacture, distribution, sale and use of false identification documents.⁹²

Proposition 227 – “English for the Children Initiative.” Proposition 227 was approved in 1998 by 61 percent of voters. California had an estimated 1.4 million students who received specialized services because they spoke limited English. Proposition 227 reduced reliance on bilingual education, and with some exceptions, required children to be taught in English to improve their English proficiency.⁹³

Federal Policies

The federal government controls national immigration policy and shares immigrant policy with the states. Federal law determines how many immigrants can enter the country, but state and local governments are charged with ensuring that housing, education, jobs and other opportunities are available to them. Federal policies impact the ability of the states to integrate immigrants into their communities because they determine who comes, the requirements of their residency, and how long they can remain and the federally funded services that immigrants may receive. The following is a list of key federal policies:

1917-1942 Bracero Program. The first Bracero programs responded to a conflict between the government’s need to control the flow of immigrants into the country and the need for more workers. The federal government created the 1917 Immigration Act to reduce the number of immigrants who came to the United States seeking employment. Employers were taxed for each immigrant they employed. And immigrants who could not read were denied entry. During World War II labor shortages encouraged farmers and the railroads to lobby for waivers of the literacy and tax provisions. From 1942 to 1964 a second Bracero Program allowed some 5 million Mexican workers to hold U.S. agricultural jobs.⁹⁴

1983 Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA). MSPA was passed to protect migrant and seasonal farm workers from fraud and exploitation. The act required labor contractors to register

U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform

The U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, which sunsetted in 1997, recommended that all levels of government actively support immigrant self-reliance.

The Commission recommended a series of technical and organizational changes to achieve several goals, including:

- A properly-regulated system of legal permanent admissions that serves the national interest and enhances the benefits accruing from the entry of newcomers while guarding against harms.
- The cultivation of a shared commitment to the American values of liberty, democracy and equal opportunity.
- An effective immigration system that is credible, efficient and well-managed.

Source: U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform. “Becoming an American: Immigration & Immigrant Policy.” September 1997.

with the Department of Labor and to assure protections for farm workers. Under MSPA, labor contractors are required to provide written information on wages, hours, working conditions and housing.⁹⁵

1986 Immigration and Reform Control Act (IRCA). IRCA included an amnesty provision that allowed undocumented immigrants who had lived continuously in the United States since before January 1, 1982, to apply for legal resident status. Eligible individuals had to apply by May 4, 1988.⁹⁶

1994 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). SCAAP provides federal funding to states and local governments to defray the costs of imprisoning undocumented immigrants convicted of crimes. California generally receives half of the \$565 million allocated each year.⁹⁷

1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). The welfare reform law denied most forms of public assistance to most legal immigrants for five years or until they attain citizenship. It requires state and local agencies to eliminate public benefits to individuals who cannot provide proof of their legal status and gave states greater flexibility in designing welfare programs.⁹⁸

1997 Balanced Budget Act. The act restored Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits to qualified immigrants who were receiving SSI benefits as of August 22, 1996 and who were lawfully residing in the United States on that date. In addition, immigrants who were lawfully present as of August 22, 1996 are also eligible for SSI if they meet the disability standard now or in the future.

1998 Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act. The act restored food stamp eligibility to immigrant children and elderly persons who were legal residents when PRWORA passed on August 22, 1996. Those who came to the United States legally after this date are ineligible. Benefits were restored to approximately 250,000 immigrants.⁹⁹

Becoming a U.S. Citizen: A Complex Process

California has been the primary destination for legal immigrants in the United States for the last 30 years.¹⁰⁰ But until recently, California has had one of the lowest rates of naturalization in the country.¹⁰¹ The most recent data indicate 47.5 percent of immigrants naturalize.¹⁰² Research suggests low naturalization rates in California are partly due to the types of immigrants that California receives: they are more likely to come from

Latin America, to be recent arrivals, to be married to non-citizens, to have lower levels of education, and to be less proficient in English.

Low naturalization rates also are linked to the arduous process of establishing citizenship. Immigrants must first petition for permanent residency. Unless they are in the United States as a student, or on some other visa, they must petition from their home country. If the petition is approved, the applicant then must wait for an immigrant visa that would allow them to enter the country.

Many immigrants are delayed for years before they can receive an immigrant visa that would allow them to legally enter the country. Numerical limits on the number of immigrants who can enter the country can require a successful applicant to wait for as long as 20 years before they are issued the visa. Once a visa is issued, and the person arrives in the United States, they can request a green card. After five years, three if married to a U.S. citizen, permanent residents can apply to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

The Visa

Visas serve as entry documents into the United States. Some enter the country with nonimmigrant visas. These are typically students, temporary workers, tourists and others. Immigrant visas are issued to people who have been approved for permanent resident status. Everyone else is issued a nonimmigrant visa.¹⁰³ An immigrant visa allows the person to obtain a green card and establish permanent residence.

Federal law gives preferential immigration status to persons with a close family relationship to a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, persons with needed job skills, or persons who qualify as refugees. In 2000, 69 percent of all legal immigrants were family sponsored.¹⁰⁴ Immigrants in other categories usually account for relatively few admissions, with the exception of the years 1989-92, when over 2.6 million formerly undocumented immigrants were normalized under provisions of the Immigration and Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986.

Immigrant visas are divided into two categories: those with no numerical limitation and those with numerical limits. The first category refers to immediate relatives of U.S. citizens and returning residents who have been absent from the United States for less than one year. In 2000, 348,879 immediate relatives were admitted to the United States.¹⁰⁵ The second category pertains to family-sponsored, employment-based and diversity-based immigrant visas and is limited to 675,000 persons per year.

Family Sponsored. The limit for family-sponsored visas is 480,000, minus the number of visas issued to immediate relatives in the preceding year. The number of family-sponsored visas issued each year must not fall below 226,000. In 2000, 235,280 such immigrants were admitted.¹⁰⁶ This type of visa is placed into four preference categories (minimum limits are listed in parentheses):

- First Preference: Unmarried sons and daughters of U.S. citizens and their children (23,400).
- Second Preference: Spouses, children, and unmarried sons and daughters of permanent resident aliens (114,200).
- Third Preference: Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens (23,400).
- Fourth Preference: Brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens at least 21 years of age (65,000).

Employment Based. A total of 140,000 employment-based visas are available each year within five preference categories, from the most highly sought persons of extraordinary ability – such as athletes, researchers and business professionals – to investors who will create employment for at least 10 persons through commercial enterprise. These investors must have at least \$500,000 in capital to qualify. In 2000, 107,024 such visas were issued.¹⁰⁷

In most instances, before an employer can sponsor an employee, the U.S. Department of Labor must certify that there are no qualified workers available for the particular job.

Diversity Visa Lottery. Each year the U.S. Department of State holds a lottery providing permanent resident visas to persons from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States. Countries that have sent more than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the last five years are unable to participate. For fiscal year 2002, 90,000 applicants were chosen at random from approximately 10 million entries.¹⁰⁸ Applicants must have either a high school education, or its equivalent; or two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience. Those who receive the visa may also bring their spouse and any unmarried children under the age of 21.

Other means of entry. People can enter the United States as refugees or through the asylum process. Others can enter through provisions in federal policy that target specific populations, such as the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966. Cuban nationals legally residing in the United States for at least one year can obtain a permanent resident visa if they meet other requirements.

Nonimmigrant Visas. Foreign nationals wishing to come to this country to work, visit or attend school may do so by obtaining a nonimmigrant visa. Initial stays for employment visas range from one to three years, but can be extended.

Permanent Residence Status

Applicants for permanent residence status apply at U.S. Consulates outside the United States. Successful applicants are issued an immigrant visa, which allows them six months to enter the country. Upon entry, immigrant visa holders obtain their green card from the INS. Numerical limits on immigrant visas control how many permanent residents actually enter the country each year.

The green card confers rights to employment and many public benefits that are not available to undocumented immigrants and nonimmigrant visa holders. Permanent resident status does not expire, however the green card may be revoked if the holder commits a serious crime or engages in other specific activities, including leaving the United States for more than a year without seeking permission.

Adjustment of Status. There are provisions that allow nonimmigrant visa holders and undocumented immigrants who are already in the country to apply to become permanent residents. Some of these provisions were temporary or only available to people who were in the country during given years. Others remain available but eligibility criteria limit their applicability to most immigrants. The INS “admitted” 157,548 permanent residents in California through adjustment of status proceedings in 1997 and 1998.¹⁰⁹

Naturalization

In general, people are required to hold green cards for at least five years before qualifying for naturalization. They must be at least 18 years old and have been in the United States lawfully for at least five years as a continuous resident, three years if married to a U.S. citizen. Any absence of 12 or more months terminates consideration of the residency period and the person must start the five-year period anew. Generally, an applicant must demonstrate good moral character and pass a citizenship, history and English test to qualify for citizenship.

Naturalized citizens hold all the rights and responsibilities that native-born citizens hold with the exception of the right to become the president of the United States.

The process of naturalization can be risky. An application can expose an immigrant to the discovery of legal problems that can cause the INS to seek their removal from the country. During the naturalization process the applicant is fingerprinted and the FBI performs a background check. The applicant is then scheduled for an interview, which may be delayed by as much as one year because of backlogs.

The INS is generally required to make a naturalization decision within four months. If approved, new citizens are sworn in. Applicants who are denied can appeal. If the appeal is denied, a second appeal can be made before a federal judge. Seeking an appeal can jeopardize a person's green card status.

Unless an applicant has been denied for a reason that will permanently prevent them from becoming a naturalized citizen, the applicant can reapply. Some challenges to the good moral character standard are permanent, such as committing two or more serious felonies. Other challenges fit into a five-year time frame. Applicants who commit perjury within five years prior to their application will be denied. They can reapply after five years have passed.

Moral Ground, Language and Civics Requirements

Moral Ground. Applicants are permanently barred from naturalization if they have been convicted of murder or an aggravated felony. Applicants can be denied if during the last five years they have:

- ✓ Been convicted of crimes involving moral turpitude, controlled substances, gambling or were sentenced to 5 years or more.
- ✓ Been involved in prostitution or commercialized vice.
- ✓ Been involved in smuggling illegal aliens into the United States.
- ✓ Been habitual drunkards or practiced polygamy.
- ✓ Willfully failed or refused to support dependents.
- ✓ Given false testimony, under oath, in order to receive a benefit under immigration statutes.
- ✓ Language. Federal law stipulates that applicants to become naturalized citizens must have an "understanding of the English language, including the ability to read, write, and speak...simple words and phrases...in ordinary uses."

The English Exam. During the naturalization interview INS officers ask applicants to read and write sample sentences. INS provides examples of the sentences applicants are asked to read and write, including:

- America is the land of freedom.
- He has a very big dog.
- I am too busy to talk today.
- I bought a blue car today.

History and Civics Exam. They must also have knowledge of the fundamentals of history and government in the United States. Certain exemptions are available.

Sample Civic Questions.

- What are the colors of the U.S. flag?
- In what year was the U.S. Constitution written?
- What is the most important right granted to U.S. citizens?
- What INS form is used to apply for naturalized citizenship?

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Immigration and Integration

The federal government has sole jurisdiction over immigration policy, but it does not have programs in place to help those newcomers integrate into community life. In contrast, Germany, Canada, Australia and other industrialized nations have well developed, federal “integration” programs. In the United States, integration is generally left to state and local governments and community organizations, although limited federal funding is available.¹¹⁰

Integration policies generally refer to helping immigrants understand, navigate and participate in the social, economic and political aspects of society. They can help immigrants understand the law and cultural practices that lead to mutual trust and respect in their communities. They can enable immigrants to start a business, find a job or otherwise become economically self-sufficient. And they can help immigrants develop the confidence to participate in civic organizations and self-governance activities, such as voting and community organizing.

A number of local, state and national governments have taken concrete steps to integrate immigrants. In some places those efforts are only extended to refugees, as federal funding is available for refugee services. In others, integration efforts reach out to all newcomers. The following list is not exhaustive.

Community Efforts

Santa Clara County. Santa Clara County stands out as the most assertive county in California in its efforts to promote immigrant integration. The county conducted an 18-month assessment of immigrant needs and developed a guide for community organizations, public agencies and employers to help them understand the needs and perspectives of immigrants.¹¹¹

Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. These two counties jointly assessed housing and related needs for the Salinas and Pajaro valleys. The assessment provides local policy-makers with clear information on housing, health care and related issues for a significant sub-population.¹¹²

Building the New American Community. Three communities around the country have received funding to support immigrant integration through a collaboration directed by the National Conference of State Legislatures’ Immigrant Policy Project. The initiative, titled “Building the New American Community,” is intended to help community leaders

promote immigrant success and self-sufficiency. Funding has been distributed to Lowell, Massachusetts; Nashville, Tennessee; and, Portland, Oregon.¹¹³

Community Organizations. Historically, the bulk of immigrant integration efforts were provided through community and faith-based organizations. Foundations, non-profit associations, charitable entities, faith-based and other organizations still help immigrants get established in their new communities. Some public funding is available to support the work of these organizations.

In fiscal year 2001-02, the California Department of Community Services and Development provided \$6 million in state funds to local governments and nonprofit community-based organizations to help legal permanent residents become naturalized. Services include outreach, assessment of eligibility for naturalization, citizenship preparation, English instruction and referral to other naturalization services.

Schools. State funding for immigrant services also is available through K-12, community colleges and adult schools. Los Angeles City College, for example, created the Citizenship Center in 1992. Classes prepare immigrants for the history examination and INS interview. English instruction is offered and staff help immigrants prepare their INS application packet. In 2002, 800 students have completed the program. LAUSD, through its Division of Adult and Career Education, provided citizenship preparation classes and services to approximately 6,000 students in 2001 with a naturalization success rate of 95 percent for those who completed the program. Many other community colleges and school districts offer similar services.

Other State Efforts

Illinois. The Illinois Immigrant Policy Project Roundtable Initiative brings together state and local officials, researchers, immigrant organizations and others to address four challenges: immigration policy and law, workforce issues, education and health and human services. The project has done needs assessments in the Chicago area, estimated the costs of expanding welfare and education services for immigrants, and explored how immigrants are revitalizing the Midwest.¹¹⁴

Iowa. Iowa is exploring model community programs that can help more immigrants be self-sufficient. The State also recruits immigrants from around the country who have specialized skills needed by important industries with workforce shortages because of the retirement of technicians. Precision machinists and other skilled workers are particularly sought in some parts of Iowa. The New Iowans Program,

sponsored through the University of Northern Iowa, has produced a “Guide for Citizens and Communities” and helps community leaders, neighbors and immigrants understand and address the pressures and challenges that immigrants bring to new communities.¹¹⁵

Maryland. The Maryland Office for New Americans works to help immigrants participate fully in the economic, cultural and civic life of their communities. The office provides public information, outreach and assistance for immigrants working to become naturalized citizens.¹¹⁶

California’s Commission of Immigration and Housing: 1913 – 1945

“It has been the declared public policy of the State of California since 1913 to encourage the immigrant who regards this country as his home to become an American citizen.” – 1940, Guide to Citizenship. California Commission of Immigration and Housing

From 1913 to 1945 the California Commission of Immigration and Housing worked to support the “Americanization” of immigrants. Formed in response to fears that the opening of the Panama Canal would increase immigration to California, the Commission was intended to help immigrants establish their footing. Early materials note:

The Commission was created on the conviction that all problems which touch the immigrant take on a distinct aspect peculiar to no problem of the native born. It was built upon that conviction that the foreign born suffers great hardships because, from the moment of his arrival, he is placed at a disadvantage, and that in order that he may be placed upon equal footing with his native born-neighbor, definite constructive aid must be given to him in overcoming his handicaps.

The Commission had four departments:

- **Complaint Department.** The department was an information and advice service. It provided legal aid and assisted immigrants in applying to bring their families into the United States. It also heard grievances and advocated for the rights of immigrants with employers and local agencies.
- **Department of Camp Sanitation.** Throughout California’s history, many immigrants have worked in labor camps. The department established camp sanitation standards and enforced state laws regarding the operation and design of labor camps.
- **Department of Housing.** The department enforced California’s housing laws. Housing was seen as a fundamental challenge of immigrants, thus the department focused its efforts on helping immigrants secure appropriate, safe and healthy housing.
- **Department of Immigrant Education.** The department worked with the State Board of Education “in working out methods of Americanization teaching.”

The Commission also housed the State Committee for Americanization, which included the Commissioners, members of the State Board of Education and representatives from the University of California, Extension Division. The Commission was disbanded in 1945. The wave of immigrants that was anticipated had not materialized because of changes in immigration law. The State also recognized that immigrants, like native residents, were being served by all state agencies. The responsibilities of the Commission were integrated into the operations of existing or newly emerging state agencies.

Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants uses federal resettlement funding to help refugees get settled.¹¹⁷ Notable aspects of the program include:

- ✓ Citizenship and democracy education that addresses the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a participatory democracy.
- ✓ Information on crime and victimization in newcomer communities.
- ✓ Education for employers and employees on discrimination based on national origin and citizenship status.
- ✓ Leadership training for potential leaders from immigrant communities.

Nebraska. The Nebraska Legislature has established a task force to examine strategies to better integrate immigrants into local communities and the state economy. The task force is exploring the role of the state in supporting immigrant independence.

Canadian Efforts

Canada has developed a federal strategy for the integration of immigrants. The strategy includes a language-training component, instruction on Canadian values and helping Canadians understand the diverse backgrounds of immigrants. The goals of the strategy include helping newcomers adapt and understand the customs of their new community, as well as their rights and obligations in Canada.¹¹⁸

Information on Canada was made available to the Commission through the Canadian Department of Citizenship and Immigration with assistance from the Canadian Consul General in Los Angeles.

Recognizing the Responsibilities of Immigrants

Finding 1: Immigrant policies fail to encourage immigrants to fully participate in their communities, be contributing community members, and become citizens.

For more than 150 years immigrants have made California their home. And in turn, they have transformed California into a dynamic and desirable place to live. A majority of native-born Californians today are first-, second- or third-generation descendents of immigrants. California, like the United States, truly is a land of immigrants.

People continue to stream into the United States, and more head to California than any other state.¹¹⁹ They come seeking work or to reunite their families. Some flee persecution. Mostly, immigrants come for the opportunities that define California.

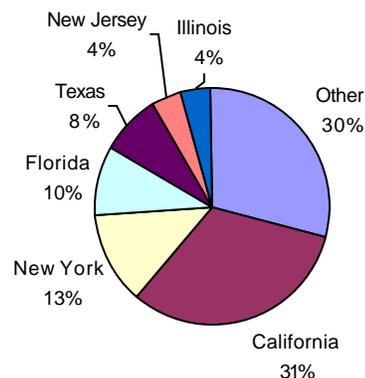
Broad Support for Responsible Immigrants

Immigrants of the past built California's railroads and water systems. They developed its world-class agricultural economy and labored to make the state a leader in manufacturing and higher education. More recent arrivals helped build California's high-technology industry and powered the tourism industry. Today, as in the past, immigrants also have responded to calls for duty and served this country in the armed forces.¹²⁰ Millions have transformed themselves from newcomers to patriots with their commitment the United States.

Immigrants continue to transform ideas and hard work into successful businesses, vibrant community organizations and responsible families. They have sought, and often found, the "American Dream."

But not all immigrants are willing to make the commitment to become part of the American community. Some fail to enroll their children in school, pay for car insurance or flout other community standards. And some appear unwilling to address the challenges that detract from the quality of life in their new communities.

Six States Make Up 70% of Nation's Foreign-Born Population



Source: Census Brief: Current Population Survey, "Coming to America: A Profile of the Nation's Foreign Born (2000 Update)." February 2002.

The public has taken note. Some statewide and community organizations have called for immigration reform, stronger enforcement of immigration law and reduced immigration levels.¹²¹ Most often, these organizations make a distinction between documented and undocumented immigrants. They argue that documented immigrants should be afforded rights and opportunities, while undocumented immigrants should be sent home.¹²²

In contrast, local officials often draw a different line between who should stay and who should not. They recognize that their communities have become dependent on undocumented labor and that most undocumented immigrants are part of a family of U.S. citizens and permanent residents.¹²³ They are unlikely to run after every undocumented immigrant. But those same officials target people who have failed to meet expectations of community life, regardless of immigration or citizenship status.

Local police chiefs dance around obligations to collaborate with INS to identify immigrants who are undocumented, but otherwise law-abiding residents.¹²⁴ Yet law enforcement officers quickly turn over the “bad guys.” Even INS officers report focusing on immigrants who become criminals, regardless of their immigration status.¹²⁵

***Local Officials Unconcerned about Undocumented,
Concerned about Criminals***

Many local officials, including law enforcement leaders, have signaled their unwillingness to identify or report undocumented immigrants to federal authorities. They cite conflict between obligations under federal law and local priorities for public safety, public health, education and the economy.

Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Police Department has adopted a policy that prevents officers from arresting, investigating or booking a person because of their authorized status in the United States. The LAPD policy manual states that “undocumented alien status in itself is not a matter for police action. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all employees of this Department to make a personal commitment to equal enforcement of the law and service to the public, regardless of alien status.”

San Francisco. San Francisco has adopted a policy that prohibits the use of public funds to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration laws or the gathering and dissemination of information regarding immigration status unless mandated by federal or state law or a court decision.

Sources: Los Angeles Police Department. February 2001. “Report of the Rampart Independent Review Panel.” Page 1. San Francisco Municipal Code. Section 12H.2. Use of City Funds Prohibited.

Benefits of Clear Expectations

While behavior is more important to communities than legal status, it is often unclear how immigrants are expected to contribute. Brookings Institution scholar Peter Skerry reports on an interview with an immigrant organizer in Chicago expressing his frustration, saying: “I wish to hell someone would tell us how we’re supposed to act here!”¹²⁶ And immigrants profess that the written and unwritten rules of community life in the United States often are unclear.¹²⁷

Around the country, efforts to help immigrants understand how to be responsible community members are widely praised. In San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, court officials are directing immigrants with repeat traffic violations into classes instead of jail. Teaching immigrants to uphold their community responsibilities has proven to be more effective at reducing inappropriate behavior than punishment or fines.¹²⁸

Community leaders and immigrants in Monterey County point out that immigrants want to be successful, but they often need help understanding how. Officials with a non-profit housing program in Salinas help new homeowners and renters understand community expectations for taking care of homes or apartments. They point out that finding permanent housing requires more than cobbling together the financing. It means understanding the responsibilities of being a homeowner or renter.¹²⁹

Setting Expectations

Setting clear expectations can help immigrants make the transition from newcomers to responsible community members. And clear expectations can speed immigrants to personal success – by encouraging them to learn English, develop social networks, and access education and training programs that lead to expanded opportunities.

Learning English opens doors to employment and better wages.¹³⁰ Developing connections in the community can broaden networks of social capital. Awareness of community resources improves access to financing, technical assistance and guidance for those interested in becoming entrepreneurs or addressing community needs. And the ability to navigate the public education and job training system, housing programs and the legal system can help ensure that

Expectations of Immigrants

Immigrants and other residents can benefit from clear, reasonable expectations to be responsible community members.

The Commission believes that all residents, including immigrants, should be expected to:

- Learn English.
- Obey the law and support public safety.
- Know their rights.
- Pay taxes.
- Work toward self-sufficiency and care for family members.
- Be engaged in civic affairs.

both adults and children can pursue new opportunities and are free from exploitation.

Residents at large also benefit when immigrants develop a sense of belonging and responsibility to their communities. Responsible neighbors help ensure public safety and obey the law. They fulfill parental obligations, respect public resources, participate in civic affairs and ensure the accountability of public officials.

Making that transition – from newcomer to responsible community member – is what immigrant integration entails. Immigrants, by virtue of their willingness to leave their homelands, are risk-takers and achievers.¹³¹ Integrating them into California can speed their ability to make lasting contributions.

1. English is an Avenue to Participation. There is at least one area where immigrant advocates and their opponents agree: that immigrants should learn English. Most immigrants recognize the value of learning English.¹³² English-language skills open avenues to better paying jobs, increase opportunities to build social networks, and help ensure that immigrants will not be victimized by unscrupulous translators and others on whom they otherwise must depend.¹³³

Yet learning a new language can be exceptionally difficult, particularly for those adults with limited or no formal education in their native language.¹³⁴ Adults who must work, care for their children and address the many other chores of daily life have little time to attend classes. In fact, learning a new language is a challenge that nearly all adults in the United States would find overwhelming.

Nonetheless, learning English is essential to accelerate self-sufficiency and community participation. California has the largest education and training system for adults in the country. Through the community colleges, and the network of adult education programs, California has the capacity to educate 1 in 10 adults in California in a single year.¹³⁵ Despite those resources, immigrants face numerous barriers to learning English through the colleges.¹³⁶

Some communities tailor English classes to immigrants. At San Francisco City College, immigrants

The Value of Bilingual Skills

All immigrants should be sufficiently proficient in English to address day-to-day language needs.

Bilingual skills, in English and a second language, are valuable for all residents, not just immigrants. California's competitiveness in a global economy and its prosperity as a global community is furthered when a majority of residents are proficient in English and at least one other language. Consider the value of language skills:

- Lack of English proficiency within the U.S. immigrant population costs the economy more than \$175 billion annually.
- It costs U.S. companies an average of \$1 million to replace an employee who leaves an overseas post. Over half of employees who leave those positions do so because they could not adjust to language and cultural differences.
- English and bilingual skills expand job opportunities.

Sources: National Center for Policy Analysis. David Howard. November 1, 2001. "Lost in Translation." *Smart Business*. Deborah Sharp. May 9, 2001. "Spanish Study Boom in U.S." *USA Today*.

work on English skills while learning about employment rights and life skills.¹³⁷ Other colleges have integrated English-language training with vocational courses to provide a context for their new language that also can improve job opportunities.¹³⁸

Under existing policies, there is no explicit incentive for immigrants to learn English. The naturalization process requires applicants for citizenship to understand and speak from a sample of short sentences. Critics point out that standards for passing the required English test are seemingly arbitrary, do not reward those who actually learn English, and fail to set a meaningful minimum standard that would permit an immigrant to communicate clearly in English.¹³⁹

Of equal concern, there is no English language requirement for permanent residents. Less than half of immigrants in California naturalize.¹⁴⁰ Those who choose to maintain their permanent residency status face no English-language requirements.

2. Public Safety is a Common Good. Many immigrants – and refugees in particular – come to the United States because this country is safe. Respecting the rule of law, as many opponents of illegal immigration point out, is a fundamental tenet of membership in the U.S. community.

But many immigrants are leery of law enforcement officials. They may have been victimized by corrupt and unscrupulous agents in their homelands. And many fear that local police could cooperate with the INS to identify and deport undocumented residents.¹⁴¹ But the lack of trust between a segment of the community and law enforcement officials undermines public safety for everyone.

In Sacramento County, Ukrainian immigrant Nikolay Soltys was accused of killing his wife and children. Before he could be apprehended, he went into hiding. But tenuous trust and language barriers between the Ukrainian community and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department delayed his capture and undermined the safety of all residents.¹⁴²

While federal regulations require applicants for naturalization to be of good moral character, they fail to create an expectation that immigrants or new citizens should support community safety and understand their rights to protection under the law. For instance, under federal policies, immigrants who have committed perjury or been arrested for prostitution can be denied citizenship.¹⁴³ But unless a permanent resident seeks citizenship, the moral character standard is not invoked. Permanent residents who choose not to seek citizenship face no special incentive to support community standards. And immigrants, whether or not they are

seeking citizenship, are not encouraged to become familiar with the public safety and criminal justice systems in the United States.

3. Awareness of Rights is Fundamental. Immigrants must know the rights ensured by the Constitutions, including the right to engage in self-governance. They must also understand the value of respecting the rights of others, the right to free speech and expression. The United States was founded on notions of self-governance and individual freedoms that continue to guide meaningful debates over the accountability of public officials to all residents.

Immigrant advocates have labored to ensure that immigrants are afforded all appropriate protections and are aware of their rights in the workforce, in housing, education, health and elsewhere. These protections help ensure that all families have appropriate opportunities to succeed. And they promote recognition for core American values of freedom, justice, fairness and opportunity. But federal policies governing permanent resident status and citizenship fail to ensure that immigrants are adequately aware of their rights or their responsibilities to respect the rights of others. And state immigrant policies do not fill this gap.

4. Responsibility for Children and Family Members is Essential. A goal of public services in California is to ensure that Californians can establish and maintain their social and economic independence. A majority of families benefit from public services, particularly public education, at some point in their lives. But the public safety net is not intended or designed as an alternative to personal responsibility.

The Public Charge

For over 100 years, federal immigration law has barred immigrants from entering the United States or becoming permanent residents if they are determined likely to become a “public charge.”

Cash assistance and institutionalization for long-term care, including care provided under Medicaid are considered when determining whether a person is likely to become dependent on public assistance. Other benefits, such as food assistance, child care services or job training are not considered.

Receipt of public benefits is not a factor in the naturalization process and certain categories of immigrants, such as refugees and asylees, are exempt from the public charge test.

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Immigrants must understand their responsibility to ensure the well-being of their children and other family members. Children should be enrolled in school to ensure they have the education and skills necessary to live as self-sufficient adults. They should receive adequate and appropriate nutrition and health care that can prevent long-term health problems. And families must secure stable housing that affords family members the health and safety they require to succeed in school, work and in their personal lives.

A federal standard precludes immigrants from becoming permanent residents if they would become dependent on the state, or become a “public charge.” But public policies do not ensure that immigrants are aware of their

responsibilities toward their families or understand how public services can clear their path to self-sufficiency.

5. *Engaging in Civic Affairs is Beneficial.* The responsiveness of government is dependent on residents holding public officials accountable. And that accountability can require understanding the goals of public programs, how government operates, and calling attention to deficiencies. Perhaps more than any other benefit of U.S. citizenship, immigrants beam with pride when granted the right to vote.¹⁴⁴ But civic engagement, and voting in particular, is threatened by public policies that fail to encourage immigrants to become citizens and to hold public officials accountable.¹⁴⁵

In California, just 47.5 percent of immigrants have naturalized.¹⁴⁶ In California's 2002 March primary just 35 percent of eligible voters went to the polls.¹⁴⁷ Some potential voters failed to register. Others registered but failed to participate in the election. And over 3 million Californians who are voting age are ineligible to vote because they are immigrants who have not naturalized.¹⁴⁸ At the present high rate of immigration, and with the current low levels of naturalization, the percentage of residents who are eligible to hold public officials accountable through the voting booth will remain low.

Becoming a Citizen

Francisco is a 41-year-old immigrant from the San Joaquin Valley. He recalls jumping the fence to enter the United States around 1977. He doesn't recall exactly when. He came to visit his sister, not to work. Then he met the woman who would become his wife. She too was in the country illegally. They chose to stay. For 17 years he followed the harvests – picking lettuce, broccoli and other crops. Then he hurt his back. Two surgeries forced him to think of a life out of the fields.

He went to college, took English classes at night and began to involve himself in community affairs – his kid's schools, housing issues, and other social challenges in his neighborhood.

In the late 1980s Francisco petitioned for permanent resident status under Reagan's amnesty program. He is currently in the process of becoming a U.S. citizen.

Two of his five children are in college, and a third is reviewing competing offers from several universities. His two youngest children are in elementary school.

Recounting his achievements and his opportunity – he is planning to buy a house soon – Francisco reflected, "There is no question that in order to succeed, and to not just survive, we need to advance in life. We need to become U.S. citizens." He added, "we need to do this for the sake of our children."

He also commented, "Someone asked me recently why immigrants don't really like their neighborhoods. Junk cars, graffiti, garbage everywhere. I said when was the last time that you were living in a home with two or three families. I am saying this not really to make them right or wrong. That is a fact. The fact is that we need to get the right tool to motivate the masses to really participate ... that is the only way that we are going to fully guarantee democracy in the State of California."

In short, residency and naturalization policies do not support and reinforce the responsibility of immigrants to learn English, uphold the law, understand their rights, address family responsibilities, and engage in civic affairs. Existing public policies do not encourage immigrants to integrate into a community when they arrive, when establishing residency, or when they become citizens. Thus the benefits that immigrants bring to California are delayed.

Responsibility Should Have Its Rewards

The majority of immigrants who come to California are hard working individuals seeking greater opportunity for themselves and their family. Most do integrate into California's social, political and economic systems. Some families integrate sooner; others require several generations before they exercise ownership of their new country.

But others violate established community standards, threaten public safety and remain economically dependent. They fail to productively integrate. With some exceptions, federal immigration and naturalization policies do not distinguish between immigrants who are responsible community members and those who are not.

Federal immigration and naturalization policies could be crafted to reward immigrants who are responsible community members. Residency and citizenship could be tied to characteristics necessary to maintain the prosperity and quality of life that draws people to California. The federal government could be urged to better align federal policies with community priorities, a topic that is discussed in detail in Finding 3.

The State makes distinctions between documented and undocumented immigrants when creating eligibility standards for public health, welfare and education and training programs. Those distinctions often are based on extensions of federal law, the politics of immigration, or short-term budget concerns. Those standards have not been driven by whether immigrants are making contributions to California. And recently, more benefits are being extended to all immigrants, regardless of their integration, legal status or interest in becoming citizens.¹⁴⁹

The current approach to awarding benefits fails to distinguish between those who will stay and those who chose only to remain temporarily. It fails to create incentives for immigrants to become citizens. And it does not recognize that some immigrants are responsible community members and some are not. Thus it delays benefits, to citizens and newcomers, that responsible community members bring to communities.

Alternatively, California could create incentives for immigrants to work toward becoming permanent residents and ultimately citizens. The State could establish a residency program that would allow immigrants who meet specific eligibility criteria to benefit from public programs.

For instance, eligibility could be granted to immigrants who pay taxes, work or actively participate in education and training programs, are learning English, enroll their children in school and abide by the law. Enrollment in the residency program could open doors to public programs. Existing policies tend to award all benefits to all immigrants, or determine eligibility based on how long an immigrant has been in the United States, regardless of their commitment to the country. A residency program could award benefits to responsible immigrants and encourage them to make a long-term investment in California.

A residency program could offer assistance and advocacy with the immigration and naturalization process. The benefits of participating in such a program are outlined in greater detail in Finding 2.

More than three-fourths of immigrants in California are legal residents. California can establish a residency program that would give priority for public services to legal immigrants who make a commitment to California. The State must also advocate before federal officials to reform a system that results in so many undocumented immigrants. Until immigration policies are aligned with state and community goals, California should, where not in violation of federal law, extend benefits to undocumented immigrants who make a commitment to their communities.

Recommendation 1: California should establish goals for immigrant integration and create incentives for immigrants to achieve those goals. The Governor and Legislature should:

- ***Establish the Golden State Residency Program.*** The Governor and Legislature should establish a program that encourages immigrants to establish residency and become citizens. It should create incentives for immigrants to integrate and support those who contribute to their communities. Participation should be open to documented immigrants – and until federal policies are reformed, undocumented immigrants. Criteria for participation could include:
 - ✓ ***Commitment to establish citizenship.*** The program could be limited to immigrants who demonstrate they want to become U.S. citizens and enforce a time frame for establishing citizenship, once a person is eligible.

- ✓ **Responsibility to local community.** The program could ensure that participants have a history of paying taxes, are law abiding, and are employed or engaged in workforce development and training programs, where appropriate.
- ✓ **Proficiency in English.** The program could ensure that participants have practical English skills or are actively engaged in English-language training where appropriate.
- ✓ **Participation in civic affairs.** The program could ensure that participants are actively involved in local civic affairs through public, volunteer and community-based organizations and other opportunities.
- ✓ **Responsibility for children and other family members.** The program should ensure that immigrants are fully responsible for the needs and nurturing of their children and care of other dependent family members. Children should be enrolled in school, in a health plan and have adequate housing.

Participants in the Golden State Residency Program would be eligible for a range of benefits comparable to those afforded citizens. The program should take adequate measures to ensure that information pertaining to the legal status of immigrants is kept confidential and that participation in the program does not expose participants to an increased risk of adverse actions by federal immigration officials. Finding 2 discusses the opportunities available to participants in detail.

- **Develop a public awareness campaign on the rights and responsibilities of immigrants.** The State should develop – or encourage foundations and civic organizations to develop – a series of public awareness campaigns on the following issues:
 - ✓ The importance of proficiency in English, and the value of bilingual skills.
 - ✓ Immigrant rights, including freedom from abuse and harassment, and protection from fraud.
 - ✓ Immigrant responsibilities to their communities, including the need to pay taxes, be law abiding, secure employment and establish and maintain economic self-sufficiency.
 - ✓ Parental and family responsibilities and child welfare laws.
 - ✓ Avenues to civic involvement and ways to promote community improvement.
 - ✓ Current and historic contributions of immigrants to California and individual communities.

Supporting Immigrant Success

Finding 2: California has an obligation to help immigrants succeed. But policies that ration access to public services hinder many from becoming responsible, successful community members.

Over the last century, California has developed programs that fuel economic and social success. Public programs – including education and training, public health and welfare, and economic development services – are intended to help residents become self-sufficient, and to make social, artistic and economic contributions to their communities and the state.

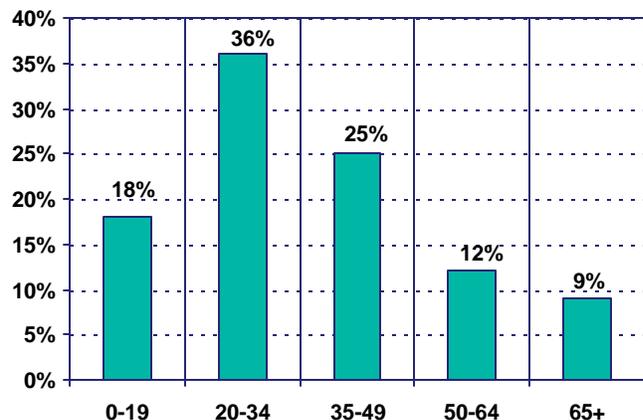
Immigrants, as with native-born Californians, have the potential to make lasting contributions to their communities. Residents who do not become self-sufficient, however, can impose significant public and social costs. As described in Finding 1, all residents have responsibilities to their communities. Yet many individuals rely on public programs to help them meet those responsibilities. For individuals and communities to be successful, public programs must effectively and efficiently serve some of California’s poorest residents, many of whom are immigrants.

Investing in Immigrants

One in four Californians is a first-generation immigrant.¹⁵⁰ And nearly 20 percent of those immigrants are under the age of 19.¹⁵¹ They are in their formative years, which presents an important opportunity to quickly and effectively integrate them into the social and economic framework of their communities. Well-educated, healthy children have vastly improved work opportunities, lower rates of criminal involvement and are more likely to become self-reliant adults.¹⁵²

Another 47 percent of recent immigrants are in their 20s and 30s.¹⁵³ Many young adult immigrants, particularly those from Mexico and Central America, did not receive adequate formal schooling in their homelands.¹⁵⁴ But most have technical skills or a profound desire to work hard and earn their way out of poverty. High quality education and training programs can improve their earning potential and enhance their self-sufficiency.

Immigrants are Concentrated in Young Adult Age Groups



Source: Hans P. Johnson, PPIC. Based on 1990 Census.

Just 16 percent of first-generation immigrants in California are of retirement age.¹⁵⁵ Most come to the United States through family reunification programs.¹⁵⁶ And many of these older adults work. They also care for their grandchildren, impart community and cultural values to their families and establish themselves as community leaders among immigrants.

Education is Key to Economic Success

The stakes are high for individuals, their families and California's communities. Long-term prosperity is dependent on ensuring a qualified and capable workforce. Consider the following trends:

- Throughout the 1990s, just 20 percent of jobs nationwide went to low-skilled employees.
- Low-skilled workers are more likely to hold part-time or temporary jobs with low pay and inadequate benefits.
- In 2015, when many of today's elementary-age children will graduate, a high school education alone will provide 40 percent less in real earnings than it did 30 years ago.
- The economy is primarily producing jobs that require some college education – not necessarily a college degree, but at least a year or two of college.
- Workers with greater educational levels are less likely to lose a job and when they do, they recover faster.
- An educated workforce contributes to economic and social stability.
- On average, a high school graduate earns \$22,895 annually compared to a four-year degree holder, who earns \$40,478.

Source: Cited in Little Hoover Commission. 1999. *Open Doors and Open Minds: Improving Access and Quality in California Community Colleges*. Sacramento, CA: Little Hoover Commission.

Many immigrants who come to the United States choose to stay.¹⁵⁷ As with native-born residents, the public sector can invest in immigrants who will make California their home, and help them to quickly become self-sufficient. Alternatively, communities can struggle to address the needs of an expanding population of poor residents with limited opportunities to become self-reliant.

High Stakes of Integration

Most communities are trying to help residents access services that can strengthen their financial independence. Many immigrants come to California with the skills and resources they need to be successful. But others have limited employment and English skills, diminishing their opportunities.

More than other indicators, education and skills determine the earnings of immigrants.¹⁵⁸ The value of education is magnified for some segments of the population. Latina women with bachelor's degrees earn an average of 82 percent more than those with high school degrees. Latino males earn about 60 more if they hold bachelor's degrees.¹⁵⁹

Economic analyses suggest that over time, the tax revenues that immigrants as a whole pay into government coffers exceed the added costs

that low-income immigrants place on public programs. Adult immigrants with less than a high school education, over their lifetime, draw more from public services than they pay in taxes at a cost of about \$13,000 each. In contrast, more educated immigrants each contribute about \$198,000 more than they cost.¹⁶⁰

Equipping immigrants to be independent can help promote a high standard of living throughout local communities struggling to address a host of social and economic challenges. Through its investment in welfare, health care and particularly education and training programs, California has made a commitment to assist individuals become independent. But, for these programs to be successful, they must be successful for immigrants.

The debate over extending public benefits to immigrants often focuses on the costs of providing services versus the savings associated with restricting access. Public benefits also are construed as enticing more immigrants to come to California or as inhibiting their willingness to work hard. These debates are driven by short-term budget concerns or political perceptions of the value of immigrants.

The demographic data, however, indicate that California can ill afford to ignore the needs of immigrants who will be long-term residents. California's 10 million immigrants possess dramatic potential to safeguard California's prosperity or threaten it. An investment in education, training and other services can ensure they will make lasting contributions. Ignoring their needs will magnify public sector costs and social and economic challenges.

Real Fiscal Limits

Just as the State cannot afford to ignore the potential of its immigrants, it cannot afford to provide unbridled access to public resources to anyone who enters California. Immigrants present real costs that weaken the capacity of the public safety net to address the needs of citizens and immigrants alike.

Like native-born residents, immigrants who cannot support themselves and their families magnify the burdens on the public sector. Unemployed immigrants crowd street corners as they jostle for temporary work at day-laborer pick-up sites. They increase demands on charities and social service agencies that work to help them meet housing, health care and welfare needs.

Impoverished immigrants increase the costs of food stamp and welfare programs.¹⁶¹ Immigrant households are more likely than native-born households to receive public assistance.¹⁶² California's schools educate some 678,548 immigrant children, increasing the annual costs of the public school system.

One estimate suggests that illegal immigrants alone increase state costs by an additional \$3 billion each year.¹⁶³

Immigrants who cannot support themselves place other demands on the communities where they live. Homeless immigrants add to the blight of inner cities where they congregate. Overcrowded housing brings down property values. And immigrants who become involved in crime and violence threaten the safety and sanctity of homes and businesses.

Maintaining A Precarious Balance

In an attempt to balance public interests, California restricts access to benefits using various criteria. Some programs provide benefits only to immigrants who hold federal refugee status. Others restrict eligibility to permanent residents. In health programs, some aid is targeted to immigrant farm workers, such as funding for rural clinics. Other aid is specifically for young children, such as Healthy Families, although access is limited to residents who hold certain immigration statuses.¹⁶⁴ Eligibility criteria allow the State and counties to limit expenditures while providing services to some needy individuals and families.

But a narrow focus on holding down short-term expenses can undermine primary public goals. Santa Clara and San Francisco counties have implemented plans to provide health care to all children living in their counties, including undocumented immigrant children.¹⁶⁵ County officials recognize that universal, preventive health care can reduce long-term costs, lower use of expensive emergency room services and better enable children to pay attention in school and develop the skills necessary to be self-sufficient as adults. These counties are turning to local, non-traditional sources of funding to cover children who are not eligible for state or federal health plans. The foundation community, in particular, is funding essential services that are inadequately covered by public sources.¹⁶⁶

In Los Angeles County, officials from children's mental health, juvenile justice and education programs are cobbling together funding to ensure that all children, including immigrant children, receive mental health services that help them succeed in school and avoid the juvenile justice system.¹⁶⁷ Officials in Los Angeles recognize that immigrant children have the same primary needs as native-born children. Ignoring those needs undermines fundamental goals of education and increases short-term and long-term costs.

Eligibility criteria that are driven by short-term budget concerns and the politics of immigration policy erode the ability of communities to invest in

needy, and likely permanent residents. Thus communities are forced to ration services and forgo opportunities to prevent future costs and avoidable, negative outcomes.

Linking Benefits to Responsible Behavior

A number of states have created incentives for immigrants to make decisions that support the long-term goals of communities and the state. Several states have tied continued eligibility for benefits to requirements that immigrants take steps to become citizens.

In Connecticut, permanent residents who are eligible for state-funded Temporary Family Assistance and State-Administered General Assistance must pursue naturalization when they are eligible or they lose access to these programs.¹⁶⁸ New Jersey has a similar requirement for its state-funded food stamp program.¹⁶⁹ New Jersey also requires immigrants to seek citizenship as part of its teacher credential program. The State will revoke a teaching license if an immigrant fails to become a naturalized citizen within a specific time frame.¹⁷⁰

After federal welfare reform restricted benefits to some legal immigrants, 19 states enacted their own programs to assist those left out of the federal program. Three of those states also require permanent residents to seek naturalization to continue their eligibility.¹⁷¹

California has an even larger challenge. The state has a larger percentage of immigrants, a significant percentage of whom are undocumented. Still, efforts in other states demonstrate that state policies can be used to encourage immigrants to establish citizenship.

These policies recognize that immigrants can make long-term contributions to their communities, but not all do so. A public investment in immigrants can be tied to their willingness to make a commitment to the state and their community.

Barriers Limit Effectiveness of Services

Incentives can reinforce the importance of immigrants being responsible community members. And providing access to public services can augment the natural ability of immigrants to be self-sufficient. But many immigrants face barriers to accessing the services that can move them toward self-reliance. In some cases, barriers are explicit policy decisions that exclude immigrants from participating in public programs, often because of their immigration status. Other barriers are program characteristics that fail to recognize the needs of a diverse population.

Enrolling More Children in Medi-Cal

California has 1.85 million children without medical insurance. Two-thirds of them are eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families, but are not enrolled. Among the barriers:

- ✓ Applications are confusing and complicated.
- ✓ Clients have unpleasant experiences with eligibility workers.
- ✓ Clients are not aware of the availability of coverage.
- ✓ Immigrants may be reluctant to apply on behalf of their children.

Sources: E. Richard Brown, Ninez Ponce and Thomas Rice. 2001. *The State of Health Insurance in California: Recent Trends, Future Prospects*. Los Angeles, CA: Center for Health Policy Research, University of California, Los Angeles. Page 32. Medi-Cal Policy Institute. *Speaking Out: What Beneficiaries Say About the Medi-Cal Program*. March 2000. Page 13. Medi-Cal Policy Institute. *Opening the Door: Improving the Healthy Families/Medi-Cal Application Process*. October 1998.

Barriers also can be ineffective programs that fail to help immigrants address their needs.

Eligibility barriers limit access for many who could benefit. Eligibility criteria are used to limit who can participate in public programs. Health, welfare, education and training programs routinely place limits on who can receive benefits. Consequently, when they exclude immigrants, they limit opportunities to help them become responsible community members.

The 1996 federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) reduced the number of immigrants who are eligible for most federally funded programs. Under the law, immigrants are restricted from receiving federally funded food stamps, Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid services.¹⁷² The law also made it clear that

undocumented immigrants are ineligible to receive virtually all services that use federal funds, with the exception of vital health and education services.¹⁷³

In California, undocumented immigrants, until recently, were ineligible for reduced tuition at public colleges and universities.¹⁷⁴ Immigrants who lack proof of legal residency are ineligible to obtain state identification cards or driver's licenses.¹⁷⁵

Immigrant advocates assert that eligibility barriers prevent meritorious, yet undocumented, students from becoming doctors and teachers. They point out that the ban on driver's licenses prevent many immigrants from taking their children to school, to the doctor or driving to and from work.

