

# Immigration Town Hall

APRIL 16, 2025

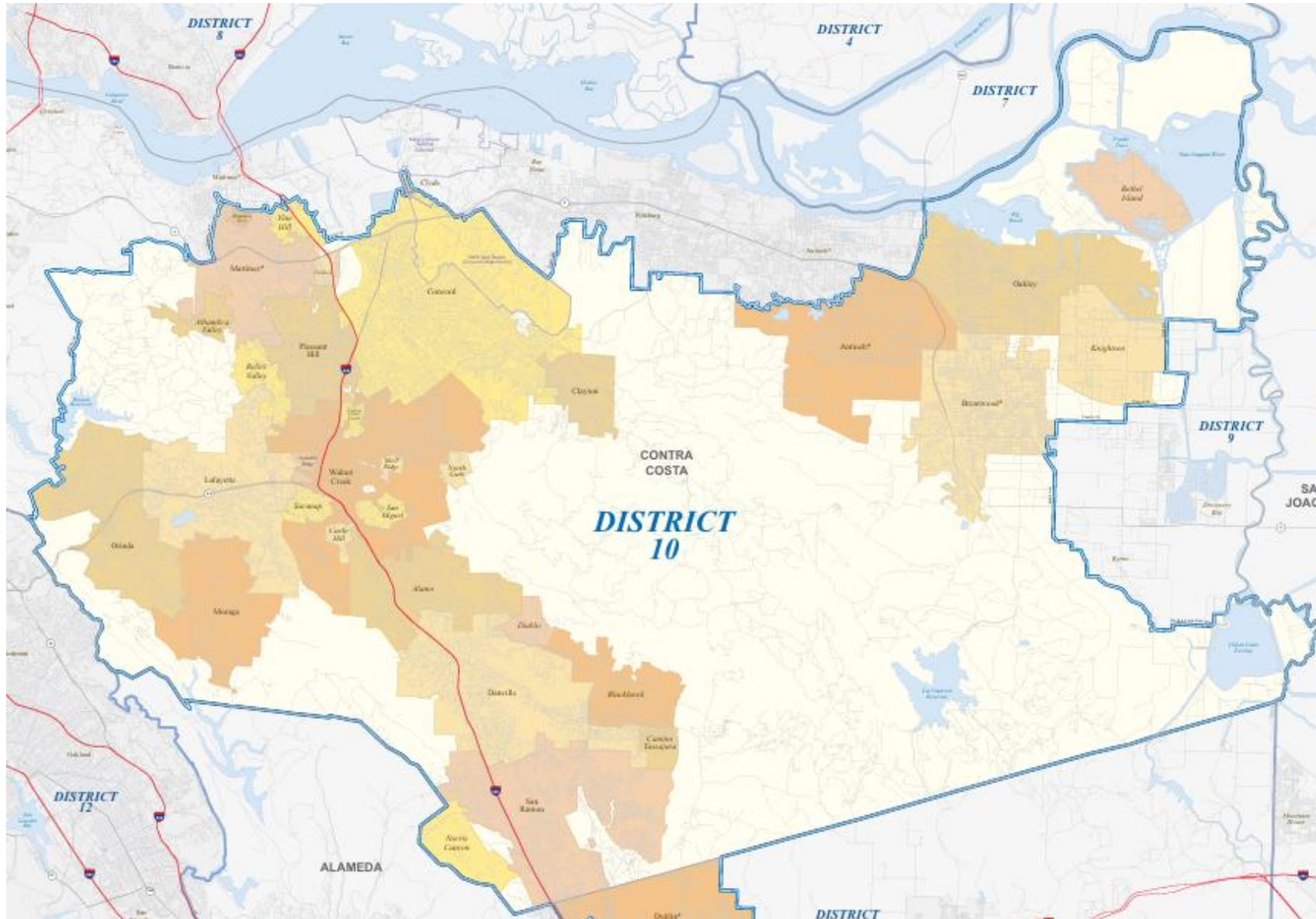
# House Ethics: Congressional vs. Campaign Activity

