

Comprehensive Immigration Reform: Understanding the Process and Impacts

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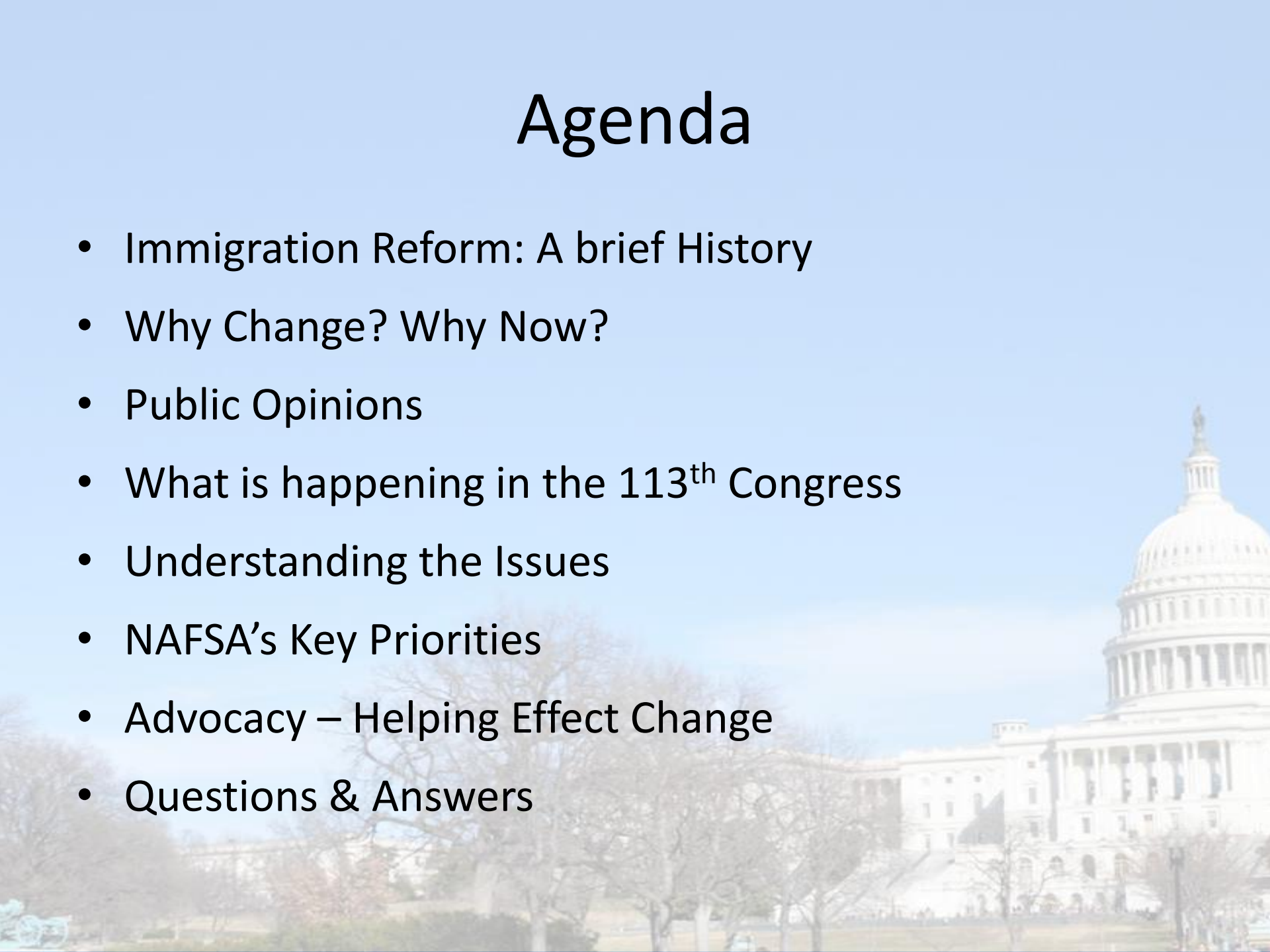
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Agenda

- Immigration Reform: A brief History
- Why Change? Why Now?
- Public Opinions
- What is happening in the 113th Congress
- Understanding the Issues
- NAFSA's Key Priorities
- Advocacy – Helping Effect Change
- Questions & Answers



Immigration in the USA – A (VERY) Brief History

- 1790 – Naturalization Act
- 1840's-1920's - Mass immigration
- 1882 – Chinese Exclusion Act
- 1952 - Immigration & Nationality Act
- 1986 – Immigration Reform & Control Act
- 1996 – Illegal Immigration Reform & Immigrant Responsibility Act
- 2001 and Beyond – SEVIS and More!



