

The American Cities Summit: Topic B Primary Sources

Establishing more Effective Pathways for Immigration

Here are primary sources that your moderator or legal chair thought would be helpful in gaining an understanding of the topic. These are by no means all of the sources available, just sources we wanted to highlight.

Source #1: The United States Constitution Amendment #14

Amendment #14 outlines birthright citizenship and was later used as base for all immigration policies in the U.S. This amendment also explains the rights that citizens have which includes protection against the deprivation of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Amendment #14 was the first piece of immigration legislation included in the U.S. Constitution which was of significant importance because it was the first time that immigration and citizenship was addressed in the Constitution.

<http://constitutionus.com/#amendments>

Source #2: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Webpage

This source is helpful because the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services department publishes all current news articles pertaining to immigration on this site and the public can explore the page in an interactive way to see what steps immigrants pursuing citizenship need to take in order to fully become citizens. For example, articles on this page include “USCIS Launches Mobile Form for Replacing Green Card” and “USCIS Announces Citizenship and Assimilation Grant Opportunities.” Also, all of the forms regarding immigration are found on the webpage.

<https://www.uscis.gov>

Source #3: Civics (History and Government) Questions for the Naturalization Test

This document is an example of a one hundred-question exam that immigrants pursuing naturalization must pass in order to obtain citizenship. This source is helpful to understand the expectations of immigrants’ knowledge in order to become citizens. Many people assume that immigrants can get into the country easily, but the exam is very expansive and many natural-born-citizens would struggle to successfully pass the test. The exam covers topics from constitutional knowledge, taxes, important dates, to knowledge of how the government operates.

<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Office%20of%20Citizenship/Citizenship%20Resource%20Center%20Site/Publications/100q.pdf>

Source #4: Immigration to the U.S.

This short document is a composite of interviews that detail the hardships that immigrants have faced during and after the immigration process. The document contains first hand accounts of immigrating to the United States, their reasons for doing so, and the obstacles they faced. The information is all from interviews conducted on many individuals who are from various regions around the world who have or currently reside in the Metro-Detroit area.

<http://detroitjourneys.marygrove.edu/detroit-journeys/immigration-to-the-u-s.html>

Source #5: “Goodbye Old Ireland!”

This source is one of the most iconic images of mass immigration out of Western Europe, specifically Ireland. People were leaving their home by the boat load, as seen in this image, to immigrate to a new country in hopes of a better life and a fresh start. This image embodies the spirit of immigration and the American Dream.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c23731/>

Source #6: “The Americanese wall”

This image is a piece that is often referenced when discussions about immigration and the literacy test take place. The image is a politicized example to demonstrate the struggles between the government and immigrants entering the U.S. seeking citizenship. The image illustrates how difficult U.S. immigration policies are on incoming immigrants and how intimidating the examinations can be to non-native English speakers. The image represents the American government as intimidating and distant while the immigrants are pictured to be begging on the other side of the border.

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3b00563/>