

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 3

CHAPTER 77

Relative to immigration.

[Filed with Secretary of State August 15, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 3, Alejo. Immigration.

This measure would specify goals for the reform of the nation's immigration system, and would urge Congress and the President of the United States to take a humane and just approach to solving the nation's broken immigration system.

DIGEST KEY

Fiscal Committee: no

BILL TEXT

WHEREAS, The United States of America is a nation of values, founded on the principles that all men and women are created equal, and the promise of freedom for all; and

WHEREAS, We are a nation of immigrants, who believe in the promise of freedom and opportunity; and

WHEREAS, The current immigration system is broken, antiquated, and not meeting the challenges of the 21st century. It separates families, including same-sex couple families, creates long backlogs for families seeking reunification, and neglects the hard work and financial contributions immigrants make to our country; and

WHEREAS, Since 2008, more than 1.6 million immigrants have been deported, and one in every 10 American children faces the threat of the deportation of a parent; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that about 11 million undocumented immigrants are in the United States, and California has the largest population of immigrants, both legal and undocumented; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants and their children constitute nearly one-half of California's population and live and work in all 58 counties, most notably in the San Diego, Central Valley, Los Angeles, Ventura, and greater San Francisco areas; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 77 percent of undocumented immigrants who reside in California live with family members who are legal United States residents and citizens; and

WHEREAS, One in 10 workers in California is an undocumented immigrant, and immigrants are a vibrant, productive, and vital part of the state's growing economy; and

WHEREAS, Immigrants are essential in keeping the American economy strong; from technology programmers in the Silicon Valley to restaurant owners and workers, immigrants are filling an intrinsic need in the labor force; and

WHEREAS, Agricultural workers have been performing very important and difficult work to maintain America's food supply, and have a role of ensuring that Americans have safe and secure agricultural products to sell and consume; and

WHEREAS, Students should not be punished for their immigration status. Instead, they should be given recognition for their sacrifice, hard work, and determination; and

WHEREAS, The United States can do a better job of attracting and keeping the world's best and brightest. A comprehensive immigration reform should also grant immigrants who have received a Ph.D. or master's degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics from an American university the opportunity to invest in and contribute to this great nation. For the future of our economy, it makes no sense to educate the world's future innovators and entrepreneurs only to ultimately force them to leave our country at the moment they are most able to contribute to our economy; and

WHEREAS, Modernizing our antiquated and dysfunctional immigration system will uphold our nation's basic values of fairness and equality, as well as access to health care; and

WHEREAS, A comprehensive, as well as compassionate, approach to solve our broken immigration system should be one that works for all communities and families in America; and

WHEREAS, A just immigration reform must ensure that it reflects one of our basic values—that we all are created equal—thus immigration reform must recognize each immigrant's full humanity; and

WHEREAS, A proposal must be comprised of tenets that achieve all of the following: (1) establish an earned citizenship process that requires immigrants to pay back taxes and learn English; (2) enhance security in our ports of entry to secure our nation; (3) reform immigration enforcement programs that separate families to ensure that family unification systems are strengthened; (4) upgrade the current visa programs, including the creation of a guest worker program for agricultural workers, in order to have a legal workforce and a system that better enforces labor protections; and (5) uphold due process as well as the inherent rights of all immigrants; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to take a humane and just approach to solving our nation's broken immigration system; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor of California, and to the author of this resolution.