Common-sense Immigration Reform

- 2006 – *Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act* introduced and passed through Senate. Died in the House when no consensus reached
- 2008 – Obama declared immigration reform a “top priority” in his first term.
- 2012 – Obama cites not getting immigration reform passed as his “greatest failure” in his first term.
- *Comprehensive to Common-sense*: Strategic rebranding to move away from 2006 failure.

Why Change? Why Now?

- Since Obama's first term in office, there has been a change in political climate that makes change more likely.
- In 2012 Elections, Obama received 71% of the Hispanic vote – that fact is hard for Republicans to ignore. Immigration is often considered a “gateway” issue upon which party decisions are made.
- Both parties realize deporting 11 million undocumented individuals is not a viable. Public opinion polls suggest that the majority of Americans are in support of immigration reform.
- Not changing could put the USA at risk for losing competitive edge as skilled workers exit the country.

Public Opinion

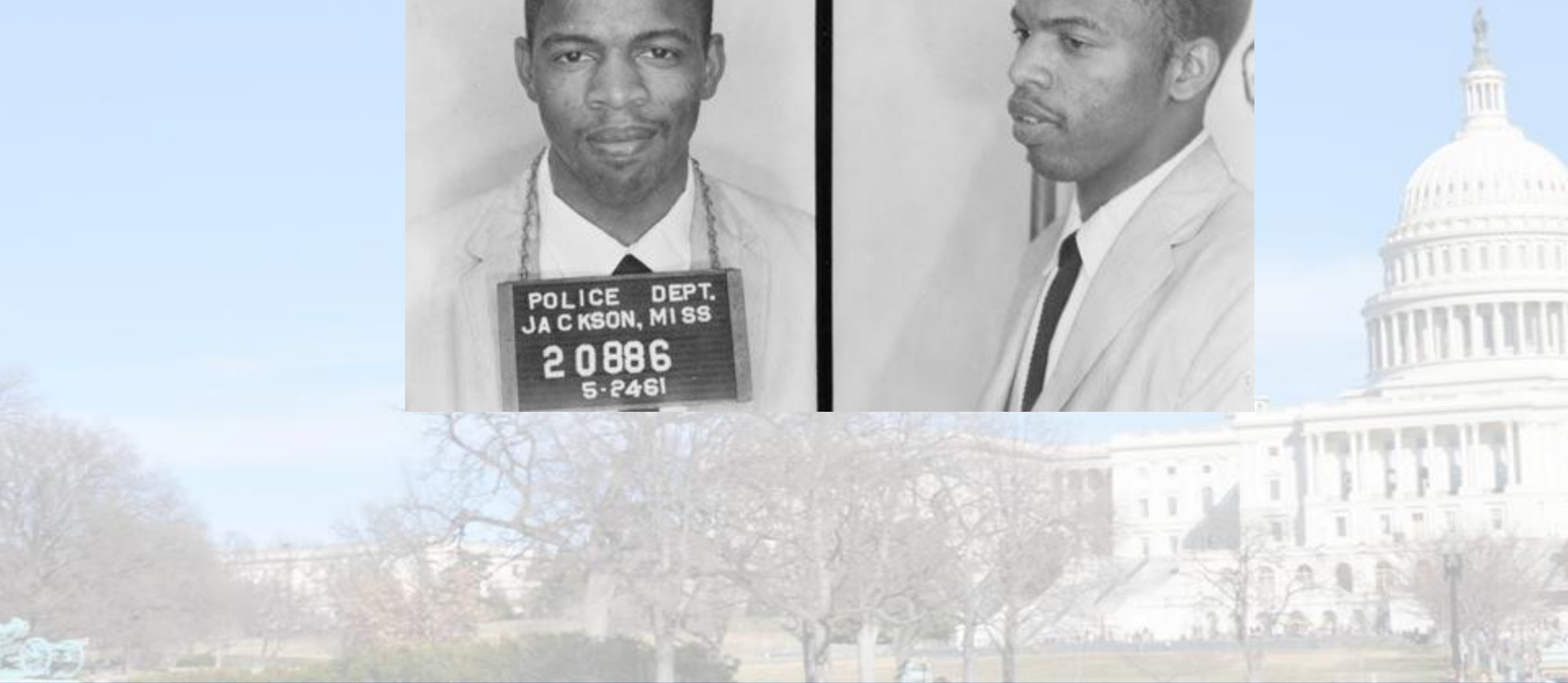
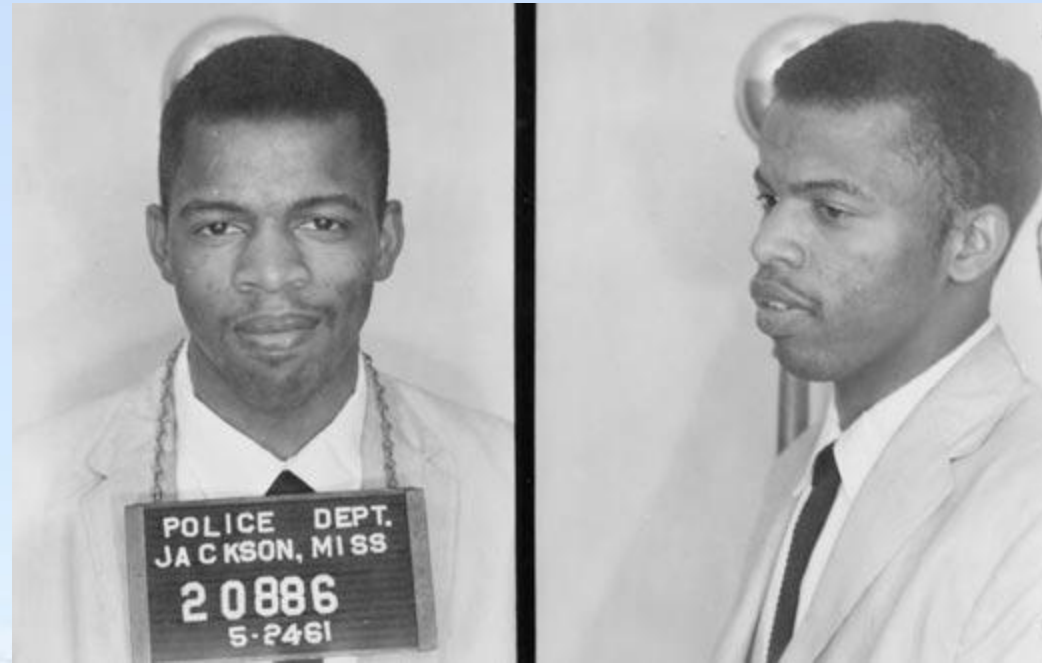
- Pew Research May Survey:
 - Around 75% of Americans indicated immigration policies need minimally “major changes”
 - Majority of Americans think those undocumented in the USA should have a way to stay, *if* they meet certain requirements
 - Top Priority? Not for all...
 - Strengthen our economy? 49% agree.

