



Drawing on “the history of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in the United States and Canada,” which is “inextricably connected to the immigrant experience,” the Atlantic-Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (AMSSND) has made a commitment to support justice for immigrants. In light of this, AMSSNDs adopted a Corporate Stance on Comprehensive Immigration Reform for the United States, which proposes six focal points:

- 1) Pathways to citizenship for undocumented persons in the United States
- 2) Family reunification as a priority in immigration policy
- 3) Opportunities and protections for low-skilled immigrants to come and work in the United States
- 4) Due process protections within our immigration enforcement policies
- 5) Addressing the root causes of migration such as global, economic, environmental, and social injustices
- 6) Effective and humane border security that recognizes the human rights of all people.

As the United States enters the final weeks of this presidential election season, the Immigration Committee invites you to evaluate the candidates according to their policies regarding these criteria. As we discern how to cast our ballots, we reflect on the AMSSND commitment to immigrants, and the Directional Statement’s call to “witness to unity in a divided world while addressing these divisions with audacity and hope.”

### 1) Pathways to citizenship for undocumented persons in the United States

#### Biden:

If elected, Biden has vowed to send legislation to Congress in his first days to provide a “roadmap for citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants who contribute so much to this country.” He also would immediately strengthen protections for Dreamers.

#### Trump:

The Trump Administration also “has made removals of illegal immigrants a priority.” His administration has separated families through zero-tolerance deportation policies; called for a crackdown on sanctuary cities; and attempted to terminate or procedurally dismantle DACA without a legislative replacement in place.

### 2) Family reunification as a priority in immigration policy

#### Biden:

As president, Biden will support family-based immigration by preserving family unification as a foundation of our immigration system; by allowing any approved applicant to receive a temporary non-immigrant visa until the permanent visa is processed; and by supporting legislation that treats the spouse and children of green card holders as the immediate relatives they are, exempting them from caps, and allowing parents to bring their minor children with them at the time they immigrate.

#### Trump:

President Trump has proposed to end family-based migration (“chain” migration, as he calls it). His administration has separated thousands of children from their families through zero-tolerance deportation and detention policies, and federal officials say it may take one to two years to reunite them.

### 3) Opportunities and protections for low-skilled immigrants to come and work in the U.S.

#### Biden:

Biden believes that “immigrant rights and worker rights are deeply connected.” He pledges to ensure that every worker can exercise labor rights and are protected by safety protocols, regardless of immigration status. He also will work with Congress “to reform the current system of temporary work visas to allow workers in these select industries to switch jobs, while certifying the labor market’s need for foreign workers.”

#### Trump:

President Trump has proposed to move the country to a merit-based entry system, meaning that low-skilled immigrants would be severely disadvantaged for obtaining legal status.

He also implemented new “wealth test” rules making it easier to deny immigrants’ residency or admission to the United States because they have used or *might use* public-assistance programs.

### 4) Due process protections within our immigration enforcement policies

#### Biden:

Biden “will direct enforcement efforts toward threats to public safety and national security, while ensuring that individuals are treated with the due process to which they are entitled and their human rights are protected. President Biden will end workplace raids to ensure that threats based on workers’ status do not interfere with their ability to organize and improve their wages and working conditions. He will also protect sensitive locations from immigration enforcement actions. No one should be afraid to seek medical attention [or emergency services], go to school, their job, or their place of worship for fear of an immigration enforcement action.”

