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## **1986 Immigration Act from the National Archives on Public Display for the First Time**

*Landmark legislation to reside next to groundbreaking exhibit on Lincoln and immigration*

**Washington, D.C.** – President Lincoln's Cottage and the National Archives are proud to collaborate in the first-ever public display of the Immigration Reform and Control Act signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in November 1986. The original Immigration Act, from the National Archives, will be on display at President Lincoln's Cottage from June 1, 2016 through December 1, 2016.

During its stay at President Lincoln's Cottage, the Immigration Act will reside next to President Lincoln's Cottage's special exhibit, *American by Belief*, a groundbreaking exhibit which presents American immigration policy during the Lincoln era as well as contemporary stories from recent immigrants to the United States.

"We hope that by seeing political action from the 1860s and 1980s, as well as contemporary stories of immigration, visitors will better appreciate and share their own understandings of the American immigration experience," said Callie Hawkins, Associate Director for Programs at President Lincoln's Cottage.

Although best known for leading the United States through the Civil War and helping end legal slavery, President Lincoln made a tremendous impact on America's immigration policy. On July 4, 1864, Lincoln moved to the Cottage for his final summer in residence. That same day, he signed into law An Act to Encourage Immigration, the first comprehensive immigration law in American history.

"The National Archives is pleased to have this opportunity to partner with President Lincoln's Cottage on this first-time exhibition of the 1986 Immigration Act," said David Ferriero, Archivist of the United States. "Its connection to national immigration laws dating back over 200 years of American history, including the 1864 Act signed by President Lincoln, is a welcome addition to our national conversation during this election year."

President Lincoln's Cottage CEO and Executive Director Erin Mast stated, "We're honored the National Archives entrusted us to display this act publicly for the first time, to help illustrate the evolution of immigration in the U.S. since Lincoln's time." Mast continued, "President Lincoln had a vision of the United States as a global beacon for freedom and opportunity and believed immigration should be encouraged and protected. What's clear today is that there are many challenges, but also that the U.S. continues to serve as a beacon of hope."

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### **About President Lincoln's Cottage**

For over a quarter of Abraham Lincoln's presidency, he lived at the Cottage, on an uplifting hilltop in northwest Washington, D.C. While in residence, President Lincoln made some of his most crucial decisions of the Civil War, visited with wounded soldiers, spent time with self-emancipated men, women and children, and developed the Emancipation Proclamation. His experience of being surrounded by the human cost of war here undoubtedly impacted his thinking and strengthened his resolve to challenge the status quo. Through innovative guided tours, exhibits and programs, we use Lincoln's example to inspire visitors to take their own path to greatness, and preserve this place as an authentic, tangible connection to the past and a beacon of hope for all who take up Lincoln's unfinished work.

President Lincoln's Cottage is a private nonprofit located on the grounds of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. The Cottage is recognized as a National Historic Landmark, National Monument, and site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Hours of operation: The Robert H. Smith Visitor Education Center is open 9:30am-4:30pm Monday-Saturday and 10:30am-4:30pm Sunday. Cottage tours are on the hour, seven days a week. For more information, visit: [www.lincolncottage.org](http://www.lincolncottage.org) or call 202-829-0436.

### **About the National Archives**

The U.S. National Archives is an independent federal agency that preserves and shares with the public records that trace the story of our nation, government and the American people. From the Declaration of Independence to accounts of ordinary Americans, the holdings of the National Archives directly touch the lives of millions of people. The National Archives carries out its mission through a nationwide network of archives, records centers and presidential libraries, and online at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov).