

The Shaping and Reshaping of Revere

In the annals of the nearly 400 years of American history, from our earliest beginnings until today, the continuing saga of immigration to this country has been the most significant interconnecting feature of our history. We all share a common strain in our cultural DNA. With the exception of a very few, we are all immigrants or the decedents of immigrants to this country.

Most Revere residents today are the direct descendents of the largest wave of immigrants to legally emigrate to America during the late 19th and early 20th century.

The Journey To America

The decision to leave one's birthplace to live in a new land has always been a daunting and frightening experience. Yet, for nearly four centuries, millions upon millions of immigrants have bid farewell to their homelands and their families and friends to journey to America to start a new life. These immigrants made that difficult decision to move to America for many reasons. Some emigrated in search of adventure. Others could not live happily in their own home country because of the absence of freedom of religion and speech; while others fled starvation and disease, escaping from oppression, the ravages of war or in search of economic opportunity and a better life for themselves and their families. Waves and waves of immigrants have journeyed to the shores of America and have enriched our nation as all of these new Americans of different backgrounds, origins and heritage have assimilated into the tapestry of the American culture. For nearly four centuries America has continued as the largest multiethnic and multicultural society in the history of the world to, thus far, successfully integrate into its society new waves of immigrants from diverse heritages.

The First Wave

The first era of immigration to New England began 387 years ago on September 6, 1620, when a band of English Pilgrims, financed by a number of wealthy London merchants and traders, sailed from Plymouth England, aboard the ship Mayflower, with 102 passengers arriving at what was to become Provincetown, Massachusetts on November 10, 1620, to establish a new religious colony, as well as the first English Trading Company in New England, created to transport furs, timber, fish and other tradable goods back to London. These first immigrants to

America had entered into an economic agreement with their financial backers to ship goods back to England, for a period of seven years, to repay their debt to those who had financed their voyage to America.

In 1624, five years after the Pilgrims landed at Provincetown, young Samuel Maverick and other adventurous followers sailed from England and established a settlement at Winnisimmit, (now Chelsea), on the northern shoreline of the Mystic River, overlooking what was to become Boston Harbor. It was from this location, the site of the former Chelsea Naval Hospital, (now Admiral's Hill), that Maverick built his house and became the first immigrant to settle in the area that later evolved into Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop.

During this same era other adventurous English emigrated to New England establishing settlements at Gloucester, Beverly, Ipswich, Salem and Weymouth.

Six years later, on March 29, 1630, John Winthrop, the first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company in New England, aboard his flagship the Arbella, journeyed from England and arrived at Salem Harbor on June 12, 1630 with 700 immigrant passengers to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony in New England.

Five days after he had landed at Salem, Governor Winthrop sailed south past the shores of Rumney Marsh Beach, (now Revere), and landed at Chelsea to dine with Samuel Maverick at Maverick's house. It was from this location that Winthrop first viewed what was to become Boston Harbor and the Town of Boston.

This new immigrant community mostly English in their ethnic origins was grounded on the English language, laws, institutions, political ideas, literature and customs and gave America an Anglo-centric flavor. Their Anglo-Saxon Puritan Protestant traditions and common law carried over from England, and became the dominant influence on the founding American society. The native American Indians called these new immigrants "yengeese" translated into English as "Yankees." In order to keep their community strictly Puritan, the early settlers created legislation that restricted immigration. In 1637 the Massachusetts General Court adopted an order that no person or town should receive or entertain a newcomer for more than three weeks without permission. In addition to the desire to keep their colony Puritan, they were also concerned with the immigration of paupers.

In subsequent years a law was passed that restricted the immigration of "lame, impotent, or infirmed persons." Hardly any immigrants came to Massachusetts during the second half of the 17th century.

There were so few immigrants in Boston that the Massachusetts General Court encouraged the import of white servants to relieve the labor shortage. Other coerced and forced

immigrants in this first era were African and West Indian slaves brought from their distant homelands in servitude to their English masters. Also, many of the new immigrants arrived as indentured servants. Since the cost of one-way transatlantic travel to New England was expensive and since many of the immigrants could not pay for their passage across the Atlantic, they voluntarily indentured themselves, which meant that they were legally bound to work for their employer, who paid the ship's captain for their passage to America. One-third of all immigrants arriving in America between 1630 to 1776 had become indentured to secure their passage to New England.

