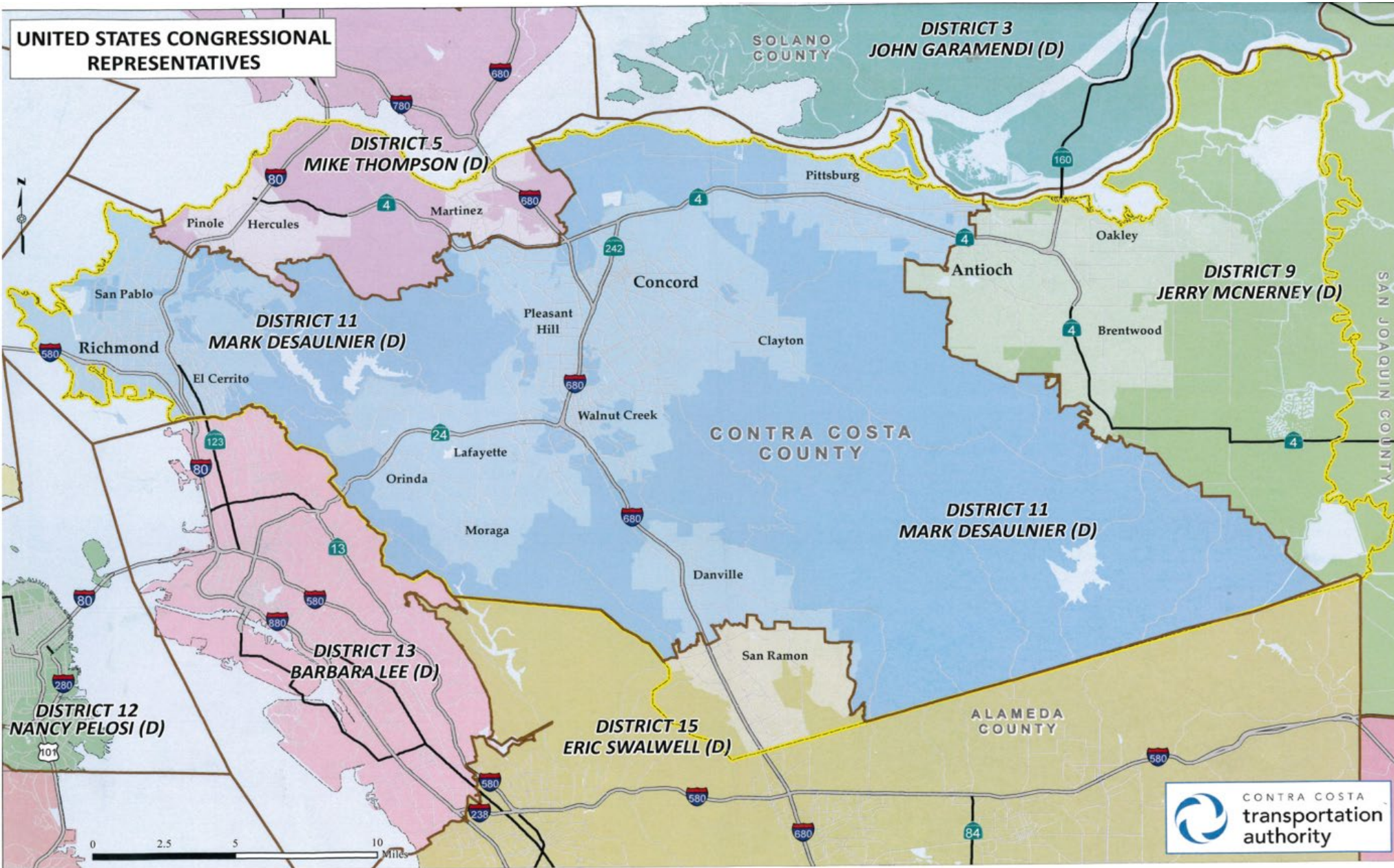


# Immigration Town Hall

OCTOBER 6, 2021



“I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, windswept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. **And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here.** That's how I saw it, and see it still.”

