Twitter Thread by LIRS

LIRS
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THREAD: LIRS is moved by the prospect of an administration that sees immigration as a strength, not a weakness.

Despite challenges, we believe we can advance a sensible, coherent, humane and just immigration system by focusing on the following 10

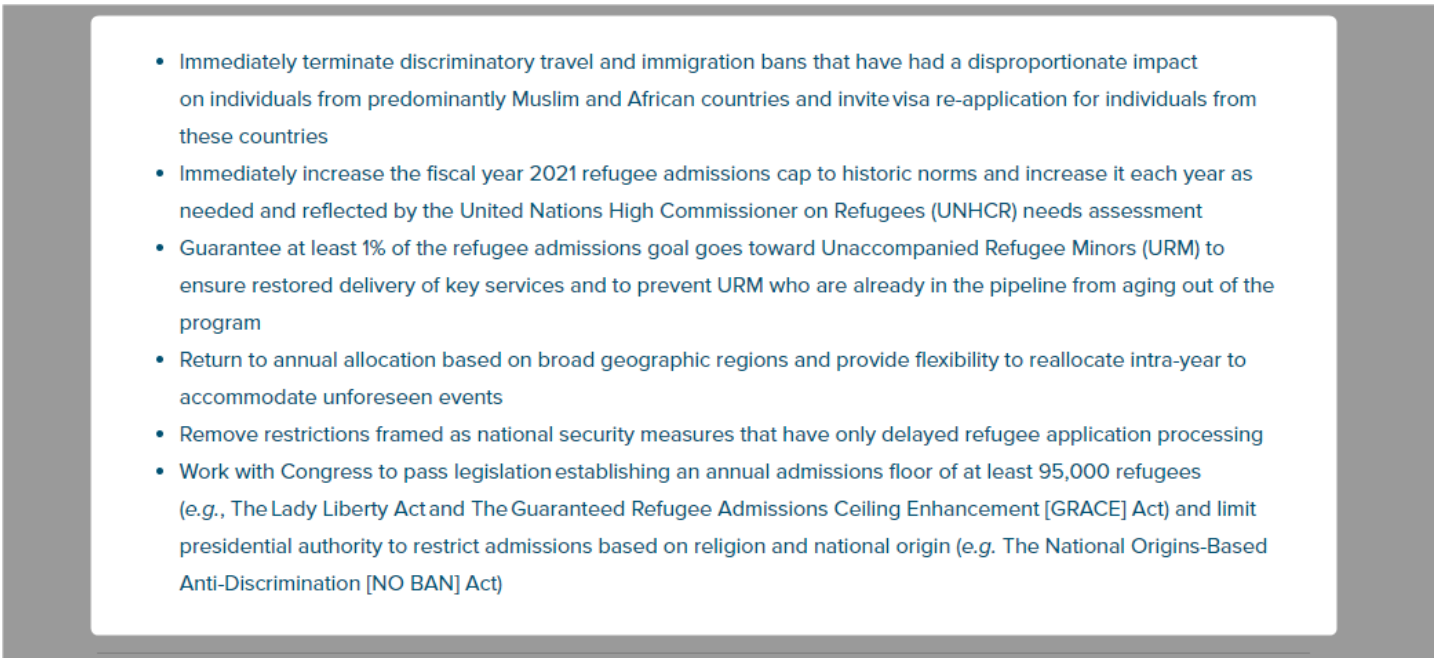
1.) Prioritize the reunification of all separated families and strengthen protections for unaccompanied children.

https://t.co/oh9sHxtiTO



2.) Restore U.S. leadership in refugee resettlement.

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3.) Ensure COVID-19 relief, testing, and treatment regardless of immigration status

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4.) Reinstate asylum, suspend deportations, and institute ICE and CBP reforms

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- Re-establish asylum procedures at the border and end policies that deny protection and due process to asylum seekers, such as the Migrant Protection Protocols
- Demand Congress institute comprehensive reforms, oversight, and transparency measures at both ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and Customs and Border Patrol Protection (CBP) and ensure staff are trained to treat migrants arriving at the border humanely and held accountable to professional standards
- Enact a moratorium on deportations until recommendations for reforming ICE and CBP policies are developed
- Reverse policies that bar victims of gang and domestic violence and members of the LGBTQ community from being eligible to apply
- Reverse policies that implemented asylum application fees, a 365-day waiting period for work authorization, and the expansion of public charge regulations used to deter access to essential public services and resources
- End asylum cooperative agreements with El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, which limit the ability of asylum seekers to access critical protections and to claim asylum in the U.S.