The first wave of English immigration continued for twenty-four years, ending in 1642 due to the outbreak of the English Civil War.

As English immigration subsided new immigrants began to arrive in Massachusetts, between 1642 to 1651, primarily from France, Germany and other European countries.

By 1687, sixty-three years after Maverick had first settled at Winnisimmit, the population of the early settlements of Winnisimmit, (Chelsea), Rumney Marsh, (Revere), and Pullen Point (Winthrop) had only grown to 31 inhabitants, who were, for the most part, early farm owners, tenant farmers, indentured servants and slaves to the wealthy landowners of Boston. They farmed, fished and hunted fowl on their masters' lands at Winnisimmit, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point. A significant number of Scotch-Irish immigrants arrived in Boston in 1718 but they were dispersed throughout the colony due to the pressure from the Boston Puritans to maintain strict Puritan Orthodoxy in Boston.

By the time of the American Revolution, immigration to Massachusetts had been minimal and the colony was mostly composed of British stock. Some 95 percent of the population of Massachusetts came from England.

Boston's European population was overwhelmingly English. Its African population reached a high of 10 percent of the total English population of 15,730 in the mid 1700s, and remained steady at over 1,000 throughout the later half of the 18th century.

For 105 years, from 1634 to 1739, Winnisimmit, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point, were part of the Town of Boston governed, by the Board of Selectmen of Boston. In 1739 Winnisimmit, Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point were set off from Boston and incorporated as the independent Town of Chelsea. On the date of the incorporation of the Town of Chelsea there were only 40 homes in the new town: four in Winthrop, 10 in Chelsea and 26 in Revere.

During Chelsea's first century as a town, the population quadrupled in size, increasing from 267 inhabitants in 1739 to 1,201 residents by 1837.

Population of the Town of Chelsea

1739 TO 1837

1739 – 267	1810 – 594
1765 – 462	1820 – 642
1790 – 472	1830 – 770
1800 – 849	1837 – 1,201

During the early years of the 18th century, America had a laissez-faire attitude towards immigration without restriction or limitations as to who could enter the country. All branches of government, private employers, shipping companies, churches, and all other institutions all assisted and promoted unfettered immigration to America.

In 1790, the new Congress of the United States passed the Nationality Act of 1790 which provided that, “any alien, being a free white person who has resided within the jurisdiction of the United States for a term of two years may be admitted to become a citizen thereof.”

The new federal government relied heavily upon newly arriving immigrants to staff the Army. Immigrants represented about one-third of all of the regular soldiers in the 1840s, and an even higher proportion in the various state militias. It was the practice of Massachusetts Towns, in those days, to provide compensation to newly arriving immigrants to immediately join the Army to enable the town to comply with state and federal quotas which required each town to provide sufficient manpower to staff both the state militia and U.S. Army during the Civil War period.

The Second Wave

The second wave of immigration to America occurred between 1820 and 1840, which also reflected a dramatic population increase in the Town of Chelsea. From 1837 to 1840 the population of Chelsea nearly doubled in number from 1,201 in 1837 to 2,390 inhabitants in 1840. This dramatic increase in population growth coincides with rapid industrialization in the United States and also with the potato famine in Ireland and the unprecedented Irish immigration to the United States. During this period of time more than 750,000 Irish, British and German immigrants arrived in America; and another 4.3 million immigrants came from these countries during the next 20 years. Of the total number of immigrants to America during the second wave, 40 percent were from Ireland, escaping poverty and famine in their native country.

Also during this period large numbers of Canadians emigrated to Massachusetts from the Canadian provinces of Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Islands, finding new homes near Boston in Chelsea and Revere and other areas of Massachusetts.

By 1846 the Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point sections of Chelsea were again set off as the new Town of North Chelsea, (now Revere and Winthrop), with a population of 818 inhabitants, comprised mostly of the families of the early settlers and recent immigrants arriving from Canada and Ireland. From 1846 to 1866 the population of North Chelsea increased by thirty percent to 1,190 inhabitants, again reflecting early Canadian and Irish immigration to Massachusetts.

