

New Poll: Americans Prefer House Approach on Immigration

Poll is First to Offer the Public a Choice Between House and Senate Plan

WASHINGTON (May 3, 2006) – A new Zogby poll of likely voters, using neutral language (see wording on following pages), finds that Americans prefer the House of Representatives' enforcement-only bill by 2-1 over Senate proposals to legalize illegal immigrants and greatly increase legal immigration. The poll was conducted for the Center for Immigration Studies.

- On immigration generally, Americans want less, not more, immigration. Only 26 percent said immigrants were assimilating fine and that immigration should continue at current levels, compared to 67 percent who said immigration should be reduced so we can assimilate those already here.
- While the Senate is considering various bills that would increase legal immigration from 1 million to 2 million a year, 2 percent of Americans believe current immigration is too low. This was true for virtually every grouping in the survey by ethnicity, income, age, religion, region, party, or ideology.
- When offered by itself, there is strong support for the House bill: 69 percent said it was a good or very good idea when told it tries to make illegals go home by fortifying the border, forcing employer verification, and encouraging greater cooperation with local law enforcement while not increasing legal immigration; 27 percent said it was a bad or very bad idea.
- Support for the House approach was widespread, with 81 percent of Republicans, 72 percent of independents, 57 percent of Democrats, and 53 percent of Hispanics saying it was good or very good idea.
- When offered by itself, there is also some support for the Senate approach, thought not as much as for the House bill: 42 percent said the Senate approach was a good or very good idea when told it would allow illegal immigrants to apply for legal status provided they met certain criteria, and it would significantly increase legal immigration and increase enforcement of immigration laws; 50 percent said it was a bad or very bad idea.
- There were few groups in which a majority supported the Senate plan, even when presented by itself, exceptions included Hispanics 62 percent of whom said it was a good or very good idea and the most liberal voters (progressives) 54 percent of whom approved of it.

[More](#)



Center for Immigration Studies

- When given three choices (House approach, Senate approach, or mass deportation), the public tends to reject both the Senate plan and a policy of mass deportations in favor of the House bill; 28 percent want the Senate plan, 12 percent want mass deportations; while 56 percent want the House approach.
- But when given a choice between just the House and Senate approaches, without the choice of mass deportations, the public prefers the House approach 64 percent version to 30 percent.
- One reason the public does not like legalizations is that they are skeptical of need for illegal-immigrant labor. An overwhelming majority of 74 percent said there are plenty of Americans to fill low-wage jobs if employers pay more and treat workers better; just 15 percent said there are not enough Americans for such jobs.
- Another reason the public does not like Senate proposals to legalize illegals and double legal immigration is that 73 percent said they had little or no confidence in the ability of the government to screen these additional applicants to weed out terrorists and criminals.
- Public also does not buy the argument we have tried and failed to enforce the law: 70 percent felt that past enforcement efforts have been “grossly inadequate,” while only 19 percent felt we had made a “real effort” to enforce our laws.

Question 1: Americans Want Immigration Reduced

Which of the following statements best reflects your views?

	The time has come to reduce immigration so we can assimilate the immigrants already in the country.	Immigrants are assimilating fine, and we should continue the current level of immigration.	Not Sure
All Americans	67 %	26 %	8 %
Women	75 %	20 %	6 %
Men	59 %	31 %	8 %
Party			
Republicans	74 %	21 %	6 %
Democrats	61 %	32 %	7 %
Independents	66 %	24 %	11 %
Race			
Whites	70 %	23 %	6 %
Blacks	65 %	26 %	9 %
Hispanics	45 %	36 %	19 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	86 %	12 %	3 %
Conservative	72 %	20 %	9 %
Moderate	66 %	26 %	8 %
Liberal	61 %	33 %	6 %
Progressive	43 %	51 %	6 %
Religion			
Protestant	76 %	18 %	6 %
Born-again	80 %	14 %	6 %
Catholic	65 %	29 %	6 %
Jewish	44 %	39 %	17 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	68 %	18 %	13 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	75 %	17 %	8 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	74 %	22 %	4 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	67 %	29 %	4 %
\$75,000 and over	60 %	33 %	7 %
Region			
Northeast	66 %	25 %	8 %
Midwest	71 %	25 %	4 %
South	69 %	24 %	7 %
West	59 %	28 %	14 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 2: Americans Think Immigration Is Too High

There are currently 37 million legal and illegal immigrants in the United States and 1.5 million new legal and illegal immigrants settle in the country each year. Putting aside for a moment the question of legal status and considering only the numbers, do you think the number entering the country is too high, too low, or just about right?

