

## **Group Debate: Closing the U.S. Southern borders to immigration**

**Clear Statement of Objectives:** The United States should close their southern borders to immigration because of: the risk of safety, the stigma on current immigrants, and the impact on the U.S. economy.

### **Information to present:**

Safety:

- Disease

-Approximately 300 million crossings take place from Mexico into the United States making it an easy transportation for infectious diseases, such as, HIV, measles, rubella, rabies, hepatitis A, influenza, tuberculosis and much more. There have even been signs of declines in vaccination coverage towards these infectious diseases.

→ Approximately 300 million crossings take place from Mexico into the United States making it an easy transportation for many infectious diseases.

- Drug trafficking

- since Trump began his administration in 2016 and increased the U.S.'s southern border control, drug trafficking has been reduced 30%.

- Announcing his plans to deal with a growing toll of opioid deaths, Trump said in March that "drug traffickers kill so many thousands of our citizens every year."

- Children/women safety

-Thousands of immigrant children have crossed over the border have been used for drug trafficking. Health professionals report that as many as **six in ten migrant women and girls are raped on the journey**. Which raised many concerns that abducted women and girls are vulnerable to trafficking.

## Stigma

- Trauma/Quality of life

- Sources of Trauma stem from the new President's administration that call for the deportation of not only "dangerous criminals" that the previous Presidents administration put into place, but also the Trump administration call for the deportation of undocumented immigrants who committed minor offenses, which include acquiring a fake drivers license or social security number.

- As many have faces the threat of deportation in the Obama's administration, later it was overturned only to focus on those with a felony background. Now everybody is essentially in danger, causing them to be anxious and be in a feeling of limbo.

- Process of getting deported is stressful. It includes judicial proceedings, attending hearings, getting a lawyer and paying the lawyer, getting detained only to be transported to various facilities to eventually getting deported. This happens many times in some cases for people who keep coming back into the country.

- Some daily stressors of undocumented immigrants are fear of deportation, discrimination, language barriers. Forced separation of loved ones is a reason behind severe anxiety.

- Acculturated stress includes, their housing this can include () this is another cause anxiety, fatigue and depression, which can lead to drug and alcohol abuse and/or suicide. This then leads to a decline in their physical health. This also is known as the Ulysses Syndrome.

- End of life care is also not sufficient for undocumented immigrants. Cancer is the leading cause in Latinos (2016). Some challenges undocumented immigrants face while

in end of life care is late diagnosis, no social support, financial issues, anxiety of deportation, language and cultural barrier.

### Economically

- More jobs for American citizens
- Less deportation = more money
- There are 44.7 million immigrants in the U.S, and about 1 in 4 immigrants are undocumented.
  - Around 334,000 immigrants were deported from the U.S.
  - Overall, the Obama administration deported about 3 million immigrants between 2009 and 2016.
  - USA TODAY investigated and the average cost for one person to be deported is \$4,800. It cost \$180 per day to detain an individual and detention length is on average 30 days. On average ICE spends \$10,854.
- Taxpayer money can go to other resources like public education, government resources, social security, ect ...
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  - This year, Trump diverted 10 million dollars from FEMA budget to support ICE to crackdown on undocumented immigrants.

### Questions for cross-examination:

- Do we not have the responsibility to protect the human rights of american citizens?
- Do you believe that it is worth the risk for these families to come across the border? The amount of human trafficking, kidnaping, and rape has skyrocketed with the immigrant population, will closing the borders not aide with these problems?

- We are here not to talk about how immigration is bad and that all immigrants cause all bad things that happen in our nation. That one crime portrays an entire population. We are here today stating that we have a duty as American citizens to serve and protect our own nation. If the facts are showing a spike in drug trafficking, human trafficking, declined child safety, and a decline in our economy because of immigration. Why should we then not close our borders?
- With mental health already being underfunded and not a priority of the US government for documented citizens, how can we expect to help undocumented citizens who have same level of stressors but have even less resources than documented citizens?
- How are undocumented expected to make a living if acquiring a fake drivers license or social security card puts them in jeopardy of getting deported?

**Definition of key terms:**

- Immigration - A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.
- Refugees - A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. **Refugee camps** are set up to provide aid to these individuals till they can return to their country.
- Ulysses Syndrome - high levels of stress with chronic recurring and unresolved feelings of failure, loneliness, social isolation and, of course, fear of deportation. Physical symptoms may include chronic fatigue, headaches, colitis, nausea, and exhaustion.
- Acculturated Stress- Acculturation or adaptation to a new culture involves changes in multiple areas of functioning (e.g., values, behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, etc.), and for individuals, families, and groups engaged in the acculturation process, these adjustments

are often experienced as stressful. The stress that emerges from difficulties in acculturation is referred to as acculturative stress.

**Paragraph of core social work values:**

- Failure to uphold basic principles of human dignity and protection from disease, trauma, and violence.
- Fight injustice and help create a world where human rights are protected.
- As social workers, we believe in the dignity and worth of the human being. Does this not apply to our American citizen's and already legal immigrants living in our country? How are we going to protect our families and citizens from disease, drug trafficking, and our struggling economy by allowing our southern borders to stay open.
- We also believe in the dignity and worth of a human being, in regards to the undocumented immigrants. Their entering this country illegally is shown to have caused severe stress and anxiety.

**Summary of where we got our data:**

- Our data for this project has been collected from research databases such as ebsco, peer reviewed articles, internet sources, and interviewing/discussing this issue with persons who are knowledgeable about the topic.

**One interview:**

Statement from an employee of ICE, wants to be kept anonymous. (Family Member)

The price of immigrant enforcement is expensive, it has spent 263 since 1986 this comes from the taxpayer money. If we did have open borders it would more than likely leave 20,000 people without a job. With the idea behind open border there is a running thought that it would possibly send the wealthiest or best of the country as the process of immigrating to this country would be easier for them to get here and stay here. If the US government were able to implement some kind of closed border, the money “saved” from losing all of the immigration agents would only go to other agencies and funding. Close borders in theory as well would encourage more skilled workers to come to the United States as the obstacles would be not as hard and they would be able to start a new life here. Whatever will happen there will be still people entering the country illegally, deportations would still happen, ICE would most likely not be eliminated. The best solution is to find a way for the money to be used efficiently.

(Anonymous, personal communication, November 14, 2018)

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**Two other internet sources:**

1. The Centers for Disease Control - cdc.gov
2. USA Today - usatoday.com

**Notes**

- A. “Disease” -According to Border Patrol Agent and Rio Grande Valley Union, agents are experiencing contagious outbreaks such as scabies, chicken pox, MRSA, and staph infections.

A. Academic.oup: The infections noted in immigrants from Latin America are issues such as fecal contamination which is common and results in an increased risk for for infections.

- Animal care practices are less safe in Latin America than in the United States, and meat products are often sold informally without screening for parasites having been done.
- Milk products may not be pasteurized.
- Overcrowding and poor nutrition can increase the transmission of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and other respiratory pathogens.

A. The Safety of Illegal Immigrant Children-Traveling to the border many men, women and children suffer assaults, robbery and abduction by criminal gangs. There are also reports of extortion and ill-treatment by police and immigration officials. Amnestyusa

- As many as 20,000 migrants are kidnapped every year in situations like this. The abductions can be lucrative: they earn criminal gangs an estimated \$50 million each year, according to the Mexican National Human Rights Commission.

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