Eligibility restrictions ultimately reduce the effectiveness of programs that are intended to help families move toward independence and increase the contributions that individuals make to their communities.

Immigration status is primary barrier. Undocumented immigrants are ineligible for many public services. Yet even when they can access programs, fear of detection by immigration authorities can prevent them from exercising their rights. Although federal welfare reform made adult immigrants ineligible for public health programs such as Medi-Cal, their U.S.-born children are eligible to receive publicly funded health services. With parents ineligible for care and concerned that participation

threatens chances of normalizing their legal status, or increases their risk of identification, many children do not fully benefit from these programs.

Immigration status also plays into state and federal tax policies. Federal and state tax agencies report no interest in tracking down undocumented immigrants. Yet many immigrants who pay taxes fail to receive credit for their contributions or to apply for refunds. The Franchise Tax Board (FTB) reports that it treats undocumented immigrants like anyone else, and will issue a tax refund to anyone who qualifies, regardless of their legal status. The FTB does not have data on the number of undocumented immigrants who file taxes. The Social Security Administration, however, reports that from 1990 to 1998 it received over \$20 billion in Social Security taxes for which people failed to receive credit because the social security numbers used did not match issued numbers. Analysts suspect undocumented workers paid the majority of these taxes.¹⁷⁶

Undocumented status also prevents some from reporting crimes, against themselves or others.¹⁷⁷ Women in particular can face domestic violence and feel helpless because their immigration status is often tied to that of their abuser.¹⁷⁸ And fraud by immigration consultants has received increasing scrutiny as immigrants report unscrupulous consultants taking advantage of people who are unlikely to report crimes because of their immigrant status.¹⁷⁹

Legal status also can complicate dealing with the legal system, housing and employment programs and other services.¹⁸⁰

Many local communities and the State have not clarified how public programs that may serve undocumented immigrants interact with federal immigration authorities. As a result, integration is slowed and the benefits of integration are delayed.

Lack of language and cultural proficiency prevent many from benefiting. State law requires government agencies to hire bilingual employees when more than five percent of the people they serve only speak languages other than English.¹⁸¹ But residents from diverse cultural and language backgrounds, regardless of their immigration or citizenship status, complain that public programs are not designed to serve them. The Legislature has convened two public forums to explore this issue.¹⁸²

The California Language Access Coalition and other organizations have documented instances in which residents did not benefit from public

services because culturally proficient staff and services were not available.

- A Mandarin-speaking worker sued her employer for back wages and overtime pay. The State Labor Commission asked the employer to translate for the employee because a Mandarin interpreter was not available.¹⁸³
- A woman who only speaks Chinese turned to the Employment Development Department for job assistance after being laid off. The department failed to direct the woman to a Chinese-language hotline maintained by the department, and as a result services that could have returned her to work quickly were delayed for several months until she turned to a community job services agency for assistance.
- A report prepared for the Latino Legislative Caucus and the Hispanic Republican Caucus found the greatest barriers to Latinos participating in employment training programs were language-related.¹⁸⁴
- In Los Angeles a woman mistakenly signed papers giving her baby up for adoption because she was under the impression the hospital would not give her the baby until she paid her bills in cash.¹⁸⁵
- According to a survey sponsored by the California Wellness Foundation, non-English speaking garment workers are reluctant to file workers' compensation claims for on-the-job injuries because they fear they will lose their jobs. Despite being eligible for compensation that can help them fully recover from injuries, many workers continue on the job, potentially complicating their injuries and increasing their long-term health needs.¹⁸⁶

The health care field in particular has been criticized for failing to provide culturally proficient care or to address the language needs of patients.¹⁸⁷ The State and Consumer Services Agency was recently directed by the Legislature to convene a task force on language and cultural barriers in health care and dentistry.¹⁸⁸

Because of their educational needs, children can face particular challenges. In 1988 immigrant advocates argued that the public school system is "woefully unprepared and inadequate" to address their needs.¹⁸⁹ Despite dramatic increases in funding for public schools, many graduates are still ill prepared to enter the workforce. Estimates suggest that nearly 50 percent of U.S. businesses provide remedial education – including basic skills in reading, writing, math and English – to their employees, the majority of whom are U.S. high school graduates.¹⁹⁰

When public programs do not address public needs, they undercut the value of public funding. They waste time and money. They prolong

poverty, increase dependence on other public services and undermine efforts to improve the quality of communities.

Ineffective programs undermine progress. Public programs that are ineffective and inefficient fail to help residents address their needs and become self-reliant. Many programs have unclear goals, and do not assess how well they are serving their customers.

Entrepreneurs who are unaware of small business assistance are likely to see their businesses fail. And many communities have not taken an adequate look at how regulations undermine the success of small, particularly home-based, businesses.¹⁹¹ Families that do not receive help when their children first experience learning difficulties are more likely to see their children struggle in school. Renters who do not take advantage of homebuyer assistance programs delay the leap to owning a home and the government loses the potential contributions from property taxes.¹⁹² And community colleges and adult schools that do not provide classes at the times, in places and ways that meet the needs of students, fail to help immigrants.

The public bureaucracy is often so entangled and difficult to penetrate that some public agencies hire guides to help people understand the service delivery system.¹⁹³ The lack of clear expectations keeps standards low. The performance of community colleges, for instance, is evaluated for how many students are enrolled in courses, not how well they learn or how quickly they obtain jobs. And critics report that less than half of California's poorest residents who are eligible for food stamps actually receive them.¹⁹⁴

Similarly, some important, private-sector services also have been unavailable to immigrants. An unresponsive financial services market has forestalled homeownership, personal savings and investment and greater financial security for many immigrants. More recently, some banks have changed their policies to accept foreign identification cards, highlighting how the financial services and banking industry can better respond to the unique needs of immigrants.¹⁹⁵ But critics argue that financial services remain ill equipped to work with non-English speakers. Bilingual information and staff are generally unavailable. And loans and credit are generally not designed to meet the needs of seasonal workers or those who have multiple jobs and cannot access businesses during normal "banking hours."¹⁹⁶

***California Department of Justice
Office of Immigrant Assistance***

In 2001 the Attorney General created the Office of Immigrant Assistance to help immigrants who are the victims of discrimination or exploitation.

Often the victims of scam artists, immigrants are hesitant to seek assistance from law enforcement agencies because of their residency status. The office provides education and outreach services to help immigrants know their rights and understand how to use the legal system to seek redress in case of injury.

Source: <http://caag.state.ca.us/immigrant/index.htm>

Current Policies are not Strategic

Under existing policies, public benefits are distributed in ways that do not necessarily reflect core community priorities. Public policies encourage all immigrants to attend public colleges, but place restrictions on who can access job training, health insurance programs and even state-supported foster care.¹⁹⁷

Eligibility	Citizens	Documented Immigrants	Undocumented Immigrants
General Issues			
Voting Rights	Yes	No	No
Pay Taxes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency and Basic Services			
Emergency Medical Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prenatal Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Foster Care	Yes	Yes	No ^a
Free public education K-12 classes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Specialized services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Services			
Education and Training			
Community Colleges	Yes	Yes	Yes
CSU	Yes	Yes	Yes
UC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Free Adult Education			
English classes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Citizenship classes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Financial Aid			
Cal Grants	Yes	Yes	No
Supplement aid	Yes	Yes	No
One Stop Center Job Training Services			
Core Services	Yes	Yes	No
Intensive Services	Yes	Yes	No
Training Services	Yes	Yes	No
Health & Welfare			
BabyCal	Yes	Yes	Yes
County Medical Services (non-emergency)	Yes	Yes	No
Medi-Cal	Yes	Yes	No
Rural Health Services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Healthy Families ^b	Yes	Yes	No
CalWORKS ^b	Yes	Yes	No
Food Stamps	Yes	Yes	No
WIC Supplemental Nutrition	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other			
Naturalization Services	Not Applicable	Yes	No

- a. State funding is not available to provide foster care services to undocumented immigrant children. Counties fund foster care services to these children.
- b. Documented immigrants are eligible for these programs only after they have been in the country for five years.

Proposed California Residency Program

California could align public policies with community goals. All residents would receive emergency and basic services necessary to protect their personal and physical safety. Immigrants who make a commitment to their communities would be treated similar to citizens. Others would have the lowest priority for services.

Eligibility	Citizens	Program Participants	Other Immigrants
General Issues			
Voting Rights	Yes	No	No
Pay Taxes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency and Basic Services			
Emergency Medical Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prenatal Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Foster Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
Free public education			
K-12 classes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Specialized services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Services			
Education and Training			Lowest priority to receive public services.
Community Colleges	Yes	Yes	
CSU	Yes	Yes	
UC	Yes	Yes	
Free Adult Education			
English classes	Yes	Yes	
Citizenship classes	Yes	Yes	
Financial Aid			
Cal Grants	Yes	Yes	
Supplement aid	Yes	Yes	
One Stop Center Job Training Services			
Core Services	Yes	Yes	
Intensive Services	Yes	Yes	
Training Services	Yes	Yes	
Health & Welfare			Lowest priority to receive public services.
BabyCal	Yes	Yes	
County Medical Services (non-emergency)	Yes	Yes	
Medi-Cal	Yes	Yes	
Rural Health Services	Yes	Yes	
Healthy Families	Yes	Yes	
CalWORKS	Yes	Yes	
Food Stamps	Yes	Yes	
WIC Supplemental Nutrition	Yes	Yes	
Other			
Naturalization Services	Not Applicable	Yes	No

Addressing Access and Service Barriers

A number of communities in California have made strides in dismantling barriers and helping immigrants become self-reliant. These agencies and programs recognize that benefits only accrue to individuals and communities when services are truly accessible, understandable and responsive to client needs.

Assessing Needs. Several communities have undertaken efforts to better understand the needs of immigrants. The needs of newly arrived immigrants can differ from longer-term immigrants and differ still among immigrants from different countries and cultures.¹⁹⁸ In Santa Clara County, the Office of Human Relations sponsored a summit on immigrant needs and contributions.¹⁹⁹ The county produced a resource document to help service providers and others understand the needs and concerns of the growing immigrant population, and a resource guide to help immigrants and others understand the assistance available to them.²⁰⁰

Monterey and Santa Cruz counties collaborated on an assessment of farm worker housing and health needs.²⁰¹ And non-profit, community and faith-based organizations have continually worked with immigrant communities to hone awareness of family and individual needs within immigrant neighborhoods. These efforts strive to better align programs with needs to help individuals and families to be productive, independent, responsible community members.

Developing Responsive Public Programs. A number of public and private entities have modified existing programs or policies to respond to the needs of immigrants or other diverse client populations.

- Santa Clara County has hired staff in the Office of the Public Defender with specialized training and skills working with immigrants who need to understand how they are affected by legal decisions.
- Since 1997 the state Department of Mental Health has had an Office of Multicultural Services.²⁰²
- Community mental health, social services and child welfare programs are actively recruiting professionals with diverse backgrounds to expand the pool of culturally and linguistically proficient staff.
- In San Francisco, city college faculty have begun to link English-language training with classes on employment rights in California.

The new classes are designed to teach English while preparing immigrants and others to navigate the workplace and other daily living challenges.²⁰³

- In several communities, law enforcement and other government agencies are accepting foreign-issued identification cards for immigrants who lack U.S.-issued identification cards.²⁰⁴

Meeting Needs in the Marketplace. The private sector also has recognized that immigrants often are poorly served. And while businesses may be interested in expanding their market share, they often provide services that allow consumers to become economically responsible and secure. For example:

- As described previously, Wells Fargo Bank and other financial institutions have begun to accept identification documents issued by the Mexican government for Mexican immigrants in the United States.²⁰⁵
- In Arkansas, a community bank has developed innovative financing packages to allow more immigrants to purchase homes. The bank recognizes that few poor immigrant workers meet job stability requirements for mortgages, despite their ability to make consistent payments.²⁰⁶ Fannie Mae also targets services to immigrants recognizing that the needs of immigrant families can differ from those of other residents.²⁰⁷
- Health Net and other health insurers have developed bi-national health insurance programs that allow immigrants to access health care in the United States and Mexico. These programs recognize that many families migrate between the two countries or prefer accessing health care in one country or the other.²⁰⁸
- A technology company has developed a Web site to provide useful information to immigrants. New2USA.com provides information on the technical, social and economic aspects of living in the United States that are not addressed elsewhere. The Web site provides information on colleges, moving companies, dating, national holidays and other issues.²⁰⁹

Developing responsive community-based organizations. The non-profit, faith-based and foundation communities also have historically played a dominant role in helping immigrants.

