



What's at Stake

By the end of the Biden administration, there were about 15 million illegal immigrants residing in the United States. Roughly 10.8 million encounters occurred in just the last four years. It is currently estimated that there are 2 million gotaways in the United States, and there were record-high crossings on the southern border.

This is not just a safety issue but a human rights issue:

- One-third of female migrants have been sexually assaulted. Data suggests that 60-80% of women and young girls are raped on the journey to cross the border.
- There were over 850 migrant deaths in 2022 due to drowning, extreme heat, and other weather conditions, as well as falling from attempting to climb barriers. Many migrants died during human smuggling operations due to abandonment and inhumane conditions.
- Drug smuggling at the southern border has become a major problem, with 27,000 pounds of drugs seized—including 6 billion lethal doses of fentanyl.
- In 2023, 169 individuals on the United States' Terrorist Watchlist were arrested. Of those individuals, 99 were released. And beyond the safety and crime issues, nearly \$20 billion was spent on migrants who came here illegally rather than using those funds for more border security.

An insecure southern border undermines and complicates legal immigration pathways to the United States.

A Better Approach

It is proven that remaining tough on border issues drastically reduces problems. For example, President Trump's policies have reduced illegal crossings dramatically in his first and second terms. In the first month of President Trump's second term, the Border Patrol recorded nearly 8,500 apprehensions, making that a record low in 25 years. Building the wall, implementing asylum restrictions, and increasing enforcement have become deterrents and have aided in preventing illegal immigration, creating a more secure border.

Beyond creating deterrents, the United States must develop a more efficient process for legal immigration and implement a strong national security plan that addresses human rights violations, supports peace-building initiatives, and encourages peaceful diplomacy.

Addressing Misperceptions

MISPERCEPTIONS	FACTS
<p>Illegal immigrants face discrimination, violent threats, and poverty, which lead them to migrate to the United States.</p>	<p>While it is true that many immigrants are coming to America to seek a better life, as of 2019, 60% of undocumented immigrants have overstayed visas. Many people who cross the border illegally are exploited by cartels. As of 2022, smuggling migrants was a \$13 billion industry, up from \$500 million in 2018. In 2021, just over 5,000 people were charged and arrested for smuggling humans across the border. Between 2021 and 2022, there were only 41,000 migrants out of nearly 1.1 million who qualified as asylum seekers.</p>
<p>There were more migrant arrests under the Biden administration than there were under the first Trump administration.</p>	<p>Technically, there were more arrests made under the Biden administration. However, that is largely due to a higher number of border encounters. There were 10.8 million border encounters during the Biden administration versus 2.3 million encounters under the first Trump administration. Now, in Trump's second administration, there were approximately 8,500 apprehensions in February 2025. That is a 71% decrease in border apprehensions after President Trump's first full month in office compared to just over 29,000 apprehensions in January 2025. When compared to February 2024, that is a 94% decrease in apprehensions.</p>
<p>Illegal migrants do not commit crimes at the same rate as legal immigrants and U.S. citizens.</p>	<p>Illegal immigrants account for 64% of federal arrests.</p>