In 1871, the geographical area of North Chelsea would again be subdivided, creating two new towns, one becoming the Town of Revere and the other the Town of Winthrop. During the first two decades of incorporation, as the Town of Revere, the population expanded from 1,197 residents in 1871 to 5,668 residents in 1890, an increase of 4,471 residents in a brief 20 year period. The population growth was again attributed to Irish and Canadian immigration, in addition to the high fertility rate of the resident Irish population that had previously immigrated to Revere in the early 1840's. The Catholic population of the Town of Revere had become so large that in 1893 the first Roman Catholic Church, Immaculate Conception, was founded in the town.

Much of the early population growth in the Town of Revere occurred in the southeastern beachfront section of the town, which became known as Beachmont - the name reflecting the area's location adjacent to the beach and its hilly characteristics. The growth and development of Beachmont occurred for a variety of reasons, most prominent of which was the new regional transportation system, created by the new Boston-based Eastern Railroad System and the Boston, Revere Beach, Lynn (Narrow Gauge) Railroad, completed in 1875. The availability of this new convenient mode of transportation created easy access to the area and opened up advantageous possibilities for residential development, commerce, and recreation for the growing population.

Following the expansion of the railroad companies, with direct railroad access from Boston to Beachmont, Revere Beach and Lynn, came the land development opportunities in Beachmont. The Boston Land Co. had purchased the Sales Farm in Beachmont in 1872, subdividing the farm to create large numbers of building lots for new homes, and the building boom began. Similar new home development also occurred in the Shirley Avenue, Beach Street neighborhood. The new transportation system and the availability of inexpensive land led to the

migration of many residents of Boston and surrounding communities to Revere to settle in the area near the beach.

Between 1870 and 1905, more than 2,000 homes were constructed in the Town of Revere. Coupled with the rapid development of single family dwellings came the emergence of the “triple-decker”, high density style of housing, to accommodate multiple families on a single small lot of land. This type of high density housing development led to rapid population growth resulting in a doubling of the population every decade between 1870 to 1905. The rapid growth and development placed enormous pressure on the Town of Revere to provide infrastructure and public facilities and services of all kinds for the new residents, especially constructing new public schools for the growing school age population. Over a 30 year period, from 1873 to 1904, the Town of Revere constructed 10 neighborhood school buildings to serve the needs of the ever expanding population of school aged children.

Third Wave

The third wave of immigration to America began in 1880 when almost 460,000 immigrants arrived in the United States. This wave of immigration continued for nearly 35 years, until the outbreak of World War I in Europe, in 1914, the same year that 1.2 million immigrants entered the United States. During this era, from 1890 to 1905, more than 20 million southern and eastern European immigrants arrived in America, and the Town of Revere experienced another dramatic population surge. It also signaled the beginnings of a significant shift in the ethnic and religious make-up of the Town of Revere, from a predominantly northern European, English and Scotch-Irish Protestant community to a community with a burgeoning Canadian Irish and Italian Catholic population as well as, and a Polish and Russian Jewish population

Population of the Town of Revere 1890 TO 1905

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Population Increase</u>	<u>Total Number of Dwellings</u>	<u>School Pop.</u>
1890	5,668	+ 1,126	1,126	-
1895	7,423	+ 1,755	1,913	1,892
1900	10,395	+ 2,972	2,133	2,263
1905	12,647	+ 2,252	2,702	3,197

By 1905 only 19 percent of the immigrants entering the U.S. were from northern Europe, while 81 percent were from southern, eastern, and central Europe.

Revere's immigrant population grew so rapidly that by 1905, nearly 60 percent of the births in the Town of Revere were to foreign born parents who had immigrated to the United States between 1890 to 1905. The change in the ethnic make-up of the Town of Revere is illustrated below:

Origin of Birth Parents
Town of Revere Births 1905

Italy	18%
Canada	15
Ireland	13
British Isles	6
Nordic Countries	3
Russia	<u>2</u>
Total births to foreign born parents	57%
Total births to United States parents	43%

Before 1880, Italian immigration to the United States never rose above 10,000 people a year. In the decades to follow, however, the number of Italian immigrants seeking a new life in America began to increase dramatically. Between 1880 and 1890 more than 300,000 Italians came to the United States; in the nine years between 1891 and 1900 that number rose to more than 500,000, and from 1901 to 1908 more than 1.5 million Italian immigrants made the United States their new homeland. By the spring of 1909 the stream of Italians immigrating to the United States became the largest and most significant of its time.

