

FAQ | The Crisis on Our Southern Border

Q: Do walls really work? Isn't this a "medieval solution for a modern problem"?

A: Walls work. Congressional Democrats, who risibly claim that a [wall won't because it's a "medieval solution" to a modern problem](#), should try making the same argument about the wheel. The data shows that anywhere we have built walls with the correct mix of personnel and technology, we have seen a massive drop in illegal crossings – usually by 90% or more.

- San Diego (built in 1992): Apprehensions of illegal aliens crossing the border dropped 92% over the past 23 years
- El Paso (built in 1993): Apprehensions of illegal aliens crossing the border dropped 72% in one year and 95% over 22 years
- Tucson (built in 2000): Apprehensions of illegal aliens crossing the border dropped 90% over 15 years
- Yuma (built in 2005): Apprehensions of illegal aliens crossing the border dropped 95% over 9 years

Q: Is the President being unreasonable in his request? Is he refusing to compromise?

A: No. President Trump has asked Congress to fulfill its solemn duty to protect the American people and provide the needed funding to secure the border. The frontline men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol have long said they need border barriers and it's up to Congress to deliver. The President has already shown he is willing to compromise by agreeing to a steel barrier along the border rather than a concrete one. Congressional Democrats must decide if they will continue to prioritize partisan politics and their desire for open borders over supporting a mainstream, common sense solution to keep our country and our people safe.

Q: Are walls immoral?

A: No. It's unclear why Nancy Pelosi and other prominent Congressional Democrats believe that a border wall is "immoral" while other physical barriers, which Democrats have repeatedly voted to fund, are not. It is also interesting that Congressional Democrats have made no similar outcries over the "immorality" of border walls erected by other nations, such as the walls in Jordan, Israel, and the Vatican.

Q: Aren't these migrants seeking asylum from dangerous conditions?

A: Most asylum claims made by migrants arriving from the Northern Triangle of Central America (i.e. Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) have proven to be meritless. That's because widespread knowledge of loopholes in United States immigration – namely the low threshold screening standards to claim asylum – have enabled migrants to fraudulently claim "credible fear" and be released into the United States. Due to the low bar for credible-fear, DHS is seeing applicants – well-coached by coyotes, advocates, and others – utter the "magic words" to gain entry into American communities.

- Over the last five years, DHS has seen a 1,750% increase in credible fear claims for aliens who have been placed in expedited removal.
- The total number of credible-fear referrals for interviews increased from about 5,000 a year in FY 2008 to about 100,000 in FY 2018.
- Over the last ten years, there has been a **300% increase** in aliens placed in expedited removal from the Northern Triangle. **89 percent** of aliens from the Northern Triangle with a credible fear finding are found to have positive credible fear, yet **only nine percent of the cases completed in FY 2018** were ultimately granted asylum.
- NOTE: Not only is economic migration not a legitimate grounds for asylum by law, but migration has steadily increased even though the conditions in many of these countries have been steadily improving. Homicide rates in Honduras have been cut in half since 2012, and Guatemala's are at their lowest level since 2000. El Salvador has seen enough job growth in recent years to justify the return of those who were unable to come home after earthquakes in the 2000s.

Q: What other evidence do we have that these asylum claims are not meritorious?

A: Mexico is generously offering all migrants asylum, work permits, and a specific job. Nevertheless, migrants have turned down this offer with the stated intention of reaching the United States for economic opportunities.

A significant percentage of those migrants claiming to be seeking asylum fail to appear for their hearings before an Immigration Judge and subsequently disappear into the interior of the United States.

Q: Are criminals coming across the border?

A: In Fiscal Year 2018, CBP arrested 17,000 individuals with criminal records. On a typical day, CBP apprehends 21 wanted criminals at our Southern Border. The officers and agents must be vigilant about identifying national security and public safety threats above all others and denying entry to those who might do us harm.

Criminal aliens in the interior of the country is an issue as well. In the last two years alone, ICE officers made 266,000 arrests of aliens with criminal records – including those charged or convicted of 100,000 assaults and nearly 30,000 sex crimes.

Q: Is the crisis at our border fueling our nation's drug epidemic?

A: Our porous southern border has allowed drugs to flood into our country and endanger the security and well-being of American communities. Mexico is the source of more than 90 percent of wholesale heroin seized by law enforcement in the United States, up from only 10 percent in 2003. The amount of fentanyl seized by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in FY 2017 (2,370 pounds) was enough to kill every American citizen by overdose.