- ▶ Members of Congress are governed by the House Code of Official Conduct, which includes standards for whether, how, when, and where Members may engage in campaign activity.
  - ▶ This town hall is being hosted in my official capacity as Representative for California's 10<sup>th</sup> District, not as a candidate in a campaign. Therefore, House Rules prevent me from:
    - ▶ Solicitating, receiving, and accepting campaign contributions.
    - ▶ Making political endorsements.
    - ▶ Suggesting local groups to join.
    - ▶ Directing attendees to websites, resources, or events created or operated by a campaign or any campaign-related entity, including political parties and campaign committees.

**You can learn more about the House Code of Official Conduct and how it relates to this event here:**

<https://ethics.house.gov/manual/general-prohibition-against-using-official-resources-for-campaign-or-political-purposes/>

# California's 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District



CA-10 includes most of Contra Costa County and part of Alameda County

# Past Efforts at Immigration Reform

- ▶ Although difficult to navigate, there was some bipartisan work to propose reforms to our immigration system in the last decade.
- ▶ In 2013, a bipartisan group of Senators wrote an immigration reform bill that passed the Senate with a **strong majority (68-to-32)**. Provisions included a **path to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants, **reducing visa backlogs**, and **improved work visa options**.
  - ▶ The Republican House of Representatives under Speaker Boehner **refused to act** on the bill, and it expired.
- ▶ In 2018, Representatives Aguilar and Hurd introduced a bipartisan bill that would **protect DACA recipients** from deportation and **increase border enforcement**. Despite strong support, the Republican House **did not hold a vote** on that bill.

# The Current State of Immigration Policy

- ▶ Today, President Trump and Republicans in Congress would rather use our broken immigration system to score political points than pursue solutions.
- ▶ In February 2024, Republicans and Democrats in the Senate negotiated and compromised to develop a **comprehensive immigration reform bill** that would have **strengthened border security** and stop the flow of fentanyl into the United States while streamlining the asylum approval process and **expanding legal pathways** to come to the U.S.
  - ▶ The bipartisan **bill was killed by then-candidate Donald Trump** who admitted that he didn't want the bill to pass so he could continue to use the situation at the border as an election issue.
    - ▶ ***"I think we killed it. I think it's dead!" – Donald Trump, February 9, 2024***

“Our attitude towards immigration reflects our faith in the American ideal. We have always believed it possible for men and women who start at the bottom to rise as far as the talent and energy allow. Neither race nor place of birth should affect their chances.”

*Senator Robert F. Kennedy*

# Visits to the U.S.-Mexico Border

- ▶ Congressman DeSaulnier visited the border twice during the President's first term to better understand the **humanitarian crisis** caused by his immigration policies and collect information on what changes are needed to bring **humanity** back to the system.
- ▶ 2018 - Trip hosted by the Democratic Women's Working Group to McAllen and Brownsville, TX.
  - ▶ Visited the federal courthouse, Border Patrol Processing Center, Port Isabel Detention Center, and Brownsville point of entry
- ▶ 2019 - Trip hosted by Rep. Juan Vargas to San Ysidro, CA.
  - ▶ Visited the San Ysidro point of entry, border infrastructure system, and border barrier



# The Many Benefits of Immigration

- ▶ Immigrants add about **\$3.3 trillion to the U.S. GDP** annually.
- ▶ In 2024, **46% of Fortune 500 companies** were founded by immigrants and their children.
- ▶ Adult U.S.-born children of immigrants have **higher incomes on average** than their parents.
- ▶ Immigration induced a **4.7% real wage increase** for the average low-skilled **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.
- ▶ A 2024 study by the American Immigration Council found that immigrants have **lower felony arrest rates** and **lower incarceration rates** than the U.S.-born, and that increasing the immigrant share of the population may **decrease the overall crime rate**.

