



To: Interested Parties

From: Celinda Lake, David Mermin, and Brittany L. Stalsburg; Lake Research Partners

Re: Recent polling on attitudes toward immigration among African Americans

Date: May 1, 2013

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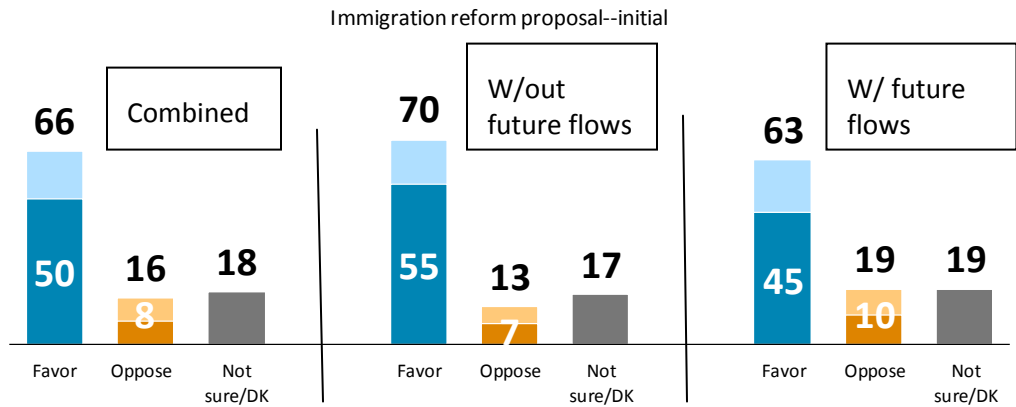
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A recent poll conducted by Lake Research Partners¹ found **solid support among African American voters for an immigration reform proposal that includes a roadmap to citizenship** (66% favor, 16% oppose). This support holds up after hearing both anti- and pro-reform messages, including hot button issues of the potential for immigrants to take jobs away from African Americans (Final ballot: 69% favor, 14% oppose).

A **simple version** of the proposal that does not include a plan to manage immigration based on future economic needs works slightly better than a version that is longer and includes language about future flows, though support for reform is high no matter which version is used.



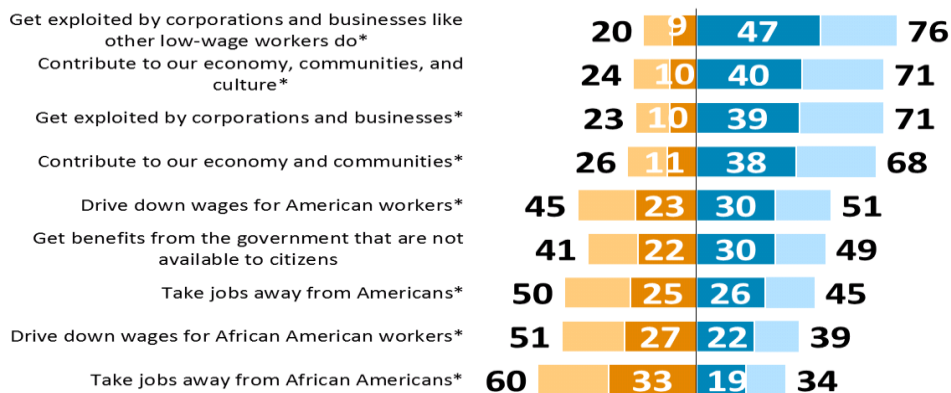
¹ Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey on behalf of The Leadership Conference Education Fund. The survey fielded March 25-30, 2013. Interviews were conducted by telephone using professional interviewers with 805 African American likely general election voters nationwide. The overall margin of error is +/- 3.5%.

Immigration reform proposal without future flows: Under this proposal, the federal government would establish a roadmap to citizenship for immigrants currently living and working in the U.S. Employers who violate the law and hire unauthorized workers would be punished and face strict fines and penalties

Immigration reform proposal with future flows: Under this proposal, the federal government would establish a roadmap to citizenship for immigrants currently living and working in the U.S. Employers who violate the law and hire unauthorized workers would be punished and face strict fines and penalties. In the future, employers would be able to bring in foreign workers only when the economy is strong enough so that there are real shortages of workers, and those workers would have the same rights as all other workers.

Attitudes toward immigrants are mostly positive. A majority of African Americans **disagree with the assertion that immigrants are taking jobs away from African Americans specifically** and are also driving down their wages. They are more mixed over whether **immigrants get benefits from the government** that are not available to citizens and whether **immigrants take jobs away from Americans generally**. African Americans have led the way in terms of seeing shared fate and shared values—over three-quarters agree that immigrants get exploited by corporations and businesses like other low-wage workers do. More than 7 in 10 believe that immigrants contribute to our economy, communities, and culture. These attitudes have also strengthened over time. Today, only 39% of African Americans agree that immigrants drive down wages for African Americans, a 20 point decline from 2007 when 59% of African Americans agreed.

How well does this phrase describe Immigrants?



Finally, we also found that like many Americans, **African Americans have little confidence in the economy.** Three-quarters rate economic conditions in the country as just fair or poor and a majority (54%) are concerned that they or someone in their household will lose their job in the

next year. **But while African Americans are pessimistic about the economy, more than 3 in 5 still support immigration reform, regardless of their economic outlook.**

In sum, **African American voters are ready for immigration reform and strongly support a proposal that includes a roadmap to citizenship.** Support spans across regions, age, gender, and among even the most economically insecure voters, by large margins.