	Too High	Too Low	Just About Right	Not Sure
All Americans	66 %	2 %	26 %	7 %
Women	72 %	1 %	20 %	7 %
Men	59 %	2 %	32 %	7 %
Party				
Republicans	70 %	0 %	24 %	6 %
Democrats	62 %	3 %	31 %	4 %
Independents	66 %	2 %	21 %	12 %
Race				
Whites	68 %	1 %	24 %	7 %
Blacks	73 %	3 %	19 %	5 %
Hispanics	43 %	0 %	43 %	14 %
Ideology				
Very Conservative	85 %	1 %	14 %	3 %
Conservative	70 %	1 %	20 %	8 %
Moderate	65 %	1 %	26 %	7 %
Liberal	58 %	1 %	32 %	9 %
Progressive	48 %	4 %	46 %	2 %
Religion				
Protestant	73 %	1 %	22 %	5 %
Born-again	78 %	1 %	18 %	3 %
Catholic	64 %	0 %	30 %	6 %
Jewish	49 %	14 %	30 %	7 %
Household income				
Less than \$25,000	70 %	0 %	21 %	8 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	72 %	2 %	21 %	5 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	62 %	3 %	29 %	6 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	64 %	1 %	29 %	6 %
\$75,000 and over	63 %	1 %	29 %	7 %
Region				
Northeast	63 %	2 %	29 %	7 %
Midwest	66 %	2 %	27 %	5 %
South	72 %	1 %	23 %	5 %
West	62 %	2 %	24 %	13 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Marginal of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 3: Americans Like House Approach

The House of Representatives has passed a bill that tries to make illegal immigrants go home and reduce future illegal immigration mainly by fortifying the border, forcing businesses to verify that workers are legally in the country, and allowing greater cooperation from local law enforcement. It does not increase the number of people allowed into the country legally. Do you think this bill is a:

	Good or Very Good Idea	Bad or Very Bad Idea	Not Sure
All Americans	69 %	27 %	4 %
Women	70 %	26 %	5 %
Men	69 %	28 %	3 %
Party			
Republicans	81 %	16 %	3 %
Democrats	57 %	39 %	4 %
Independents	72 %	24 %	4 %
Race			
Whites	71 %	24 %	4 %
Blacks	68 %	30 %	2 %
Hispanics	53 %	44 %	3 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	88 %	11 %	2 %
Conservative	78 %	18 %	4 %
Moderate	66 %	30 %	3 %
Liberal	57 %	38 %	5 %
Progressive	41 %	56 %	2 %
Religion			
Protestant	75 %	21 %	5 %
Born-again	77 %	19 %	4 %
Catholic	66 %	30 %	4 %
Jewish	48 %	47 %	6 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	65 %	29 %	6 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	60 %	32 %	8 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	78 %	20 %	2 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	78 %	20 %	2 %
\$75,000 and over	67 %	30 %	3 %
Region			
Northeast	72 %	24 %	4 %
Midwest	70 %	25 %	5 %
South	71 %	25 %	4 %
West	64 %	34 %	2 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Marginal of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 4: Limited Support for Senate Approach

The Senate is considering a bill that would allow 12 million illegal immigrants here to apply for green cards, which allows permanent residence and citizenship, after a background check and payment of back taxes. In addition, the bill would double the number of green cards in the future from 1 to 2 million a year. It would also allow in an additional 400,000 foreign workers each year, who could also apply for green cards. The bill also increases enforcement of immigration laws Do you think this bill is a:

	Good or Very Good Idea	Bad or Very Bad Idea	Not Sure
All Americans	43 %	50 %	7 %
Women	41 %	50 %	10 %
Men	45 %	51 %	4 %
Party			
Republicans	41 %	53 %	6 %
Democrats	48 %	46 %	6 %
Independents	40 %	53 %	7 %
Race			
Whites	41 %	52 %	7 %
Blacks	30 %	65 %	5 %
Hispanics	62 %	27 %	11 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	21 %	75 %	4 %
Conservative	39 %	55 %	6 %
Moderate	51 %	41 %	8 %
Liberal	51 %	43 %	6 %
Progressive	54 %	43 %	4 %
Religion			
Protestant	39 %	55 %	6 %
Born-again	35 %	60 %	6 %
Catholic	43 %	50 %	6 %
Jewish	63 %	34 %	3 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	35 %	57 %	8 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	32 %	61 %	7 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	42 %	52 %	6 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	47 %	49 %	4 %
\$75,000 and over	49 %	45 %	6 %
Region			
Northeast	44 %	51 %	6 %
Midwest	39 %	51 %	10 %
South	40 %	55 %	5 %
West	52 %	42 %	6 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Marginal of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 5: Public Prefers House Bill Best

Which of the following options do you think is the best way to deal with Illegal Immigration?