Public Opinion





Public Opinion



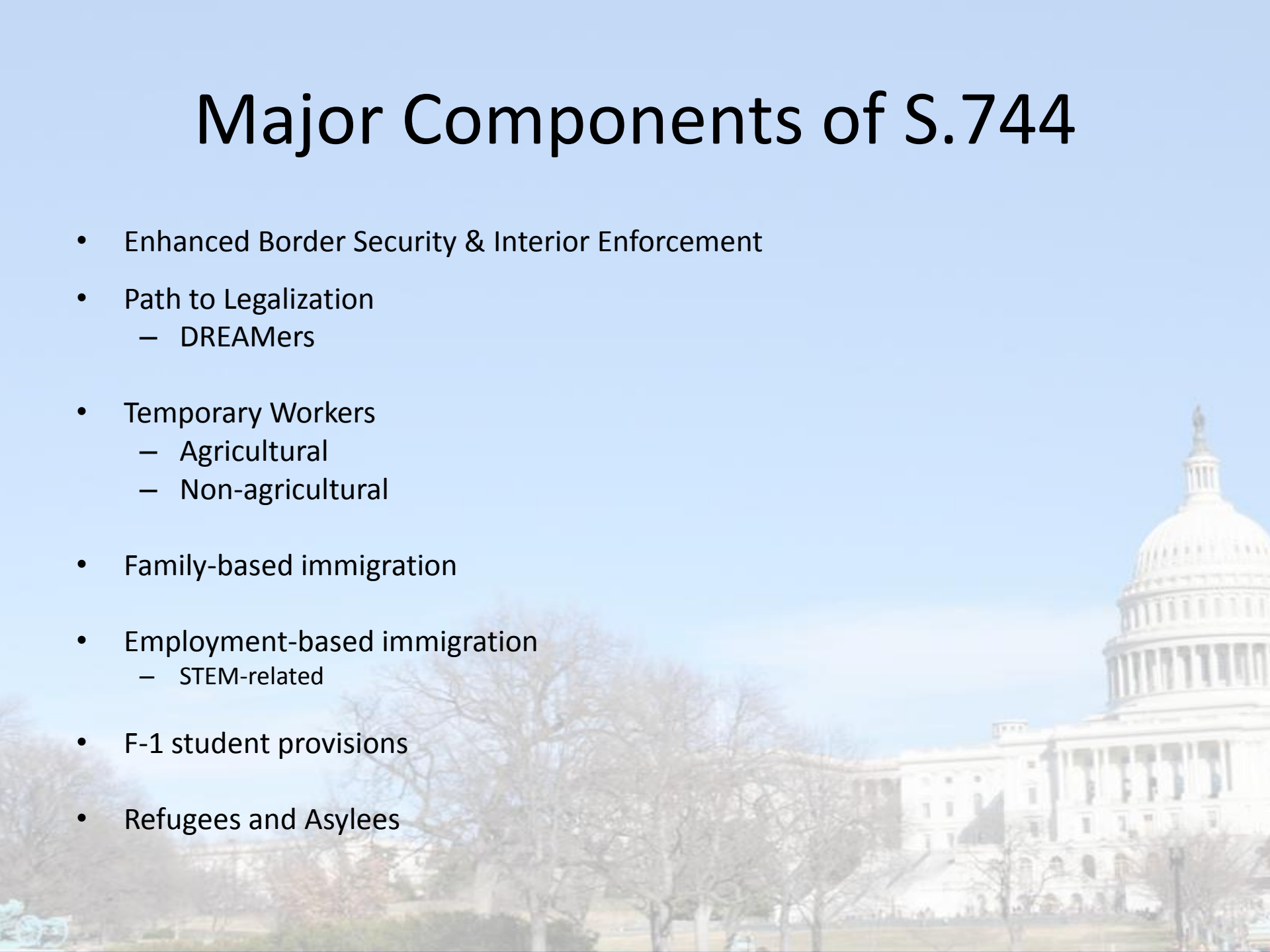
The 113th Congress

- The “Gang of Eight”
- *April 13, 2013* – Introduction of “S. 744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act.”
 - Consideration by Senate Judiciary Committee, Sen. Patrick Leahy (VT), Chairman
- *May 21, 2013* – Senate Judiciary Committee passes out S. 744 (13 – 5)
- *June 27, 2013* – S.R. 744 passed by the Senate (68 – 32)
- *October 2, 2013* – Introduction of H.R.15 in House of Representatives
- The future?



Major Components of S.744

- Enhanced Border Security & Interior Enforcement
- Path to Legalization
 - DREAMers
- Temporary Workers
 - Agricultural
 - Non-agricultural
- Family-based immigration
- Employment-based immigration
 - STEM-related
- F-1 student provisions
- Refugees and Asylees



NAFSA's Key Priorities – Green Card Reforms

- Develop a viable package for green card relief including some or all of the following provisions:
 - Increase the overall number of green cards available annually.
 - Recapture unused EB green cards from prior fiscal years to help eliminate the backlog.
 - Stop counting spouses and minor children against the employment-based green card cap.
 - Eliminate annual per country limits with a possible phase-in period.
- Provide relief through the DREAM Act to children raised in the US who lack immigration status.
- Through Uniting American Families Act, allow US citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor same-sex partners for legal permanent residency. **(US vs. Windsor resolved this)**
- Create a direct path to green card status for foreign students. Including protection from long adjudication timeframes by extending immigration status.
- Provide age-out protection for children.
- Protect higher education and related or affiliated non-profit orgs from increased filing fees.

NAFSA's Key Priorities – Non-Immigrant Reform

- Extend dual intent to students in F Category statuses
- Expand employment options for F-1 and J-1 student both during the school year and during breaks.