- Throughout the country, faith-based organizations work with neighborhood organizations to address housing, food, clothing, legal status and employment needs within immigrant communities.
- Non-profit organizations also have a long-standing tradition of serving immigrants. The California Human Development Corporation offers a range of services, many targeted to help immigrants, farm workers and their families become self-reliant.²¹⁰
- Foundations provide significant funding to support programs that serve immigrants.²¹¹

Charting Outcomes. Measuring progress based on desired outcomes can help administrators tune the service delivery system. It also can allow the public and policy-makers to conduct better oversight of programs. But despite legislation calling for the measuring of outcomes, few public agencies can report how effectively or efficiently they are pursuing their mission or serving clients.

Community Responsibilities

California's communities must not squander the opportunities that all residents, including immigrants, represent to enrich the quality of life.

Each community should ensure that residents have adequate opportunity to be self-reliant and receive appropriate assistance to quickly achieve and maintain self-reliance.

Communities should:

- Be aware of the needs of residents, including immigrants.
- Provide adequate housing.
- Ensure health care.
- Inform all residents of their rights.
- Offer English training that works for immigrants.
- Provide job training and assistance.
- Hire sufficient staff who are culturally proficient to work with community members.
- Maximize the opportunities for all residents, including immigrants, to be self-reliant and successful.

Federal welfare reform directed states to assess how well and how quickly welfare recipients are moving into stable employment. The California Department of Mental Health is finalizing performance measures for community mental health systems. And the community colleges are tuning performance measures and improving access to information that can help residents evaluate their local colleges. Most public efforts to chart outcomes are works in progress.

Supporting the Needs of Immigrants

California could craft an immigrant policy that links eligibility for public services with attention to individual responsibilities. California currently funds services for immigrants that the federal government has declined to provide. And the State recognizes the needs of both documented and undocumented immigrants for many services.

California's immigrant policy could provide incentives for immigrants to earn public benefits by being responsible community members and ultimately establishing citizenship. Congress has floated proposals to allow undocumented immigrants to earn legal status.²¹² And a number of states already

regulate access to public services with incentives to become naturalized citizens.

The Golden State Residency Program. Finding 1 outlined a proposal to create a residency program for immigrants who declare and maintain a commitment to be responsible for the quality of life in their communities. Where not in violation of federal law, California can reform its eligibility rules to offer public services to immigrants who are enrolled in the program. Participation could be open to immigrants who meet the following criteria:

- ✓ **Commitment to establish citizenship.** The program should be limited to immigrants who commit to become U.S. citizens. It should include a time frame for establishing citizenship, once a person is eligible.
- ✓ **Responsibility to local community.** The program should ensure that participants have a history of paying taxes, obeying the law and are employed or engaged in workforce development and training programs.
- ✓ **Enrollment in English-language training.** The program should ensure that participants speak and understand English or are actively engaged in English-language training where appropriate.
- ✓ **Participation in civic affairs.** The program should ensure that participants are actively involved in local civic affairs through public, volunteer and community-based organizations and opportunities.
- ✓ **Responsibility for children.** The program should ensure that immigrant parents are fully responsible for the needs and nurturing of their children. Children should be enrolled in school, registered in a health plan if available, and free from involvement in crime and violence.

These conditions for participation would make it clear to immigrants what is expected of them and reward their responsibility. The government, in turn, needs to be responsible for making sure that programs are effective and efficient. Virtually every state program – not just those that comprise the safety net – serves immigrants. The opportunity and obligation of the State is to serve current and future Californians.

Reform will require California to be clear in its goals for immigrants and establish standards that help ensure public programs provide the services necessary to hasten independence, economic self-sufficiency and civic engagement.

Recommendation 2: California must prudently invest in immigrants who make a commitment to become citizens and support their communities. Policy-makers and the public must ensure that public programs effectively address community needs. The Governor and Legislature should:

- **Align public policy with community goals through the Golden State Residency Program.** Immigrants who commit to the residency program described in Recommendation 1 should be given priority over other immigrants to receive public services.
- ✓ **Education.** Participants should be eligible for all education benefits afforded citizens, beyond what is currently available under federal and state law. Educational providers should assess barriers that may prevent immigrants from benefiting from educational programs and ensure that those programs effectively and quickly promote self-reliance.
- ✓ **Health Care.** Participants should be eligible for all health care programs available to citizens, including Medi-Cal. State health officials should ensure that health programs focus on prevention and efficiently address the health needs of immigrants in the residency program.
- ✓ **Welfare and Social Services** Participants should be eligible for all welfare and social service programs available to citizens. State administrators should ensure that welfare and social service programs quickly provide the support and guidance necessary to move families quickly toward self-reliance.
- ✓ **Workforce Development.** Participants should be eligible for all workforce development programs that promote employment and economic self-reliance. State administrators should assess the effectiveness of existing programs and propose reforms necessary to effectively serve native-born and immigrant residents.
- ✓ **Civic Participation.** Participants should be eligible to serve on all non-elected boards and commissions that are open to citizens. The right to vote should remain an exclusive right of citizens.
- ✓ **Driver's License.** The Governor and the Legislature should enact legislation to make participants in the residency program eligible for a driver's license or state identification card.

While the residency program should be open to all immigrants, participation should be limited to those who make a commitment to California. Other immigrants would receive lower priority for services through public programs.

- ❑ **Ensure that state programs effectively support community goals.** Each state agency should review how effectively it supports the self-reliance of immigrants. The following agencies should pay particular attention to the needs of immigrants and community goals:

 - ✓ **State and Consumer Services Agency.** The agency should assess the effectiveness of efforts to protect immigrants from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation. It should review credential and license requirements to ensure that well-trained immigrants can work in their professional fields while upgrading or assessing their skills to meet current standards.
 - ✓ **Department of Finance.** The department should annually report the number of immigrants who have established naturalized citizenship, the number of non-citizens in the state, and trends in the percentage of citizens and non-citizens living in poverty and participating in publicly funded health and welfare programs.
 - ✓ **Labor and Workforce Development Agencies.** California's labor and workforce development agencies should ensure that immigrants have access to the training and skill development resources needed to become or remain economically self-sufficient. They should ensure that immigrants fully understand workplace rights and responsibilities and receive adequate protection on the job.
 - ✓ **California Community Colleges and Adult Schools** Programs that provide English-language training should develop and implement plans to increase the number of students who become proficient in English each year for the next 10 years.

- ❑ **Create the California Commission on Immigrants.** The Commission should be charged with three fundamental challenges:

 - ✓ **Create a statewide dialogue.** The Commission should promote public awareness of the contributions of immigrants and how immigration can support community goals.
 - ✓ **Advocate for effective programs.** The Commission should work to improve the performance of public programs that promote immigrant responsibilities to their communities and community responsibilities to immigrants. It should pay particular attention to growing the role of community-based organizations in promoting the integration of immigrants and addressing barriers to citizenship.
 - ✓ **Monitor progress.** The Commission should identify ways to define and measure immigrant integration and self-reliance and report progress to policy-makers and the public. The Commission should identify ways the naturalization process and INS services could be improved to better serve new Californians.

Align Immigrant and Immigration Policies with Community Goals

Finding 3: Efforts to build strong communities are undermined by federal policies that limit prudent investments in immigrant self-reliance, fail to create incentives for immigrants to become citizens and forgo opportunities to ensure immigrants are responsible community members.

Properly managed, immigration and immigrant integration policies can further national, state and local goals for prosperity, security and freedom. But these policies are not strategically crafted or implemented.²¹³ The need for periodic amnesties for undocumented immigrants and dependence on millions of illegal workers are signs of flawed immigration policies. Policies for integrating immigrants are equally faulty. There is no clear nexus between policies toward immigrants and state and local goals for economic prosperity, civic participation and community quality of life.²¹⁴ In fact, federal and state policies limit the support immigrants can receive – thus hindering progress toward self-reliance, increasing public costs and delaying the benefits that immigrants bring communities and the country.

Immigrants have made California strong and they will continue to do so. But how strong and how quickly immigrants develop a sense of ownership and responsibility toward their communities and this country depends on whether public policies reinforce their responsibilities to their communities. Immigration and immigrant integration policies and community values merge when those policies support the realization of community goals. They part when those policies create artificial barriers to addressing community needs.

Immigration and immigrant integration policies could be guided by publicly held goals for communities. From a variety of other works, the Commission has drawn a simple, but useful list of community goals, which should apply to immigrants, just as it does native-born Californians. All residents should:

- Be safe.
- Be healthy.
- Remain out of trouble.
- Live in safe, affordable housing.
- Be economically self-sufficient.
- Participate in self-governance.
- Have a sense of belonging and responsibility to their communities.

Immigrants and the communities where they live share responsibility for realizing these goals. Public policies should reinforce those shared responsibilities.

Conflicting Concerns, Misaligned Policies

The ambiguities in public policies reflect the conflicting sentiments toward immigrants. Many residents would support reduced immigration levels.²¹⁵ The U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, for example, recommended reducing immigrant admissions.²¹⁶ Yet the public also believes immigration is important to the country and supports the rights of immigrants who want to bring their family members to the United States.²¹⁷ This conflict may be partly derived from the tension between wanting to crack down on illegal immigrants – who have violated a principle that is important to most residents, to be law abiding – and recognition that many illegal immigrants are essential to the national economy.²¹⁸

Undocumented Immigrants and Unemployed Citizens

All persons in the country should have legal authorization, yet removing undocumented workers would devastate the economy.

California has an estimated 2 million undocumented immigrants. It is widely agreed that immigrants come to work.

California has an estimated 1 million unemployed persons. If undocumented workers were removed or effectively prevented from working in California, the state would face the massive challenge of training and convincing hundreds of thousands of workers to take positions they may not want and have not already filled. Thousands would be required to relocate to communities where they do not want to live. Despite that costly and controversial effort, thousands of jobs would remain unfilled.

California should align its education, workforce development and training programs with its economic development goals. In the meantime, the state depends on documented and undocumented immigrant labor to meet many needs.

Source: Employment Development Department.

In California, this dissonance is all around us. Undocumented immigrants are day laborers and professionals. They are children and the elderly. California's economy would suffer if the immigrant workers in the state who lack legal work authorization were to walk away from their jobs. Crops would go unplanted and unpicked. Homes and offices would not be cleaned. New home construction would be curtailed and prices would increase even higher. Hospitals, nursing homes, restaurants, hotels, assembly plants, and many more employers would lose valued workers and be unable to replace them. Californians cannot make a purchase, receive a service, or use a utility without benefiting from the work of immigrants. And about one in four immigrants in California is undocumented.²¹⁹

Beyond the economy, immigrants also are mothers and fathers of U.S. citizens. They are grandparents and caregivers, neighbors and friends. Immigrants, those with documentation and those without, are essential members of California families and communities.

Immigration policies fail to meet California's needs. Public attention and federal policies are primarily directed at preventing undocumented

immigrants from entering the country. The federal government spends billions to keep out undocumented immigrants, but does little or nothing to find and deport them once they enter.²²⁰ The federal government also does little to encourage immigrants, documented or not, to become successful citizens.

Harvard University Professor George Borjas argues that the federal government has not stated its objectives for immigration. It has not clarified what types of immigrants the United States wants, and how many it wants.²²¹ Family reunification is a priority in admissions, as are specific economic considerations, such as recruiting engineers to fuel the growth of the technology industry. Yet other interests are left undefined and unaddressed.

Employers are clear that they want a reliable supply of low-cost labor. The presence of 2 million undocumented immigrants, who are able to sustain themselves without core health and welfare benefits, is evidence that legal immigration has not met the need for foreign labor.

