America's Workforce Challenge

Why Economic Growth Requires More Workers

Workforce growth is slowing just as demand for workers continues to rise. As population growth slows and more Americans retire, employers across the economy are struggling to fill critical jobs. Around 2030, deaths are projected to exceed births in the United States, meaning future workforce growth will depend increasingly on immigration. Without enough workers, economic growth slows.

Three Facts Congress Should Know

We face a demographic turning point

Deaths are projected to exceed births around 2030-2031, reducing the natural growth of the U.S. population and workforce.

The population aged 65 and older grew nearly five times faster than the total population between 1920 and 2020. In 2023, retirements hit record highs.

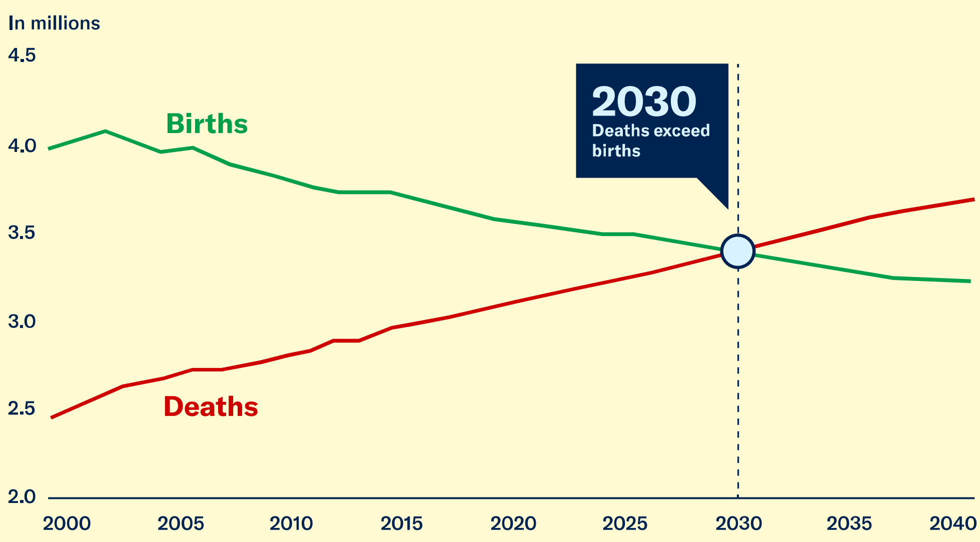
Employers need more workers

There are not enough workers available to fill every open position.

There are 8.1 million unfilled jobs and 6.9 million workers to fill them.

Workforce growth drives economic growth

When businesses cannot find workers, projects are delayed, investments are constrained, supply chains weaken, and economic growth slows.



Workforce Shortages Are Affecting Critical Industries

Sector	Workforce Pressure	Economic Impact
Health Care	Legal immigrants are more than 18% of the health care workforce; nurse unemployment is ~1.6%.	Staffing shortages strain patient care, long-term care, and care access.
Construction	202,000 openings reported in February 2026; nearly 90% of employers report vacancies.	Projects are delayed, housing supply is constrained, and costs rise.
Manufacturing	313,000 durable goods manufacturing openings remained unfilled as of April 2025.	Output is capped and supply chains face pressure.
Small Business	41% report trouble filling vacancies; more than 90% have struggled to find qualified applicants.	Growth, productivity, and customer service are limited.
Agriculture	~116,200 annual openings (BLS/USDA); avg. farmer age 58.1 yrs.	Seasonal labor gaps, harvest shortfalls, and supply chain disruptions.
Information Technology	Foreign-born workers make up ~20–25% of the U.S. tech workforce. U.S. cybersecurity workforce gap alone exceeds 700,000 unfilled positions.	Reduced foreign talent pipeline slows innovation. Unfilled roles leave critical infrastructure exposed and erode U.S. competitiveness in the global technology race.
Hospitality	~979,000 open positions with ~24% of workforce being foreign-born.	Service disruptions, reduced capacity, and staffing pipeline failures

It’s NOT an Either-Or Choice

America needs a comprehensive workforce strategy that:

- **Expands workforce participation**
- **Invests in education, training, and skills development**
- **Improves productivity and economic competitiveness**
- **Modernizes legal immigration pathways to meet workforce needs**

Congress can:

- Modernize employment-based visa programs to meet America’s workforce and talent needs across all industries.
- Provide employers with reliable work authorization verification tools.
- Maintain secure borders and uphold the rule of law.
- Pair immigration modernization with investments in the American workforce.

These solutions complement, not compete, with each other.

America cannot grow its economy without growing its workforce

America’s economic future depends on its workforce. Immigration is one part of the solution—not the entire answer. Congress must invest in policies that help more Americans enter, remain in, and advance in the workforce. Modernizing legal immigration is one component of a workforce strategy that supports economic growth.