- Allow short term study on tourist (B) visas.
- Expand opportunities to study for F-2 spouses/children.
- Provide work authorization for spouses of H-1Bs and F-1s.
- Restore Secretary of State authority to waive personal appearances by visa applicants.
- Restore visa renewal in the US for the following nonimmigrants: E, H, I, L, O, and P.
- Launch a Frequent Traveler Program for international students, researchers, scholars, and business people.

NAFSA's Key Priorities – Other Issues

- Protect Current Laws
 - Maintain H-1B cap for Higher Ed/Research institutions
 - Continue allowing colleges/universities to petition for green cards for most qualified applicants for positions that include classroom teaching
 - Maintain the exemption from the H-1B training fee for higher education and related or affiliated non-profit organizations.
- Management of SEVP
 - Move the Student and Exchange Visitor Program within Department of Homeland Security from the enforcement division of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to the services division of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Read more here: www.nafsa.org/113thcongress

Advocacy Day Washington, DC

March 18-19, 2014

- By attending Advocacy Day, you can:
 - Explore the fundamentals of advocacy;
 - Gain insights into the workings of a congressional office;
 - Learn about current political trends as they relate to NAFSA's legislative priorities;
 - Share information with your representative/s and senators about the impact of international education on your campus and our local community.
 - www.connectingourworld.org

Helping Effect Change

- Write to your representatives. Thank them, complain, whatever. Use the system and share your opinions. NAFSA even makes it easy for you!
- Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Spread the word on the issues.
- Talk to people. Ask them how this affects them. Help them see how this affects them.
- Consider attending Advocacy Day next year. There are travel grants. It is exiting. It is important.

Questions & Answers