Recent proposals to revive guest worker programs or to award amnesty to undocumented immigrants reveal that many believe the United States needs more immigrant employees than policies allow.²²² But amnesty or guest worker programs will not ensure that immigrants will be responsible community members. Amnesty programs can undermine support for legal immigration by creating disincentives for immigrants to enter legally. And guest worker programs provide labor without clarifying goals for part-time residents.

Immigration policies could be fashioned to attract people who will make lasting contributions to their new communities and to the United States, through their labor, civic engagement, social commitment and cultural activities. But existing policies fail to link community priorities and immigration policies.

Consider three areas of particular concern:

1. Immigration criteria are not tied to community priorities.

Immigration to the United States is primarily a question of numbers. Some groups of applicants face no numeric limits, primarily the spouses and minor children of citizens. Others, however, face numeric restrictions based on how closely they are related to either a citizen or a permanent resident. The numeric limits mean that even when a petition for permanent residency is approved, applicants often must wait several years to receive a visa that will allow them to enter the country. As of April 2002, immigrant visas are not available to Mexican nationals because the quota of visas available to them has been allocated to

persons who are already in the United States and who have had their status adjusted to permanent resident. The State Department in early 2002 was processing visa applications for people from the Philippines who had their petition for a green card approved in December of 1988.²²³

As Borjas notes, one has a better chance of being accepted to Harvard University than receiving permission to legally immigrate to the United States.²²⁴ Moreover, the admission process at Harvard is intended to determine which applicants are likely to be successful. Federal immigration policies have no comparable standard that links immigration decisions with some larger national or community goal. In 1994, then-President Clinton wrote “the nation’s immigration policy exists to serve the public – to provide benefits to private citizens, families, employers, and communities.”²²⁵ But federal policies are not used strategically to accomplish these ends.

2. Guest worker proposals without immigration reform can undermine community goals.

President Bush has proposed a revamped guest worker program that would allow additional people to enter the United States under temporary legal status. The program could include a mechanism for some guest workers to obtain permanent resident status.²²⁶ Lawrence H. Fuchs, Jaffe Professor of American Civilization and Politics at Brandeis University and a former commissioner on the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, points out that guest workers do not necessarily have an incentive to invest in the United States or to support the goals of local communities.²²⁷ Many are short-term residents looking for employment that can help them support their families back home.

Guest worker programs, without immigration reform, can undermine the potential that immigration has to support community priorities. People who are unable to enter the country as permanent residents may turn to guest worker programs to enable them to enter the country legally. And guest worker policies themselves are not designed to encourage newcomers to put down roots and establish citizenship. A guest worker program, particularly one that would allow guest workers to become permanent residents, further signals the need for change in the number of workers who are admitted as permanent residents.

3. Policies governing permanent residency define immigrant rights, but fail to clarify immigrant responsibilities.

Under immigration law, immigrants who meet certain standards are granted permanent resident status and issued a green card. Permanent residents enjoy many of the rights that accrue to citizens. But they have few obligations, particularly the obligation to become a citizen.

The “permanent” component of their legal status suggests they have no intention of returning to their country of birth. And they are treated that way. With some exceptions, permanent residents cannot lose their legal residency. But they are clearly not citizens. They hold a less than “full-status” as a member of the U.S. community.

This permanent, “in-between” status can undermine community goals, particularly for self-governance. Across the nation, a few communities allow non-citizens to vote in local elections.²²⁸ But California reserves voting for citizens.²²⁹

A permanent class of non-citizens in a community can undermine efforts to build support for long-term community goals. Residents may be reluctant to support new housing projects, greater investment in public transportation systems, and even school construction if it is thought to primarily serve non-citizens or temporary residents. And citizenship is a requirement for some jobs that are important in building trust among diverse community members, such as some peace officers and other government positions.²³⁰

Under immigration policies, green card holders face no timeline for becoming citizens, or scrutiny once they become permanent residents. In California, just 47.5 percent of immigrants become citizens. The national average is 50.5 percent.²³¹

Policies that determine who comes to the United States and who stays could be driven by community priorities and evaluated on how well they encourage integration and responsibility toward local communities. States could look to immigration policies to help them attract an adequate number of workers, as with a guest worker policy. And they could look to immigration policies to identify people who will make a commitment to becoming citizens, as with a citizenship policy, with all of the concomitant rights and responsibilities.

Immigrant policies also fail to meet California’s needs. Some scholars suggest that the federal government leaves immigrant integration to the states and local communities.²³² But a host of federal laws define integration policies, particularly those that

Naturalization Statistics

High immigration rates and low naturalization rates challenge the ability of the State in a number of areas:

- ✓ The California Constitution reserves voting rights for citizens.
- ✓ The federal government funds a greater portion of public benefits for citizens than immigrants.
- ✓ And citizens have a higher standard of legal protections that allow them to more aggressively hold public officials accountable.

The naturalization rate is increasing, but remains below 50 percent. California should investigate barriers in the naturalization process that prevent more immigrants from becoming citizens. The questions addressed to the INS should include:

- ✓ How many applications for naturalization from California residents are reviewed each year?
- ✓ How many are approved? Of those, how many result in the granting of citizenship?
- ✓ How many are denied?
- ✓ How common are the various grounds for denial?
- ✓ How many applicants apply but fail to complete the application process?
- ✓ What are the reasons that applicants fail to complete the process?
- ✓ What percentage of successful applicants was approved following the first application?
- ✓ How many were required to reapply and for what reasons?

determine eligibility for public benefits. Federal Medicaid regulations govern which immigrants are eligible for the bulk of publicly funded medical services. Federal policies establish eligibility criteria for various educational loan, grant and scholarship programs. Federal policies define eligibility for welfare, social security, housing, job training, small business assistance, tax credits and other programs.

The federal government is explicitly involved in integration efforts through the naturalization process. Federal law requires immigrants seeking citizenship to meet English requirements and to pass a history and civics test. These criteria for citizenship promote core values. They communicate that new citizens should understand English and be familiar with the building blocks of the United States. They convey the importance of holding government accountable through voting, the separation of powers in the federal government, and they explain how residents have struggled throughout the country's history to establish and defend these values.

Yet the naturalization process does little to ensure that immigrants can actually function in English or will participate in the civic life of their communities. As pointed out in Finding 1, the English test does not require immigrants to become functional in English or reward those who become fluent. The civics and history portions of the citizenship "test" also are elementary. They fail to measure whether applicants have been engaged in their community during their residency or understand the importance of civic participation. The test merely asks them to understand a set of historical and government-related facts.

As discussed in detail in Finding 2, immigrant integration is further hampered by restrictions on who can benefit from public programs and who cannot. Communities trying to address the needs of residents must juggle funding, eligibility rules and restrictions to meet publicly held goals. Efforts to capture the benefits of universal health insurance are thwarted by restrictions that exclude many who need health care the most. Initiatives to ensure that all children succeed in school are hampered because parents are afraid that school officials will conspire with the INS to deport them. Public programs that can help all residents become model citizens are hindered by policies that force local officials to place some residents on the "can help" list and others on the "cannot help" list.

Immigration and Public Security

Following the September 11 attacks, Americans and their leaders are increasingly aware of how a fluid immigration system frustrates efforts to protect public safety. Among the challenges:

- The size of the United States and the thousands of points of entry along its borders and coastlines thwart efforts to control who enters the country.
- Immigration officials cannot track the millions of people who legally enter the country each year, and so are unaware if immigrants are abiding by the terms of their entry documents.
- Large numbers of undocumented immigrants have fueled a sophisticated and growing market for counterfeit and fraudulent identification and other official documents.
- The state is so dependent on undocumented workers that federal officials find few allies among local law enforcement, employers and the public to help enforce immigration laws.
- California is an internationally recognized symbol of U.S. affluence, and the destination of more immigrants than any other state.

Building impervious borders would be expensive and limit essential trade. Fortifying federal law enforcement activities is only a partial answer. Law enforcement alone will have great difficulty ferreting out the few among millions who may bring harm to the nation.

The Commission's recommendations would improve national security in two ways:

1. ***More immigrants would become actively involved in local communities*** Currently, immigrants are scrutinized before they reach the border and when they enter the country, but federal agencies direct little attention to how immigrants fare once here. The Commission envisions policies that create incentives for immigrants to demonstrate their commitment to their communities. The right to remain in the country, receive public benefits and establish citizenship would be tied to being a responsible community member.
2. ***The public would support immigration law***. Many employers and the public do not support immigration law because they view those policies as counter-productive to community priorities. Immigration policies that are linked to community goals would put the public on the same side of the law as immigration officials. Public safety is a primary community goal and residents are willing and should be recruited to safeguard communities.

What more should California do?

In advocating for federal reforms, state officials should ensure that border policies, information sharing practices, national standards for issuing identification cards and protocols for collaboration between law enforcement agencies address public safety concerns, protect civil rights and promote statewide and community goals.

The Governor and Legislature should provide funds and direct the Attorney General to appoint a task force that represents law enforcement, local officials, immigrants, business owners and other public members. The task force should be charged with analyzing and proposing strategies that respect the civil rights of immigrants and their families while protecting public safety against individuals who might take advantage of weaknesses in the immigration system to bring harm to California.

No one has all the answers to how California and the nation can best ensure safety while supporting essential movement of people and goods across our borders. But the public and public officials must ask difficult questions and devise practical strategies for seeking answers.

Opportunities Lost

Many immigrants, lacking guidance and access to support services, are delayed in becoming economically and socially integrated and self-reliant. In some instances, legal immigrants are eligible for services, regardless of their merit, while undocumented immigrants are ineligible for services despite their merit.

The Golden State Residency Program outlined in Recommendations 1 and 2 will begin to align state and local policies to community needs. California also could champion federal reforms that create incentives for immigrants who want to become citizens and who are willing to take on the responsibility to improve their communities.²³³

Some suggest the public sector should remove restrictions that limit services to immigrants. They argue that mixed status families are particularly challenged when some family members can access services and others cannot.²³⁴ An alternative strategy would streamline immigrant categories to make a clear distinction between those working toward citizenship and those who are not.

California could work with other states and national leaders to develop policies that help immigrants achieve their goals, as temporary guest workers or permanent members of communities in the United States.

California can promote the alignment of federal policies and public goals for communities and their members who are immigrants. Policy-makers could begin by identifying the primary barriers in federal policies that prevent immigrants from becoming self-reliant.

California could champion policies toward immigrants that reflect the following values:

- Legal immigration should provide an adequate supply of workers to meet workforce needs that cannot be met by existing residents or workforce development programs. Illegal immigration should be unnecessary and uncommon because jobs are filled by legal residents: citizens, immigrants working toward citizenship and temporary workers.
- The federal government should ensure access to high-quality, efficient assistance throughout the immigration and naturalization process. The federal government should enter into a compact with individuals that clearly spells out their rights, responsibilities and opportunities as immigrants, guest workers and visitors to the United States.

- Immigrants who are working toward citizenship should be eligible for public benefits that can speed their self-sufficiency.
- Immigration, residency and citizenship decisions at the federal level should reflect state and community interests in recruiting and retaining individuals who contribute to their communities. The naturalization process should create incentives for immigrants to learn English, participate in civic affairs and contribute to their communities.

Recommendation 3: California should advocate for federal reforms that link immigration policies to community goals, create incentives for immigrants to be responsible community members and encourage immigrants to work toward citizenship. The Governor and Legislature should:

- ***Advocate for immigration reform.*** The Governor and legislative leaders should work with California's congressional delegation to motivate the President and Congress to craft an immigration policy that ensures the country admits adequate numbers of immigrants to meet workforce needs and supports strong communities. Immigration policies should encourage immigrants to become citizens.
- ***Advocate for naturalization reform.*** California's state and federal representatives should work with the President and Congress to align naturalization policies with state goals for immigrants. The naturalization process should create incentives for immigrants to meet their responsibilities to be good community members and clearly communicate the obligations that citizens have to their communities.
- ***Advocate for federal support of community priorities.*** California's state and federal representatives should work with the President and Congress to align federal policies to community goals for immigrants. State leaders should pursue two options:
 - ✓ ***Immediate steps.*** State leaders should seek additional federal funding to provide services that support the ability of immigrants to become responsible community members, maintain self-reliance and establish citizenship.
 - ✓ ***Long-term reform.*** State leaders should work to reform federal policies that govern eligibility criteria for public programs, particularly programs that address education, health, welfare and job training needs. Federal policies should make eligible those immigrants who make a commitment to be responsible community members and become citizens.

