

**Proposal for Progress**  
**Principles for Immigration Reform**  
**Butler County Commissioner Michael A. Fox**  
**Presented Sunday June 21, 2006**

We, citizens of Butler County, coming from diverse groups and backgrounds come together in a spirit of unity of purpose to issue this statement of principles regarding immigration reform.

We believe these principles form the foundation of a solution to America's immigration challenge that will serve the best interests of the United States of America, its citizens, residents, and future citizens.

We encourage the Congress, Senate and President of the United States to work towards the adoption of legislation incorporating the ideas contained herein into legislation designed create an effective alternative to the current state of affairs.

We believe that effectively resolving the immigration issue is one of the most important challenges facing America.

We believe that immigrants are and always have been the source of America's strength and vitality.

We believe that those who seek to adopt America as their home have an obligation to embody the elements of the American dream, ideals, and the rights preserved by our constitution.

We understand that America's strength is also related to our shared values, character, and social contract.

We believe that America is more than a job, a place to live and raise a family. It is an idea that burns in the hearts of our citizens. As Americans we want to share that dream and the American experience with the world.

We also recognize that America cannot take in all of the worlds poor, oppressed, and down trodden. We realize that our strength is also about maintaining a creative balance between "old" and "new" Americans.

We recognize that America is at war. We believe that the terrorist threat is real and that our national interest demands that we protect and secure our border. That our borders are open and accessible to virtually anyone who wants to come to our country is shameful and a significant threat to our national security.

We also believe that protecting and securing our northern border is as important and vital to our nation's security as protecting and securing our southern border. According to

counter terrorist officials, Al-Qaeda has more terrorists cells in Canada than all of Mexico, South and Central America combined.

We recognize that millions of hard working, God fearing immigrants have responded to Washington's failure to secure our border by taking advantage of the "open invitation" to come to America to work, raise families, and enjoy the blessings of liberty and freedom.

We believe that those who are living in America who came to this country through illegal means who are law-abiding and productive residents should be given an opportunity to earn their way to citizenship or residency. We oppose proposals that would indiscriminately send them back to their country of origin.

We believe that the failure of the federal government to enforce laws prohibiting the employment of illegal immigrants has led to a culture of trading humans in black markets and a shadow economy where those who are in America without proper documentation are left to the whims of businesses and unscrupulous employers who take advantage of them and deny them the same fair and equal treatment that most American workers enjoy.

We believe that the shadow economy is nothing less than involuntary servitude and a modern form of slavery and those responsible for it should be held to account and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

We recognize that our economy is growing and creating thousands of new jobs at a rate that requires us to utilize workers from other countries. We therefore believe that the United States government should create a guest worker program through which willing workers from other nations should be allowed to come to the United States and work provided they meet certain conditions.

We believe that anyone seeking to become a citizen of the United States should pledge their loyalty to the United States of America and be dedicated to preserving the constitution and laws of this country. Those who seek to come to or remain in America seeking citizenship should be required to learn the English language, have no felony criminal background, and have no communicable diseases.

We also believe that any non-citizen living in America who commits a felony should be subject to immediate deportation upon the completion of their time sentenced and served in jail or prison.

We believe that it is shameful that their human rights are abused and trampled by predatory employers and others who take advantage of their non-legal status. We believe that most employers want to follow the law. We also understand that when their competitors choose to employ illegal workers and pay them slave wages and do not provide them with the basic benefits that other American workers are entitled to receive that many employers are placed in a morally untenable position.

We believe that the current system that promotes and allows massive disregard of laws prohibiting the employment of illegal immigrants without threat of penalty, adversely affects immigrants who seek to make America their home and adversely affects the interests of American working men and women whose pay and benefits are artificially depressed by the employment of illegal immigrants throughout our economy.

We believe that the current state of affairs is creating extensive and dangerous criminal enterprises that are similar to yet more threatening and powerful than the crime syndicates that grew up in the prohibition era. We believe that this phenomenon threatens America's security and our economy.

In accordance with these beliefs and understandings we offer the following four principles and guidelines for creating a viable solution to the challenge of immigration. They are:

1. The northern and southern borders of the United States should be secure through fencing, walling, technology, and sufficient human resources to make it as difficult as possible for anyone to enter the United States illegally. The Congress should enact a law requiring that a fence, wall, or other similar physical barrier be built on our northern and southern border.
2. Those undocumented persons who are presently residing in the United States should be allowed to register and file applications for residency. Such applications shall be deemed approved provided such applicant does not have a felony conviction. The Congress should give such persons a specified time to register. Anyone failing to register shall be subject to deportation and deemed not eligible to ever return to the United States.
3. The Congress should establish a "guest worker opportunity" program that offers citizens who want to come to America to work an opportunity to do so provided they do not have criminal records and meet the terms and conditions set forth by the legislation which shall include but not be limited to employee portability, biometric identification systems and provisions through which participants can earn their way to residency or citizenship.
4. The Congress should enact laws strengthening the enforcement of immigration laws and increase agency capacity to carry on enforcement activities. Employers who employ illegal workers should be held accountable to follow all applicable state and federal laws.

We offer these principles for progress in resolving the dispute over immigration in an effort to create unity where there has been division, consensus where there has been controversy, and hope where there has been despair and suffering in the national debate over the immigration reform proposals pending before the United States Congress.

We believe that this debate can be unifying and strengthening to the United States rather than divisive and destructive. We understand that we represent only a small segment of a

small part of America, but we believe that this proposal, which comes from America's heartland, carries the spirit and heart of most Americans.

Americans are a good and compassionate people. Many citizens rightfully feel fear and concern for our national security. They rightfully fear the consequences of continuing to allow our borders to be open. Unfortunately, millions of those who work and live in America also live in a world of constant fear. Their fears are different. They are truly the dark underside of American. They are enslaved to their "non-legal" status. For them each day brings more anxiety and fear of deportation. Many have been here for two or three decades, have families, and are an integral part of their community and our country.

America has never been driven by its fears, but has flourished through its dreams and creative "can-do" spirit. We believe that America can be strengthened by people of good will and good faith coming together and working towards a reasonable solution that embodies these principles.

We understand that those on the extreme left and right of the political spectrum will not support these principles and those who choose to put politics above the public interest may find these ideas offensive.

Regardless, we offer them in an attempt to demonstrate that in America's heartland, where the values that have made the United States of America such a great nation are alive and well, we can come together with a solution that is good for America.

We respectfully submit these ideas to Congressman John Boehner, Majority Leader of the United States Congress, Congressman Steve Chabot, United States Senator Mike Dewine, and United States Senator George Voinovich.