Between 1880 and 1921 more than 6 million Italians entered the United States 95 percent arriving through Ellis Island, New York. No other ethnic group in American history sent so many legal immigrants to America in such a short period of time. Nearly 80 percent of these new immigrants were from the impoverished hill towns of Southern Italy and Sicily.

By 1910, 132,820 Italian immigrants from the south of Italy and 22,062 from the north of Italy had settled in Massachusetts and many of them settled in Revere.

Nearly 100 percent of the Italian immigrants of the 20th Century were Roman Catholics. By 1905 the Italian population in Revere had grown large enough that the first Italian Catholic Parish of Saint Anthony of Padua was founded in a three-family dwelling on Revere Street. It

was clear in 1905 that the Italian population of Revere was rapidly becoming the fastest growing ethnic group in the town.

Also, during the 1840s, German-speaking central European Jews began emigrating to the United States, Boston was soon home to over 20,000 Jews representing a broad range of religious, cultural, and ethnic traditions creating Boston's first Jewish community.

During the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, large numbers of eastern European Jews, fleeing pogroms in Russia and Poland, arrived in Boston and other surrounding communities. Very soon the eastern European Jews outnumbered the German-speaking central European Jews. By 1900, there were 40,000 Jews in Boston, 80 percent of whom were from eastern Europe. Many of them also settled near the mouth of the Mystic River, in Chelsea, East Boston, Everett, Malden, Revere and Winthrop.

By 1906, the Jewish population of the Town of Revere had grown large enough to establish the first Jewish congregation in Revere when Temple B'Nai Israel was founded to serve the spiritual needs of Revere's growing Jewish population. Most of that population had settled near Revere Beach in the Shirley Avenue and Beachmont neighborhoods. Within 10 years the Jewish population of Revere again increased in number so that in 1916 Congregation Tiffereth Israel purchased the Methodist Episcopal Society's church at the corner of Shirley and Nahant Avenue and founded Revere's second Jewish congregation.

The Chelsea Fire

As the result of the great Chelsea fire, on April 12, 1908, one-third of the neighboring City of Chelsea was destroyed, wiping out 3,500 buildings and displacing nearly 17,000 Chelsea residents. Many of those displaced by the fire subsequently migrated into the Town of Revere and surrounding communities to find new places to live.

Nearly 4,000 Chelsea residents, displaced by the Chelsea Fire, moved to Revere and many moved to the Shirley Avenue neighborhood and helped to build a vibrant residential and business district in that section of Revere.

The migration of new residents to Revere, from Chelsea, and the population spike, driven by the surge of births to the newly arriving immigrants, nearly doubled the population of the Town of Revere from 12,647 in 1905 to 25,179 in 1914 and increased the school age population by 30 percent, from 3,197 students in 1905 to 4,584 students in 1914.

As World War I broke out in Europe and the Town of Revere was about to become the City of Revere, new ethnic and immigration patterns began to emerge in Revere. Town of

Revere Birth Records, in 1914, indicate nearly 70 percent of the births in Revere, in that year, were to foreign born parents, while births to U.S. born parents dropped to 30 percent.

**Country or Region
Origin of Births
In the Town of Revere 1914**

Italy	35%
Russia	13%
Canada	11%
British Isles	9%
Northern Europe	2%
Eastern Europe	1%
Total Births to Foreign Born Parents	70%
Total Births to U.S. Born Parents	30%

In 1914, the number of births to new immigrant, Italian born parents in Revere exceeded the total number of births to U.S. born parents by 5 percent.

Thereafter, immigration to the United States fell sharply when World War I broke out in Europe and stayed low during the war years. When immigrants began to arrive again in the 1920's their entry into the United States was regulated and curtailed by the introduction of limits or "quotas" on the number of immigrant visas available. The 1921 Quota Act, (Johnson Act), set the first immigration quotas in the nation's history and an additional immigration quota was enacted in 1924. However the act was not implemented until 1929.

Notwithstanding the quotas, during the 15 year period from 1915 to 1930, the population of the new City of Revere increased by 37 percent due in large measure to the continued steady immigration from Canada, Italy, Ireland, Poland and Russia and the high fertility rates of the new immigrant populations.

**Population Increase
City of Revere
1915 to 1930**

1915	25,179	
1920	28,823	+14.4%
1930	<u>34,405</u>	+19.0%
	+ 9,226	

Immigration to the United States remained fairly high until the Great Depression of 1929 and then dropped significantly until after the end of World War II. During that period of time, from 1931 to 1946, only 50,507 immigrants were allowed to enter the United States. American isolationism was a major reason for restricted immigration into the country during that era.