	House bill: Trying to reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country by enforcing immigration laws, and making illegal immigrants go home over time, with no increase in legal immigration.	Mass Deportions and Round ups	Senate bill: Allowing the 12 million illegal immigrants in the country here to earn citizenship coupled with a doubling of legal immigration from 1 to 2 million a year and increased enforcement of immigration laws.	Not Sure
All Americans	56 %	12 %	28 %	4 %
Women	60 %	10 %	26 %	4 %
Men	52 %	14 %	29 %	5 %
Party				
Republicans	62 %	13 %	22 %	4 %
Democrats	50 %	11 %	36 %	3 %
Independents	60 %	12 %	24 %	4 %
Race				
Whites	57 %	13 %	26 %	4 %
Blacks	63 %	17 %	18 %	3 %
Hispanics	40 %	0 %	54 %	6 %
Ideology				
Very Conservative	60 %	30 %	9 %	1 %
Conservative	66 %	13 %	16 %	5 %
Moderate	51 %	11 %	35 %	3 %
Liberal	48 %	7 %	42 %	3 %
Progressive	49 %	4 %	47 %	1 %
Religion				
Protestant	61 %	14 %	20 %	4 %
Born-again	65 %	14 %	15 %	6 %
Catholic	54 %	9 %	34 %	4 %
Jewish	28 %	5 %	64 %	3 %
Household income				
Less than \$25,000	51 %	19 %	24 %	5 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	52 %	16 %	28 %	4 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	60 %	11 %	27 %	2 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	61 %	12 %	24 %	3 %
\$75,000 and over	54 %	9 %	33 %	4 %
Region				
Northeast	53 %	10 %	33 %	5 %
Midwest	57 %	15 %	25 %	3 %
South	62 %	13 %	22 %	3 %
West	53 %	9 %	32 %	7 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 6: House Bill Preferred Over Senate Bill

Which approach do you think is better?

	House Bill: Trying to reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country by enforcing immigration laws, and making illegal immigrants go home over time, with no increase in legal immigration.	Senate Bill: Granting eventual citizenship to illegal immigrants, coupled with a doubling of legal immigration from 1 million to 2 million a year and increased enforcement of immigration laws.	Not Sure
All Americans	64 %	30 %	6 %
Women	59 %	33 %	8 %
Men	68 %	27 %	5 %
Party			
Republicans	69 %	27 %	4 %
Democrats	56 %	38 %	6 %
Independents	66 %	24 %	11 %
Race			
Whites	66 %	29 %	5 %
Blacks	67 %	22 %	11 %
Hispanics	45 %	39 %	16 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	87 %	13 %	0 %
Conservative	72 %	22 %	6 %
Moderate	57 %	35 %	8 %
Liberal	55 %	40 %	5 %
Progressive	39 %	48 %	14 %
Religion			
Protestant	71 %	25 %	4 %
Born-again	78 %	19 %	4 %
Catholic	60 %	32 %	8 %
Jewish	54 %	38 %	8 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	68 %	23 %	10 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	69 %	29 %	2 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	66 %	31 %	3 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	66 %	29 %	6 %
\$75,000 and over	56 %	36 %	8 %
Region			
Northeast	63 %	32 %	5 %
Midwest	64 %	30 %	6 %
South	70 %	25 %	5 %
West	55 %	35 %	11 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 7: Skepticism of Need for Immigrant Labor

Which of the following statements best reflects your views with regard to low-wage jobs that require relatively little education?