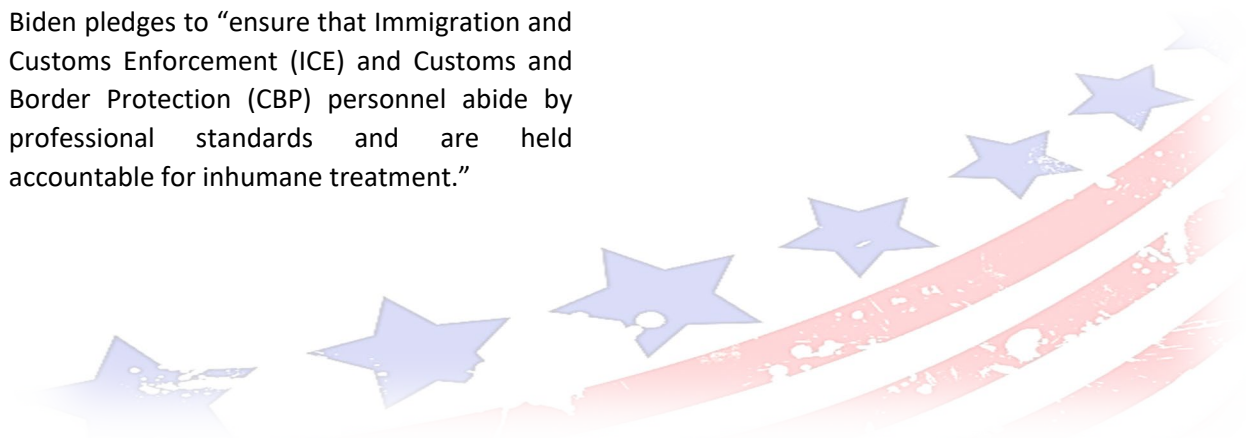
Biden pledges to “ensure that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) personnel abide by professional standards and are held accountable for inhumane treatment.”

#### Trump:

The Trump Administration has worked to partner with local law enforcement to enforce immigration laws.

As of May 2019, 80 counties in 21 states are participating in the 287(g) program, which gives state and local law enforcement entities delegated authority by ICE to enforce immigration in their jurisdiction.

This has resulted in high levels of racial profiling and the detainment or deportation of non-violent immigrants, as well as having a deterrent effect on migrants in need of police assistance.



## 5) Addressing the root causes of migration

### Biden:

Biden “knows that the most effective and sustainable way to reduce migration from the Northern Triangle is to comprehensively address its root causes” and is committed to “ensuring that the nations of Central America—especially El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, the Northern Triangle countries—are strong, secure, and capable of delivering futures of opportunity for their own people.”

### Trump:

To curb the flow of asylum seekers, the Trump Administration has cut aid, threatened to increase tariffs and taxes, and adopted controversial asylum cooperation agreements — “safe third country agreements”—with Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras to permit the U.S. to transfer asylum applicants from third countries to the Northern Triangle countries.

## 6) Effective and humane border security that recognizes the human rights of all people

### Biden:

Biden states that he will not tear down the wall but will not add to it. He would end the use of military funds to build the wall and focus on border enforcement, such as improving the screening infrastructure at ports of entry.

Biden plans to reunite any children still separated from their families, and to end the “intimidation tactic” of prosecuting parents for minor immigration violations.

He promises to rescind the bans, identifying them as an abuse of power and discrimination against black and brown immigrants.

Biden will direct the necessary resources to ensure asylum applications are processed fairly and efficiently, while treating families and children with compassion and sensitivity. He will end prolonged detention and reinvest in a case management program.

### Trump:

The Trump Administration has spent billions of dollars of Pentagon funds on the construction of replacement border wall. Efforts to seize land for the wall are under way.

The Administration’s “Zero-tolerance” policy to prosecute undocumented border crossing has led to several thousand children forcibly separated from parents, and the new asylum protocols have effectively terminated the right to seek asylum in the U.S., while forcing asylum applicants to wait in Mexico—typically in dangerous, unsanitary camps—for their hearings.

Trump also signed an executive order banning immigrants from seven Muslim-majority countries. Though this was blocked by a federal court, an amended version was upheld in the Supreme Court in 2018 which has since included additional countries.

Politics, according to the Social Doctrine of the Church, is one of the highest forms of charity, because it serves the common good. A good Catholic meddles in politics, offering the best of him or herself, so that those who govern can govern. (Pope Francis, September 13, 2013).

## Sources:

[The Biden Plan for Ensuring Our Values as a Nation of Immigrants](#)

[Making America Great Again: Immigration](#)

[President Trump's Bold Immigration Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#)

[Congressional Research Service](#)

[Where Biden and Trump stand on key issues](#)

[National Education Association, Biden vs. Trump](#)