Post War Baby Boom and Migration to Revere

Following the end of World War II a confluence of events occurred which would impact Revere's population during the next three decades, resulting in a 17 percent increase in Revere's population.

First, large numbers of World War II veterans returned home from the war, got married and then the post-war baby boom began.

Second, unlike their parents who had lived in multigenerational extended family households, (consisting of grandparents, parents and children living together in the same household) the post-war generation preferred to live in a household consisting primarily of a husband and wife and their children. The post-war baby boom and the change in household living arrangements created an enormous demand for housing in the City of Revere, resulting in the first large-scale government sponsored housing development programs. Those programs created several hundred new housing units for returning World War II veterans and their families.

Third, events external to Revere were occurring in the City of Boston which resulted in significant migration from Boston to the City of Revere. As a part of the "New Boston Movement" in the City of Boston, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) was beginning the process condemning, demolishing and redeveloping many of Boston's older neighborhoods.

In 1953, the BRA completely demolished and redeveloped a 46 acre portion of Boston's West End, displacing 2,700 families a large number of whom migrated to Revere. Also, during the early 1960s, the BRA initiated the redevelopment of sections of Charlestown and many of the displaced residents of that neighborhood also found their way to Revere.

At the beginning of the 1960s and throughout the 1980s the Massachusetts Port Authority was expanding Logan Airport in East Boston, which resulted in the relocation of many East Boston families to Revere.

It was during this same time period that the last of Revere's farm lands on the west side of the City were being sold to developers to make way for the construction of hundreds of new

homes. These high quality new homes, in proximity to excellent neighborhood schools, was an extremely attractive magnet for many Revere residents as well as residents of nearby communities who quickly purchased these new homes.

The population boom created a building boom throughout the City of Revere resulting in new homes being constructed on every available building lot in the City.

American Foreign Policy and Refugee Immigrants

From 1914 until today, American foreign policy decisions have played a major role in emigration and refugees coming to the United States. During World War I a bilateral agreement between the United States and Mexico, known as the bracero program, allowed large numbers of Mexicans to enter the United States under a temporary works program to meet manpower shortages in the U.S. Again, during World War II, the bracero program agreement continued for more than 20 years until 1964. It is generally agreed that the bracero program stimulated vast numbers of temporary Mexican workers in the U.S. and their families to acquire permanent legal status in the United States as American citizens. Most of these new residents settled in California and the southwestern United States.

After World War II and up to the 1980s, most immigrants entering the U.S. were more apt to be refugees.

U.S. foreign policy initiatives in Cuba during the 1960s led to a massive Cuban refugee movement to the United States and particularly to the state of Florida. In 1965, U.S. involvement in the Dominican Republic led to the occupation of Santo Domingo by the U.S. Marines to remove the nation's dictator.

In an effort to stabilize the country and to reduce unrest and urban unemployment in the Dominican economy at the time of the invasion, the U.S. allowed thousands of Dominican refugees to immigrate to the United States.

The U.S. also became involved in Southeast Asia, during the 1960s and 1970s, to preserve a non-communist regime in South Vietnam.

The conflict ultimately spilled over into Laos and Cambodia. In 1975 the U.S. pulled its troops out of Vietnam creating a huge refugee problem. By the early 1980s thousands of Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees began to come into the United States, a number of whom were resettled in Revere. By 1990 there were over 150,000 Cambodian Americans living in the United States.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, granted amnesty to undocumented immigrants who had entered the United States before January 1, 1982 and who had resided in the U.S. continuously. Approximately 2.7 million undocumented workers were legalized by the 1986 Act. The unintended consequences of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 was that it gave the impression to other undocumented illegal immigrants that the U.S. Congress and the President would again grant immigration amnesty in the future which resulted in a flood of illegal immigration into the U.S.

In 1992, U.S. intervention in Somalia resulted in large numbers of Somalies entering the U.S. as refugees.

In 1994, U.S. intervention in Rwanda and the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq resulted in large numbers of refugees from Rwanda, Iraq, and the Kurdish area of Iraq entering the U.S.

