Civic meeting - Panel Discussion

A local college has put together a panel of local citizens to discuss changes in immigration laws. Your character has been selected to participate in this panel. Your goal is to come up with a policy that is appealing to as many individuals as possible. However, you also want the policy to serve your own interests.

Characters:

**Moderator:** The role of this character is to start the discussion by introducing the characters and calling on one of them to begin. S/he also watches the time allowed for each character to speak. This allows the teacher to focus on the discussion. If the panel is being video taped, the teacher can rate the participants after completion of the discussion.

**Union carpenter:** you went to 2 years of technical school and are proud of your trade. You are a hard worker, and as a union member, you earn well above minimum wage. However, many illegal workers have been taking carpentry jobs. They have less training, and you feel their work isn’t as good, but they are inexpensive to hire. You are afraid that you will lose your job to these workers.

**Business owner:** Your company hires illegal workers and pays them less than minimum wage. It saves you lots of money, and you know that your workers are still making far more than in their own countries. You do not want to lose this supply of cheap labor, but you also don’t want your tax dollars to support people who are in this country illegally.

**Local activist:** You work with many families of illegal immigrants. You have seen how many of them are exploited by their employers because of their status. You also know that most of them are unwilling or unable to return to their home countries. You want to create a way for these individuals to gain legal status. You would also like to see stricter penalties for companies that exploit illegal immigrants.

**Illegal immigrant:** Your family has been in the US a little over a year. You have no health insurance and you live in a small apartment. You and your spouse work 12 hours a day in a factory; they pay you less than they pay the American workers, but you don’t complain because you don’t want to be deported. You would like to become a legal resident, but you worry that you will lose your job if you have to be paid as much as others.

**Suggested Rubric:** Advanced Speaking Rubric- Role Play (holistic or multi-trait)