*President Ronald Reagan  
Farewell Address  
January 11, 1989*

# Immigration Law: A History

- ▶ **1790** – 1790 Naturalization Act – established the country’s first uniform rule for naturalization. Allowed all “free white persons” who resided in the U.S. for 2 years to be granted citizenship.
- ▶ **1882** – Chinese Exclusion Act – suspends immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years. This is the first of many bills restricting or limiting Chinese immigration.
- ▶ **1921** – 1921 Emergency Quota Act – Congress’s first attempt to regulate immigration by setting admission “quotas” based on nationality. It limited the number of immigrants annually to 3 percent of the number of foreign-born persons of that nationality present in the U.S.

# Immigration Law: A History

- ▶ **1965** – 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act– abolishes the national-origins quota system and replaces it with a family-based and employer-based system.
- ▶ **1980** – Refugee Act of 1980 – establishes a new statutory system for processing and admitting refugees and asylum seekers and broadens the definition of refugee.
- ▶ **1982** – Immigration Reform and Control Act – imposes sanctions on employers who knowingly hire undocumented immigrants and creates 2 legalization programs, resulting in ~2.7 million people eventually becoming lawful permanent residents.
- ▶ **1990** – 1990 Immigration Act – raises legal admissions on employment-based immigrants and limits the government’s power to deport immigrants for ideological reasons.

# Modern Immigration Law & Actions

- ▶ **2001** – USA Patriot Act – broadens terrorism grounds for excluding people from entering the U.S.
- ▶ **2002** – Homeland Security Act – creates the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Immigration, customs, and border security agencies begin operating under DHS.
- ▶ **2005** – REAL ID Act – establishes statutory guidelines for removal cases, expands terrorism-related grounds for deportation and inadmissibility, increases border infrastructure, and requires states to implement REAL ID driver's licenses.
- ▶ **2012** – President Obama creates Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

# The Many Benefits of Immigration

- ▶ Immigrants added about **\$2 trillion to the U.S. GDP** in 2016
  - ▶ Researchers estimate in California they added between \$4.6 and \$8 billion\*
- ▶ In 2010, more than **40% of Fortune 500 companies** were founded by immigrants and their children
- ▶ 20 million adult U.S.-born children of immigrants have higher incomes than their parents
- ▶ Immigration induced a **4% real wage increase** for the average **native worker** between 1990 and 2004
- ▶ The inflow of STEM workers driven by H-1B visas during the period 1990-2010 **explains up to 30% of the productivity growth** in U.S. cities

# Trip to the Border

Trip #1 hosted by the Democratic Women's Working Group to McAllen and Brownsville, TX.

Federal courthouse, Border Patrol Processing Center, Port Isabel Detention Center, and Brownsville Point of Entry

Trip #2 hosted by Rep. Juan Vargas to San Ysidro San Ysidro Port of Entry, border infrastructure system, border barrier



# Afghan Evacuees

- ▶ From the beginning of mass evacuations on August 14, the U.S. helped evacuate approximately 116,700 people out of Afghanistan.
- ▶ Because of the expedited process, many Afghan citizens who were brought to the United States have not completed immigration or refugee processing so they are not eligible for many forms of federal assistance.
- ▶ The continuing resolution, signed into law on September 30, includes several provisions to support Afghan evacuees, including:
  - ▶ Making Afghan “humanitarian parolees” eligible to receive refugee resettlement services and benefits, such as reception and placement support and food assistance and
  - ▶ Requiring the federal government to expedite consideration of Afghan parolees’ asylum applications.

# Haitian Migrants

- ▶ Haiti has recently suffered both political instability and natural disasters: earlier this year, a group of mercenaries assassinated Haitian President Jovenel Moise, and an earthquake left more than two thousand people dead.
- ▶ Over two weeks at the end of September, U.S. Border Patrol agents apprehended or expelled nearly 30,000 migrants, the majority of them Haitian nationals sheltering near Del Rio, Texas.
  - ▶ I am deeply disturbed by the images and footage of U.S. Border Patrol's mistreatment of Haitians at the southern border. This abuse contradicts American values.
- ▶ Instead of turning these families away, we should be finding ways to ensure their safety as they go through the U.S. immigration process.

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