Between 1991 and 1995, the U.S. became involved in ethnic battles in Bosnia-Herzegovina. U.S. diplomacy helped to settle three years of fighting in 1995. The U.S. and other countries ended the violence and restored peace to the country. As a part of the U.S. economic assistance to Bosnia-Herzegovina, large numbers of Bosnians were allowed to enter the U.S. as refugees. A number of these Bosnian refugees have settled in Revere.

When and if the U.S. withdraws from our current involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, it can be expected that numbers of refugees from these two war-torn countries will arrive on our shores as well.

The Current Tidal Wave

Everyday in the United States, nearly 70,000 foreigners arrive in this country. Most of these people are visitors, not settlers. More than 60,000 are tourists, business people, students, or foreign workers who are welcomed at airports, ports and border crossings. About 2,200 daily arrivals are immigrants or refugees who have been invited to become permanent residents of the United States.

Since the year 2000, about 850,000 foreigners, each year, enter the United States illegally under the current ineffective U.S. immigration policy. According to the Pew Institute there are an estimated 12 million unauthorized foreign-born people living in the United States today. More alarming, according to a Bear Stearns Immigration Report, there are more likely an estimated 20 million unauthorized foreign-born people living in the United States today.

The Department of Homeland Security estimates that the composition of undocumented illegal population living in the U.S. today is

**Composition of Undocumented
Illegal Population
Living in U.S.**

57%	Mexican
24%	Other Latin America
9%	Asian
6%	Europe and Canada
4%	Africa and Other

It is extremely difficult to ascertain the exact number of undocumented foreign born immigrants who are currently living in the City of Revere today. However, since the year 2000, 2,742 American citizen children have been born to foreign born parents residing in the City of Revere. Many of these foreign born parents may be citizens or may be registered aliens – meaning they are here legally. Conversely, a fewer number of births (2,152) in Revere were born to U.S. born parents during the same time period.

**City of Revere Births
To U.S. and Foreign Born Parents
2000-2007**

Year	U.S. Births	Births to Foreign Born Parents	Total Births per Year
2000	296	271	567
2001	307	310	617
2002	299	273	572
2003	295	338	633
2004	263	350	613
2005	245	339	584
2006	200	411	611
2007	247	450	697
Total Births 2000-2007	2,152	2,742	4,894

A review of the region of origin of foreign born parents living in the City of Revere at the time of their children’s birth provides an interesting profile of the foreign homelands of Revere’s newest residents.

**Region of Origin
of Revere Births to Foreign
Born Parents between 2000 – 2007**

Latin, Central, South America	46%
Middle East	22%
S.E. Asia	13%
Africa	6%
Caribbean	5%
Western Europe	4%
Eastern Europe	3%
Canadian Prov.	1%

Since the year 2000 four foreign countries have provided the largest number of Revere births:

- Brazil
- Morocco
- El Salvador
- Columbia

While America has always been a nation of immigrants and has always welcomed new immigrants to this country, there is widespread concern in the country that illegal immigration is a major national security problem. The country is no longer capable of controlling its own national borders and can no longer implement its own immigration policies.

The Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates tougher illegal immigration enforcement, says that the U.S. government's response to the problem and its crackdown has been halfhearted at best.

Business leaders and advocates for immigrant's rights argue that America's economy would collapse if all illegal workers were deported.

In 2006, President Bush, in his address to the Nation, presented his Secure Border Initiative to secure the U.S. border, to prevent illegal crossings with the use of America's best technology, and a new border fence on the Western border with Mexico, under the control of the Department of Homeland Security as a matter of national security.

The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006, a bipartisan bill supported by Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy and Arizona Senator John McCain, and supported in part by President Bush, would have tightened border security, established an immigrant guest worker program, and offered a path to citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants already in the United States. Opponents to the bill said it would have rewarded immigrants who entered the United States illegally and would leave the country vulnerable to security threats at the U.S.

borders. Supporters argued that the bill recognized economic and social reality of immigrant populations in the United States and provided hope of legal immigration status and a path to citizenship for law-abiding immigrants who come to the U.S. to work. The McCain/Kennedy bill was defeated by Congress.

The solution to the problem of illegal immigration in America will not be decided until the election of a next President of the United States in 2008 and an acceptable bipartisan immigration bill is enacted by Congress.

Until that time the population of the City of Revere will continue to evolve as it has for nearly 400 years as immigrants shape and reshape our community.

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