

Speak up for immigrants & asylum-seekers

We need everyone to speak up. **You are the most important spokesperson when it comes to influencing friends & family!**

People are influenced more by personal stories than facts & figures. The empathy-center of our brains turns off when we start thinking about numbers. The empathy-center turns on when we hear personal stories. You can find news stories about individuals like Rosa Gonzalez, who came here fleeing violent family members:

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2018/10/26/central-america-mexico-immigrant-trail-caravan-trump-2018-221739>

But too much gloom & doom can be overwhelming & encourage us to give up. **So tell a story to illustrate the facts, ask the hearer how they would feel in the position of the immigrant in your story, & suggest a way for the listener to act on what you've told them.** The feeling of accomplishment from that concrete action will inspire the listener to do more good work!

If you receive pushback, ask questions instead of arguing. Learn what matters to the person you're speaking to and use that to encourage empathy with immigrants.

Facts:

1. The foreign-born proportion of the U.S. population is the same as it was in the late-19th century. Laws at the time ensured that most of those immigrants were white.
2. Output in the economy is higher & grows faster with more immigrants.
 - a. Immigrants are almost twice as likely to have doctorates; they increase innovation.
 - b. Undocumented immigrants are crucial to agriculture & industry. They keep costs down.
3. Immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the USA. Most illegal drugs enter the country through legal entry points.
4. Asylum is legal & you must already be on U.S. soil to apply for it.
5. Undocumented immigrants pay taxes & yet they are ineligible for government welfare benefits. Legal immigrants are only eligible for benefits after 5 years.
6. ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement) has only existed since 2003. We can have oversight without crimes against humanity.
7. A larger border wall is an ineffective waste of money and harmful to the environment. It won't stop humans from crossing, but it will hurt species & waste resources. We don't want open borders. We want humane, commonsense policies.

Sources:

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/a-dozen-facts-about-immigration/>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-on-immigration-topics-likely-2019-state-of-the-union-fact-check/>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/illegal-immigrants-us-jobs-economy-farm-workers-taxes/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/22/us/immigrants-arent-taking-americans-jobs-new-study-finds.html>

<https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/abolish-ice-movement-explained>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/01/how-trump-us-mexico-border-wall-could-impact-environment-wildlife-water/>

Tips for messaging

Don't use	Use	Explanation
“illegal aliens”	“New American immigrants”	Most undocumented immigrants overstay their visa, which falls under civil—not criminal—statute. Seeking asylum is legal. “Alien” implies difference.
“give rights”	“stop unfair barriers” or “ensure freedom”	Theoretically, we already have equal rights under the law. The problem is that these rights are being denied.
“hate”	“love”	Focus on our values of love & inclusion.
“bigots”	“radicals”	Point out that we represent the norm.
“identity politics”	“bring everyone to the table”	Complaints about “identity politics” are just a way of defending the white status quo. Focus on inclusion.
“rights of prisoners”	“risk to public safety when law enforcement aren't working as allies”	Racism & for-profit detention camps encourage racial profiling (which shifts focus away from the people most likely to commit crimes) & discourage people in marginalized positions from reporting crimes for fear of law enforcement. This threatens everyone's safety.
“help the needy”	“there's enough for all of us”	Opponents divide us; calling us to care for “Americans” 1 st . Undocumented immigrants are <i>unprotected</i> taxpayers.

See ICE or Customs Border Patrol (CBP)? Call the VT ACLU: 802-223-6304

They don't have permission to enter your premises or vehicle without a warrant signed by a judge. The VT ACLU is tracking their activity, so call the ACLU even if you aren't stopped or questioned.

Contact your legislators to speak up for immigrants & asylum-seekers

Ask them to cut funding for ICE & CBP in the Dept. of Homeland Security appropriations bill

Rep. Welch 802-652-2450 Sen. Sanders 802-862-0697 Sen. Leahy 802-863-2525

Ask Scott and Donovan to prevent ICE & CBP from overstepping their authority

Gov. Scott 802-828-3333 Attorney General TJ Donovan 800-649-2424

Contact your sheriff/chief of police about Fair & Impartial Policing (FIPP)

Script: <https://www.wallofus.org/posts/64/call-the-sheriff-to-stop-trumps-anti-immigration-policies>

Attend one or more of these events

Jul 16 & 31 at 6 pm *Hartford Select Board Meeting* on FIPP - 171 Bridge St, White River Junction

Jul 17 at 6 pm *Castleton Indivisible Meeting* - Leahy Center, RRMC 160 Allen St., Rutland

Jul 20 at 9 am- 2 pm *How to Talk to Your Racist Neighbor* - Grace Church, 8 Court St., Rutland

Jul 25 at 5:30 pm *Community Forum for Hate-free Vermont* - Rutland HS Cafeteria, 22 Stratton Rd

Jul 31 at 6 pm *Nonviolent Direct Action Training* - Grace Ch. RSVP <https://35overmont.org/workshops>

Aug 6 at 6:30 pm *Rutland NAACP Meeting* - at Rutland Free Library, Rutland

Sign a petition to ask ICE to release 3 farmworkers recently detained

Google: Action network Tell ICE to #FreeIsmael #FreeMario #FreeUberoni

To learn more & to donate to work with immigrants & asylum-seekers

Migrant Justice <https://migrantjustice.net/>

RAICES <https://www.raicestexas.org/>