Q: Does the crisis at our border pose a terror threat?

A: Overall, DHS stops on average 10 individuals on the terrorist watch list per day from traveling to or entering the United States – and more than 3,700 in Fiscal Year 2017. Most

of these individuals are trying to enter the United States from points abroad by air, but we must also be focused on stopping those who try to get in by land. Additionally, last year at our Southern Border, DHS encountered more than 3,000 “special interest aliens” – individuals with suspicious travel patterns who may pose a national security risk – not to mention the many criminals, smugglers, traffickers, and other threat actors who try to exploit our borders. This threat isn’t new. In 2016, President Obama’s DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson ordered that DHS form a “multi-DHS Component SIA Joint Action Group” to drive efforts to “counter the threats posed by the smuggling of SIAs.” Just this month, the House Homeland Security Committee released a report outlining the threat posed by SIAs, as well as unknown and other potentially dangerous individuals, traveling to the United States using illicit pathways. The report can be found [here](#).

Q: Isn’t illegal immigration down?

A: Some media figures, who do not understand loopholes in United States immigration law, have tried to argue that because illegal borders crossings are lower today than in previous years, that we are not experiencing an illegal immigration crisis. That argument is wrong.

Fiscal Year 2000	Fiscal Year 2018
In FY 2000, CBP apprehended 1.6 million migrants attempting to illegally enter the United States.	In FY18, CBP apprehended 400,000 migrants attempting to illegally enter the United States
In FY 2000, 98% of CBP apprehensions were Mexican nationals.	In FY18, 56% of CBP apprehensions were Central American
In FY 2000, CBP apprehensions were primarily single adults and, as such, 95% of apprehensions were repatriated within hours.	In FY18, well over a third of all illegal migrants apprehended by CBP were family units or unaccompanied minors (i.e. are individuals for whom DHS cannot deliver legal consequences and who are instead released into the United States interior).

The critical difference between illegal border crossings in 2000 vs. today is that, in 2000, the vast majority were Mexican single adults, and, as such, those entering illegally were detained and repatriated to their home country within hours. Today, DHS is experiencing an influx of illegal migrants for whom it cannot deliver legal consequences (i.e. minors and adults who arrive with minors). As such, rather than detaining and removing these individuals, DHS simply catches them and then releases them into American communities.

- In December, DHS averaged 2,000 illegal entries a day at the Southern border.
- Fiscal Year 2018 is the highest number of family unit apprehensions on record – it is more than 40% higher than any previous year on record.

- It takes DHS one year to remove the number of family unit migrants that cross our border illegally every three days.
- To demonstrate the nature of the problem. Of the illegal alien apprehended in FY17:
 - 82% of single adults had been repatriated
 - 91% of Mexican single adults had been repatriated
 - Only 1.1% of non-Mexican family unit aliens had been repatriated
 - Only 1.8% of non-Mexican unaccompanied alien minors had been repatriated.
 - i.e. of the 31,754 unaccompanied minors CBP apprehended from the Northern Triangle in FY17, 98.2 percent remain in the country today.

Q. How does our porous border endanger the well-being of migrant children?

A: Aliens know generally that if they bring ANY minor with them they will be apprehended by Customs and Border Protection and released into the interior of the United States. This well-known loophole acts a magnet for family units and entices smugglers to use children as a way to gain access to the United States by posing a family unit. In the last two months, DHS has seen an over 100 percent increase in fraudulent family units at the Southern border (538 in the last two months, compared to 507 the five months prior to that) Additionally, we see NINE fraudulent family units each day. The result of these loopholes is that smugglers and illegal migrants know that if they arrive in the United States illegally under the age of 18 (or arrive with someone else under the age of 18), they can benefit from catch-and-release and then disappear into the interior of the country.

Q. What are we doing to combat the humanitarian crisis at our border?

A: Congress must secure the border in order to stop the humanitarian crisis at our border. Loopholes in United States immigration law encourage parents to send their children alone on a dangerous journey to the United States, often at the hands of unscrupulous human traffickers. Data shows that 31% of women and 17% of men are sexually assaulted along the journey. Additionally, 68% of migrants and refugees are victims of violence along the journey.

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