	There are plenty of Americans to do such jobs, employers just need to pay higher wages and treat workers better to attract Americans.	America needs large numbers of immigrants because there are not enough Americans to fill such jobs.	Not Sure
All Americans	74 %	15 %	10 %
Women	79 %	12 %	9 %
Men	69 %	19 %	12 %
Party			
Republicans	70 %	17 %	12 %
Democrats	78 %	15 %	7 %
Independents	75 %	12 %	13 %
Race			
Whites	74 %	16 %	10 %
Blacks	84 %	5 %	12 %
Hispanics	65 %	20 %	14 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	71 %	9 %	21 %
Conservative	72 %	18 %	10 %
Moderate	80 %	13 %	7 %
Liberal	76 %	16 %	8 %
Progressive	68 %	18 %	14 %
Religion			
Protestant	77 %	14 %	9 %
Born-again	78 %	12 %	10 %
Catholic	75 %	14 %	12 %
Jewish	55 %	35 %	10 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	90 %	7 %	3 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	80 %	11 %	9 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	82 %	11 %	7 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	76 %	13 %	11 %
\$75,000 and over	61 %	25 %	14 %
Region			
Northeast	77 %	15 %	6 %
Midwest	75 %	12 %	13 %
South	77 %	17 %	6 %
West	67 %	18 %	15 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 8: Little Confidence in Vetting Immigrants

The Senate has proposed offering permanent residence and citizenship to the 12 million illegal immigrants in the country, and doubling legal immigration in the future from 1 million to 2 million a year. How much confidence do you have in the government's ability to screen all of these new applications and weed out terrorists and criminals?

	Little or No Confidence	Some or a Lot of Confidence	Not Sure
All Americans	73 %	27 %	1 %
Women	72 %	27 %	1 %
Men	73 %	26 %	1 %
Party			
Republicans	69 %	30 %	0 %
Democrats	72 %	27 %	1 %
Independents	79 %	21 %	1 %
Race			
Whites	74 %	26 %	1 %
Blacks	75 %	25 %	0 %
Hispanics	71 %	26 %	3 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	83 %	17 %	0 %
Conservative	73 %	27 %	1 %
Moderate	73 %	26 %	1 %
Liberal	73 %	26 %	0 %
Progressive	57 %	43 %	0 %
Religion			
Protestant	73 %	27 %	1 %
Born-again	73 %	27 %	0 %
Catholic	79 %	20 %	1 %
Jewish	44 %	56 %	0 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	76 %	24 %	0 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	76 %	22 %	2 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	67 %	33 %	0 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	75 %	25 %	0 %
\$75,000 and over	72 %	28 %	0 %
Region			
Northeast	75 %	24 %	0 %
Midwest	74 %	25 %	1 %
South	70 %	30 %	0 %
West	72 %	33 %	1 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.

Question 9: Enforcement Has Been Inadequate

Which of the following do you think better describes past efforts to enforce immigration laws ?

	Efforts in the past have been grossly inadequate and the government has never really tried to enforce immigration laws.	We have made a real effort to enforce our immigration laws and we have failed because we are not allowing in enough immigrants legally.	Not Sure
All Americans	70 %	19 %	11 %
Women	71 %	18 %	10 %
Men	69 %	20 %	11 %
Party			
Republicans	75 %	16 %	10 %
Democrats	66 %	25 %	10 %
Independents	71 %	16 %	14 %
Race			
Whites	74 %	17 %	10 %
Blacks	68 %	21 %	11 %
Hispanics	47 %	29 %	24 %
Ideology			
Very Conservative	87 %	7 %	5 %
Conservative	73 %	18 %	10 %
Moderate	66 %	20 %	14 %
Liberal	69 %	23 %	9 %
Progressive	63 %	29 %	8 %
Religion			
Protestant	75 %	15 %	10 %
Born-again	78 %	13 %	10 %
Catholic	73 %	18 %	9 %
Jewish	44 %	45 %	11 %
Household income			
Less than \$25,000	65 %	21 %	14 %
\$25,000 to \$34,999	76 %	18 %	6 %
\$35,000 to \$49,000	70 %	24 %	6 %
\$50,000 to 74,999	69 %	21 %	10 %
\$75,000 and over	74 %	16 %	10 %
Region			
Northeast	71 %	17 %	12 %
Midwest	71 %	20 %	10 %
South	75 %	19 %	6 %
West	63 %	22 %	16 %

Values do not always total to 100 % because of rounding.

Zogby America telephone survey of 1,000 likely voters conducted 4/17/06 through 4/24/06.

Margin of error is 3.1 percentage points for total population and is larger for sub groups.