- **Advocate for more efficient and effective immigration and naturalization services.** California should pass a resolution asking Congress to ensure that immigration and naturalization services in California are customer-oriented, continuously improving and at least as available and efficient as services in other states. The delegation should work with the President and Congress to identify strategies for the INS to immediately reduce backlogs, improve customer service and provide responsive information to the public and state and federal policy-makers on progress.

Conclusion

California's continued prosperity depends on the ability of all residents to build careers, to be healthy and safe, to innovate and to reach their potential through cultural activities, and enterprise. Like their native-born counterparts, poor immigrants face significant barriers to personal success, self-reliance and true independence.

When California's immigrants are successful, all Californians reap the rewards. When immigrants are trapped in poverty, all Californians bear the burden of higher taxes and increased demands on public programs. California's primary goal should be to support the ability of all residents, including immigrants to be safe, healthy and remain out of trouble. They should have the opportunity to live in safe and affordable housing, and be economically self-sufficient. They should participate in self-governance and have a sense of belonging and responsibility to the community.

All residents, particularly immigrants, have a responsibility to support a high quality of life in their communities. Immigrants who accept this responsibility merit the support and assistance of other community members. Those who neglect their communities are less deserving.

Public policies today neither reward immigrants who make lasting contributions to their communities or discourage those who would exploit public benefit programs and flout shared community values.

California has limited tools available to influence federal immigration policies. But the tools it does have are not being adequately leveraged to better align federal immigration policies with community goals. Similarly, state efforts to support immigration integration must be driven by community interests. Public policies that hamper the ability of immigrants to become self-reliant, responsible community members hinder the success of all Californians.

Appendices & Notes

- ✓ *Public Hearing Witnesses*
 - ✓ *Advisory Committee*
 - ✓ *Information Resources*
 - ✓ *Naturalization Statistics*
 - ✓ *Notes*

Appendix A

Little Hoover Commission Public Hearing Witnesses

Witnesses Appearing at Little Hoover Commission Immigrant Integration Hearing on March 22, 2001

Manuel García y Griego, Director
Center for Mexican American Studies
University of Texas, Arllington

Ann Morse, Director
Immigrant Policy Project
National Council of State Legislatures

Hans Johnson, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Public Policy Institute of California

Belinda I. Reyes, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Public Policy Institute of California

Jacqueline M. Mimms
Assistant Vice President
School/University Partnerships in
Educational Outreach
University of California

Georges Vernez, Director
Center for Research on Immigration Policy
RAND

Witnesses Appearing at Little Hoover Commission Immigrant Integration Hearing on May 24, 2001

Don Climent, Director
International Rescue Committee
San Francisco

Sister Marilyn Lacey, Director
Immigration, Refugee & Employment
Services
Catholic Charities, San Jose

Susan B. Drake, Executive Director
National Immigration Law Center

Peter Skerry, Professor*
Claremont McKenna College and
Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Ingrid Hauck, Director
Settlement Division, Integration Branch
Citizenship and Immigration, Canada

Alexander T. Tabarrok
Vice President and Research Director
The Independent Institute

Edward Kissam
Senior Research Associate
Aguirre International/The Aguirre Group

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***Witnesses Appearing at Little Hoover Commission
Immigrant Integration Hearing on August 23, 2001***

Griselda Begines, Deputy Public Defender
Public Defender's Office
Santa Clara County

Maria Fuentes
Ethnic Population Specialist
Department of Mental Health
Santa Clara County

Richard Hobbs, Director
Citizenship & Immigration Programs
Santa Clara County
Immigrant Action Network

Sarah Mercer, Legislative Analyst
Mexican American Legal Defense and
Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Rick Oltman
Western Region Field Director
Federation for American Immigration
Reform

Noah M. Pickus, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Public Policy Studies
Duke University

Theodore Wang, Policy Director
Chinese for Affirmative Action

Appendix B

Little Hoover Commission Immigrant Integration Advisory Committee

The following people served on the Immigrant Integration Advisory Committee. Under the Little Hoover Commission's process, advisory committee members provide expertise and information but do not vote or comment on the final product. The list below reflects the titles and positions of committee members at the time of the advisory committee meetings in 2001.

Lupe Alonzo
Senior Policy Advocate
Children's Advocacy Institute

Andrés Jiménez, Director
California Policy Research Center
University of California, Berkeley

Ignatius Bau, Policy Director
Asian and Pacific Islander American
Health Forum

Hans Johnson, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Public Policy Institute of California

Luz Buitrago
Executive Director
Law Center for Families

Sarah E. Kurtz, Senior Attorney
National Center for Youth Law

Rini Chakraborty, Policy Analyst
California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative

Stewart Kwoh, Executive Director
Asian Pacific American Legal Center

Henry Der
Deputy Superintendent
Education Equity, Access and Support
California Department of Education

Philip L. Martin
Chair, Comparative Immigration and
Integration Program
Agricultural Resource and Economics
Department
University of California, Davis

Patricia Gándara
Associate Professor of Education
Division of Education
University of California, Davis

Clarissa Martinez de Castro
State/Local Public Policy Director
National Council of La Raza

Liz Guillen
Legislative Counsel
Mexican American Legal Defense and
Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Craig McGarvey, Program Director
Civic Culture Program
The James Irvine Foundation

Rosalinda Guillen
National Vice President
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO

Sarah Mercer, Legislative Analyst
Mexican American Legal Defense and
Educational Fund (MALDEF)

Richard Hobbs, Director
Citizenship & Immigration Programs, Santa
Clara County
Immigrant Action Network

Ali Modarres
Associate Director of Institute, Director of
Research Programs
Pat Brown Institute
California State University, Los Angeles

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

Hugo Morales, Executive Director
Radio Bilingue, Inc.

Dr. Robert J. Moser
Deputy Director
Catholic Charities, Diocese of San Diego

Dowell Myers
Director, Master of Planning Program
School of Public Policy, Planning and
Development
University of Southern California

José R. Padilla, Executive Director
California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.

Jim Quay, Executive Director
California Council on Humanities

Belinda I. Reyes, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Public Policy Institute of California

Esperanza Ross
Special Assistant for Immigrant Workers
Hotel Employees and Restaurant
Employees International Union

Jean Ross, Executive Director
California Budget Project

Robert Rubin, Legal Director
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights

Peter Skerry, Professor
Claremont McKenna College and
Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Arnoldo Torres, Executive Director
California Hispanic Health Care Association

Georges Vernez, Director
Center for Research on Immigration Policy
RAND

Theodore Wang, Policy Director
Chinese for Affirmative Action

Appendix C

Information Resources

The following organizations can provide useful information, data and resources on immigrants and immigration policy. This is a partial list.

American Immigration Law Foundation
918 F Street, N.W., 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20004
Web site: www.aifl.org

Asian and Pacific Islander American
Health Forum
942 Market Street, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94102
Web site: www.apiahf.org/

Asian Pacific American Legal Center
1145 Wilshire Boulevard, 2nd Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Web site: www.apalc.org

California Coalition for Immigration Reform
Box 2744-117
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
Web site: www.ccir.net

California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative
926 J Street, Suite 408
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Policy Research Center
1950 Addison Street, #202
Berkeley, CA 94720-7410
Web site: www.ucop.edu/cprc/

California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.
631 Howard Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105-3907
Web site: www.crla.org

Catholic Charities
Immigration, Refugee &
Employment Services
2625 Zanker Road
San Jose, CA 95134-2107
Web site: www.ccsj.org

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
820 1st Street, N.E., #510
Washington, D.C. 20002
Web site: www.cbpp.org

Center for Immigration Studies
1522 K Street, N.W., Suite 820
Washington, D.C. 20005-1202
Web site: www.cis.org

Chinese for Affirmative Action
17 Walter U. Lum Place
San Francisco, CA 94108
Web site: www.caasf.org

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of
Los Angeles
1521 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Web site: www.grass-roots.org/usa/chirla.shtml

Commission for One California
c/o Office of the Lt. Governor
State Capitol, Room 1114
Sacramento, CA 95814
Web site: www.ltg.ca.gov/programs/1ca/index.asp

Federation for American Immigration
Reform
1666 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Web site: www.fairus.org

Institute for the Study of International
Migration
Georgetown University, Box 579400
Washington, D.C. 20057-9400
Web site: www.georgetown.edu/sfs/programs/ism/

Greenlining Institute
785 Market Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
Web site: www.greenlining.org/

Immigrant Legal Resource Center
1663 Mission Street, Suite 602
San Francisco, CA 94103
Web site: www.ilrc.org

Immigrants' Rights Project
American Civil Liberties Union
405 14th Street, Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94612-9987
Web site:
www.aclu.org/issues/immigrant/hmir.html

Immigration and Naturalization Service
Web site: www.ins.gov/graphics/index.htm

District Offices
INS Los Angeles District Office
300 North Los Angeles Street,
Room 1001
Los Angeles, CA 90012

INS San Diego District Office
U.S. Federal Building
880 Front Street, Suite 1234
San Diego, CA 92101

INS San Francisco District Office
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco, CA 94111

International Rescue Committee
1370 Mission Street, 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
Web site: www.intrescom.org/index.cfm

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
131 Steuart Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94105
Web site: www.lccr.com

Mexican American Legal Defense and
Educational Fund (MALDEF)
926 J Street, #408
Sacramento, CA 95814
Web site: www.maldef.org

National Conference of State Legislatures
Immigrant Policy Project
444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Web site:
www.ncsl.org/programs/immig/about.htm

National Council of La Raza
1111 19th Street, N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20036
Web site: www.nclr.org

National Immigration Forum
220 I Street, N.E., Suite 220
Washington, D.C. 20002
Web site: www.immigrationforum.org

National Immigration Law Center
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2850
Los Angeles, CA 90010
Web site: www.nilc.org

National Network for Immigrant and
Refugee Rights
310-8th St., Ste. 303
Oakland, CA 94607
Web site: www.nnirr.org

Pat Brown Institute
California State University, Los Angeles
5151 State University Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8261
Web site: www.patbrowninstitute.org

Public Policy Institute of California
500 Washington Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94111
Web site: www.ppic.org

RAND
Center for Research on Immigration Policy
1700 Main Street, PO Box 2138
Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
Web site:
www.rand.org/education/crip.html

United Farm Workers of America
P.O. Box 62
Keene, CA 93531
Web site: www.ufw.org

Urban Institute
2100 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
Web site: www.urban.org

Appendix D

Naturalization Statistics

The following statistics are for the Immigration and Naturalization Service district offices in Los Angeles (LOS), San Francisco (SFR) and San Diego (SND). They reflect INS processing of N-400 applications for naturalization.

Receipts	FY92	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02 (6 Months)
LOS	36,666	94,238	114,332	253,405	125,911	111,169	148,524	139,114	71,902	69,807	63,785
SFR	36,941	46,029	60,659	102,018	114,617	162,535	120,505	88,299	42,294	46,250	40,163
SND	5,788	19,377	11,937	24,801	29,881	50,651	17,057	17,362	8,359	9,281	7,956
Totals	79,395	159,644	186,928	380,224	270,409	324,355	286,086	244,775	122,555	125,338	111,904

Approvals

LOS	30,803	35,873	60,687	80,440	273,424	115,427	99,124	200,979	202,489	115,125	36,490
SFR	26,120	35,191	39,378	49,196	116,494	55,913	50,000	89,758	85,492	76,127	29,803
SND	4,981	8,524	7,080	14,831	21,840	11,074	10,114	15,948	21,129	14,831	3,589
Totals	61,904	79,588	107,145	144,467	411,758	182,414	159,238	306,685	309,110	206,083	69,882

Denials

LOS	1,625	4,412	4,819	10,453	80,158	18,091	10,337	100,160	75,591	31,668	6,990
SFR	1,090	2,029	3,444	4,279	14,927	8,935	10,088	29,019	39,297	29,884	9,180
SND	233	258	337	758	4,247	2,556	13,430	11,817	11,012	5,273	1,568
Totals	2,948	6,699	8,600	15,490	99,332	29,582	33,855	140,996	125,900	66,825	17,738

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