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Project 2025: What's At Stake for Immigrants' Rights

What is Project 2025? It's a wish list of right-wing policies, reflecting an extreme Christian nationalist ideology, written by the Heritage Foundation and more than 100 other conservative groups as a blueprint for a potential conservative administration. It is an explicit effort to further empower the presidency, embed ideologues in nonpartisan civil service, and enable the executive branch to unravel the civil rights movement's gains over the last seven decades.

The full agenda, which is more than 900 pages long, would completely reshape our federal government in order to benefit white nationalists, the rich and powerful, and religiously motivated bigots. When it comes to immigration policy, its proposals would terrorize immigrant communities, weaken our economy, and undermine notions of due process and fundamental fairness.

Former President Trump has called for the “largest deportation program in American history.” Here are some of the ways Project 2025 would help make it possible:

- **Enabling a Nationwide Deportation Machine:** Project 2025 calls for allowing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to use “expedited removal” — a process normally only used near the border, and one that raises significant concerns about due process — against immigrants found anywhere within the country. It would enable raids in sensitive zones like schools, hospitals, and religious institutions.
- **Militarizing the Border:** Project 2025 calls for “using military personnel and hardware” to prevent crossings at the border. And it calls for new laws to shut down the border — including higher hurdles for asylum seekers — and to increase wall construction. The end result would be humanitarian crises just south of our border.
- **Expanding Immigrant “Detention” Centers:** Project 2025 calls for more than doubling the number of immigrants, up to 100,000 on any day, who can be locked up while facing deportation. It calls for more immigrants to be subject to *mandatory* deportation, regardless of whether they are a flight or public safety risk. Deportation is a process that can take months or even years.

- **Eliminating Popular Relief Programs and Visa Categories:** Project 2025 calls, indirectly, for ending protections for more than half a million Dreamers who arrived here as children, in addition to 176,000 Ukrainians who fled the war in their country. Directly, it calls on Congress to repeal all Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations, which would cause nearly 700,000 immigrants — many of whom have been living and working here for decades — to lose work authorization and face deportation. It would also cut back or eliminate numerous categories of temporary and permanent visas.
- **Mandating Misguided Work Verification Programs:** Project 2025 would expand E-Verify, a system intended to prove that employees are eligible to work in the United States, but which relies on highly error-prone systems that have shut out eligible workers — especially people of color.
- **Entangling Local and Federal Enforcement:** Project 2025 calls for the expansion of state and local police involvement in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, and it calls for penalizing states and localities that don't fully cooperate with federal immigration authorities — including through the opening up of motor vehicle and voter registration databases.