# Trump's Immigration Policies

- ▶ The President used a 1798 law (the Alien Enemies Act) to send hundreds of Venezuelans to a prison facility in **El Salvador without due process**.
- ▶ The Administration is attempting to detain **tens of thousands** of migrants at a facility in **Guantánamo Bay**.
- ▶ The President attempted to **end birthright citizenship**, a constitutional right, via Executive Order.
- ▶ Reports indicate that ICE may be looking at converting former federal prisons, including the former federal women's prison in Dublin, into a **migrant detention facility**.
- ▶ The federal government is **no longer processing new applications for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)**.
  - ▶ Registered Dreamers can still renew their status.

# Attacks on Protections for Migrants

- ▶ In January, the Administration overturned guidelines that discouraged immigration enforcement in **sensitive locations**.
  - ▶ ICE agents can now operate in schools, hospitals, and other areas. A federal judge has temporarily blocked them from entering **places of worship**.
- ▶ In March, the Administration attempted to **strip work authorization and deportation protections** from hundreds of thousands of Venezuelan Temporary Protected States (TPS) holders.
  - ▶ A federal court has since **blocked** this move.
  - ▶ Haitian TPS holders are still set to **lose their protections** by **August**.

# Attacks on Protections for Migrants (cont.)

- ▶ Last week, the President announced he would end TPS for Afghans, which could force more than 10 thousand migrants to return to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.
- ▶ On March 21, the Administration cut funding for a program that provided **legal aid to unaccompanied minors**.
- ▶ In January, the President signed the Laken Riley Act, a bill that requires the Department of Homeland Security to **arrest, detain, and possibly deport** all undocumented immigrants accused of committing non-violent theft, **whether they are guilty or not**.
  - ▶ Congressman DeSaulnier voted **against** this bill when it passed the House of Representatives.
  - ▶ The Congressman supports consequences for perpetrators of crimes, particularly violent crimes, but this bill goes against our foundational judicial principles of innocent until proven guilty and would have done nothing to prevent the death of Laken Riley.

# Judicial Restraints on the Administration's Actions

- ▶ Courts are pushing back on the Administration's cruel, dangerous, and illegal policies related to immigration.
- ▶ In March, a federal judge blocked the Administration from deporting migrants to countries with which they had no relationship without giving them a chance to raise claims that they would face persecution if sent there.
- ▶ In March, a U.S. appeals court upheld a temporary block on the Administration's use of the Alien Enemies Act to deport certain Venezuelan immigrants without due process.
- ▶ Four federal judges have temporarily blocked the Administration's attempt to end birthright citizenship, citing the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

# Congressman DeSaulnier's Support for Responsible Immigration Policies

- ▶ Congressman DeSaulnier has advocated for policies that treat immigrants with respect and recognize the value they bring to our society, by:
  - ▶ Sponsoring the **American Dream and Promise Act** (H.R. 1589), which would provide a **pathway to citizenship** for Dreamers, TPS recipients, and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) beneficiaries.
  - ▶ Writing a **letter to ICE, BOP, and DHS strongly opposing** any plan to house migrants at the former federal prison in Dublin, citing the uninhabitable condition of the facility.
  - ▶ Joining his colleagues in sending a letter to the Administration urging them to **immediately reinstate** funding for legal aid for unaccompanied minors.
- ▶ **California remains a sanctuary state** under the California Values Act (SB 54), which prevents state and local resources from being used to assist federal immigration enforcement.

# Immigration Casework Services Provided by Our Office

- ▶ Some of the immigration-related services our office provides include:
  - ▶ **Checking the status of pending cases** with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
  - ▶ Contacting embassies to learn more about **pending visa applications**.
  - ▶ In certain circumstances, we may request **expedited processing** of immigration cases.
- ▶ **Our office cannot overturn application and petition denials made by USCIS or U.S. embassies.**

# Contact Our Office

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