5.) Invest and implement community-based alternatives to detention

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▲ **Invest and implement community-based alternatives to detention**

Detention alternatives and nonprofit case management programs are proven to be the most effective and cost-efficient way to support migrants as their asylum claims are processed. Those in detention lack access to basic health care and are more likely to experience re-traumatization. LIRS has successfully demonstrated the superiority of community-based interventions and strongly advocates for broader implementation of this model as a replacement for immigration detention.

- Expand holistic non-profit programs that offer case management services and facilitate access to legal counsel, as well as safe and affordable housing
- Ensure ATD (Alternatives to Detention) monitoring and check-in requirements are reasonable, so as not to impinge on the participant's ability to participate in their legal case and maintain steady employment

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6.) Provide DACA and TPS recipients a path to citizenship

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There are certain immigrants who have strong ties to the U.S. but currently hold a status that only affords them temporary protections. Immigrants who were brought here as children and adults whose countries are not able to safely accept them due to ongoing conflict or environmental disasters have long complied with policies that require them to renew temporary permissions to remain in the U.S. — some for over a decade. Their temporary status should be reinstated and/or re-designated and legislation should be enacted to provide them with permanent relief that includes a path to citizenship.

- Immediately reinstate the DACA program and protect DACA applicants and their families from deportation and separation
- Work with Congress to ensure passage of legislation that grants DACA recipients and "Dreamers," undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children, legal permanent residency status and a path to citizenship (such as The American Dream and Promise Act)
- Reinstate Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforcement Deportation (DED) for populations who cannot safely return to their countries due to ongoing conflict, violence, or environmental disaster and provide a path to citizenship for those that have been in the U.S. for an extended period of time

7.) Reduce the citizenship backlog

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▲ Reduce the citizenship backlog

According to a Department of Homeland Security report, there are an estimated 9.2 million legal permanent residents who are eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship. However, recent policy to raise fees and denaturalize individuals has discouraged many from applying. The next administration must remove barriers to naturalization and promote citizenship as an avenue for furthering immigrant integration.

- Adequately fund and staff USCIS to ensure naturalization and family-based immigration petitions are adjudicated within six months or less
- Reverse the recent policy that increased immigration application fees and review the criteria for fee waiver forms to remove obstacles for low-income individuals or people experiencing financial hardships who want to apply

8.) Advance immigrant workforce and education opportunities

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Advance immigrant workforce and education opportunities

Immigrants contribute greatly to the U.S. economy. Their high rates of employment help balance an aging native-born population and support Social Security and Medicare trust funds. Their mobility helps local economies respond to worker shortages and their high rates of entrepreneurship signal the creation of businesses that spark new jobs and develop new products and industries. The U.S. must foster this dedication and expand education and workforce opportunities to increase the economic prosperity of immigrants and their children. Through its 40 years of experience in refugee employment, LIRS has operated workforce development programs focused on upskilling and professional coaching. These programs have led to positive outcomes, such as heightened individual incomes and successful career advancement.

- Support and fund programs that help immigrants and refugees build their professional skills and transfer their educational credentials to promote smoother integration into the workforce
- Propose and pass legislation, such as the To Offer Refugees College Help (TORCH) Act, which would require states to offer in-state tuition for higher education to

9.) Provide a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented people in the U.S.

Provide a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented people in the U.S.

Nearly 11 million undocumented people in the U.S. contribute to the national economy, as well as their local communities. The majority of the undocumented population has lived in the U.S. for over ten years. Many of them are members of mixed-status families whose lives are governed by a patchwork of immigration policies. Congress must work together to eliminate immigration barriers.

- Remove three- and ten-year bars and waiting periods that prevent mixed-status families from staying together as they process their immigration claims and provide a pathway to citizenship
- Re-establish family migration as a cornerstone of immigration policy by eliminating the backlog for family-based green cards

10.) Act on Climate Displacement

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Act on climate displacement

Climate change is contributing to the displacement of people around the globe, as it threatens lives and livelihoods. According to the International Organization for Migration, the number of climate-displaced people is projected to rise to 200 million by 2050; yet, at present, no country or international body legally affords any protections for climate-displaced people. The U.S. must work to reduce climate change effects, support adaptive and resilience efforts of affected communities, and create durable solutions for resettlement.

- Collaborate with international bodies to develop a global framework that recognizes climate change as a primary factor of migration and implement safe pathways for resettlement as a last resort
- Work with Congress to pass legislation that would create a global climate change resiliency strategy and a new national humanitarian program for people displaced by environmental disasters or climate change

The incoming Biden administration and the next Congress must work alongside advocates and community- and faith-based groups to offer people fleeing violence and persecution a chance to rebuild their lives, contribute to the nation, and raise a family in safety.

If the U.S. aims to successfully reclaim a leading humanitarian role on the global stage, it must ensure its approach to refugee, asylum and enforcement policy sets a gold standard.

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✍■ https://t.co/QSfIwMU7kl

