

IMMIGRATION COMPACT

Passing an Immigration Compact would be a first step for Montana to adopt immigration principles, following states like Utah, Colorado, Michigan, Florida, Maine, Iowa, Ohio. The Compact would help guide all state-level discussions on immigration going forward.

The Montana Compact (Draft)

We the signers of the Montana Compact on Immigration are committed to pragmatic immigration policies that strengthen our economy and attract talent and business to our state. We recognize the role that immigrants play in driving economic growth and the need to find solutions for undocumented Montanans who make a vital contribution to our state's economy. The Montana Compact is a bipartisan effort agreed to by Montana's leaders, business community and higher education institutions, supporting advocacy for federal and local reforms that meet the needs of our labor market and communities.

The Montana Compact on Immigrations contains the following six principles:

Federal Responsibility: Immigration policy is a federal issue between the U.S. government and other countries. We urge Montana's congressional delegation and other leaders to support immigration reforms that improve our nation's immigration system, protect our borders, help meet labor demands and facilitate trade. We urge state leaders to adopt reasonable policies that address immigration in Montana.

Strengthening our Economy and Workforce: Montana is best served by a free-market philosophy that maximizes individual freedoms and opportunities. For the state's economy to grow and compete, Montana needs a robust workforce, with policies that prioritize, attract, and retain talent. Montana acknowledges the economic role immigrants play as workers and taxpayers. Our immigration system must be flexible enough to address the needs of businesses while protecting the interests of workers. This includes a visa system that is both responsive to and effective at meeting the demands of Montana's economy and the industries that drive growth in our state.

Common-sense Approach: Immigrants are an important part of our communities across Montana. A common-sense approach is what Montana seeks; one that reflects our values and recognizes the critical role immigration has played in the history, culture, and economy of both our state and nation. Our immigration policies must provide a sensible path forward for immigrants who are here without legal status, are of good character, pay taxes, and are committed to becoming fully participating members of our society and culture.

Strong Families: Strong families are critical to developing successful individuals and cohesive communities. Our immigration policies, where possible, should prioritize keeping families together to ensure the most supportive home environments for all children across our state. Montana champions policies that support families and improve the health, education, and well-being of all children across our state.

Competitive Communities: Communities that grow and attract talent are the ones that are welcoming to all. Local policies that help all residents to have the tools and opportunities they need to succeed are truly welcoming. And this is Montana.

Effective Enforcement: Montana supports a law enforcement strategy that focuses on public safety, targets serious crime, and safeguards witnesses and victims. Ideally, the focus of local law enforcement is on criminal activities, not civil violations of federal code. Reforms should provide the stability that allows immigrants to fully integrate into their communities. A broader reform effort would eventually include ways to reliably ensure a stable workforce for a growing economy.