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The Importance of Immigration Policy in the General Election

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Immigration is one of the most important topics in this upcoming election. The two presidential candidates have set forth their immigration policy if elected into office. One of the issues that both candidates agree on is that priority of immigration enforcement should be directed at detaining and deporting criminal individuals who pose a violent threat to public safety. The two candidates seem to diverge on almost all other immigration policy.

According to the Clinton campaign, a White House Administration under Hillary Clinton would take action to:

- Introduce comprehensive immigration reform, creating a path to citizenship;
- End the three- and 10-year unlawful presence bars;
- Defend President Obama's executive actions: Deferred Action Against Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA);
- Support immigrant integration through increased adult English language and citizenship education;
- Accept Syrian refugees to help alleviate the humanitarian crisis;
- End family detention and close private immigration detention centers.

According to the Trump Campaign, a White House Administration under Donald Trump would take action to:

- Build a permanent wall and make Mexico pay for it;
- No path to legalization for those in the U.S. illegally, unless those people leave the country;
- Repeal DACA and DAPA programs;
- Children born in the U.S., but to illegal immigrants would no longer obtain citizenship at birth;
- Triple the number of ICE officers;
- Increase standards for the admission of refugees and asylum-seekers;
- Cut-off federal grants to sanctuary cities that shelter illegal immigrants.

The President has significant influence and authority to shape this nations' immigration policy, but such power is limited if they do not have the backing of Congress to pass legislation or the

Courts to uphold such actions. The importance of this election is not just significant, because the country gets to appoint a new President, but also because that President will have the authority to appoint Justices to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is granted the authority to interpret the laws, so if any immigration law or executive action is challenged in court and appealed to the Supreme Court the Justices on that bench will have the authority to strike down or uphold any immigration action. The Supreme Court's deadlocked decision on DAPA, which stayed the preliminary injunction of the program, was a reminder of how high the stakes are in this election. In order to get real immigration reform, this country also needs to elect Representatives and Senators that are actually committed to working together across bipartisan lines to pass immigration reform.

During this election, in which immigration has become such a vocal issue, it is important for Latino communities to come together and vote for the issues that are important to the Latino community. Those that are not yet eligible to vote have the power to come together in their communities and rally to remind those that can vote to exercise their power. In order to be heard by the President and elected officials, the people must exercise their most powerful tool: the vote.

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