



## The Government's Border Strategy Is Working

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The Department of Homeland Security Secretary (DHS) has made a commitment to serious and effective enforcement of the law along the United States southern border. Despite all of the resources and personnel sent to the border there is currently a perception that violence along the border has increased and that the federal government has done nothing to stop it.

This is nothing short of nonsense and here is why:

DHS has facilitated huge increases in the presence of federal agents on the border, this coupled with overall historically high increases in the number of deportations of criminal aliens and increased, enhanced and continued cooperation with Mexico is dramatically changing the dynamic on the border.

To date there has been a decline in crime in border states, a slowing of illegal migration into the United States, and a lack of spillover of violence from Mexico onto American soil.

As this document will show the statistical evidence to make this case is overwhelming:

1. More Money, More Border Patrol, Customs Agents and More National Guard
2. Deportation of Criminal Undocumented Immigrants Has Increased
3. Crime along the US Side of the Border is Down With little spillover of Violence from Mexican Drug Cartels
4. Drug Seizures Are Up
5. Illegal Migration Into the US Has Dropped
6. Much Greater Cooperation with Mexico

### **1. More Money, More Border Patrol, Customs Agents and More National Guard**

In a truly bi-partisan manner the [Obama Administration and Congress](#) released \$600 million emergency funds for enforcement along the border:

- \$254 million for Border Patrol Personnel.
- \$80 million in funding for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).
- \$176 million for 1,000 new Border Patrol agents to form a “strike force” to be deployed at areas most needed

- \$39 million for Customs and Border Protection
- \$29 million for 250 new Customs and Border Protection officers at ports of entry
- \$10 million for investigators to stop corruption in border patrol and customs and border protection.
- \$30 million for border interdiction
- \$50 million for 250 new ICE personnel, including special agents, intelligence analysts, and support personnel,
- \$8 Million for Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
- 10\$ Million for Federal Judiciary resources for increased caseload

[Customs and Border Patrol](#) estimate that since 2004, the number of “boots on the ground” along the Southwest border has increased by nearly 85% to 17,600 Border Patrol Agents today. Arizona currently has a record number of “boots on the ground,” with more than 4,900 Border Patrol Agents, 900 Customs and Border Protection Officers, and 130 Air and Marine Agents.

## **2. Deportation of Criminal Undocumented Immigrants Has Increased**

This increase in spending on Border Security has been coupled with an increased focus in deportations of criminal undocumented immigrants. The current administration is deporting a record number of criminal undocumented immigrants. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is projecting that they will deport nearly 400,000 criminal immigrants this fiscal year.

In written testimony before the [United States Senate Judiciary Committee Secretary Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano](#) noted:

“In Fiscal Year 2009, Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) apprehended just over 556,000 individuals attempting to illegally enter the United States – a decline of 23 percent over the previous year, and more than half the total from the busiest years of the past decade. When there has been an increase in the number of personnel added to a sector and then a decline in apprehensions over a year, this could indicate that there has been a decrease in crossing attempts in that sector.

“Specific Border Patrol sectors experienced even further declines. Most notably, the El Paso Sector saw a 51 percent reduction in apprehensions, the Tucson Sector a 24 percent reduction, and the Rio Grande Valley Sector a 19 percent reduction. All these statistics indicate fewer attempts to illegally enter the United States.”

### **3. Crime along the US Side of the Border is Down With little spillover of Violence from Mexican Drug Cartels**

One of the more pernicious talking points from the media and certain politicians is that the drug cartel violence from Mexico is spilling over into the United States. This talking point has taken on a life of its own and would lead many to believe that the border is raging out of control. As it turns out this could not be further from the truth.

In Arizona in particular, where there has been much clamor regarding violence from Mexico, there has been a significant drop in criminal activity.

The FBI report on [Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime](#) shows that nationally, including border states, all four categories of violent crime declined overall compared to 2008: robbery, 8.1 percent; murder, 7.2 percent; aggravated assault, 4.2 percent; and forcible rape, 3.1 percent. Violent crime declined 4.0 percent in metropolitan counties. According to a [New York Times](#) report citing the same statistics "statistics show that even as Arizona's population swelled, buoyed in part by illegal immigrants funneling across the border, violent crime rates declined, to 447 incidents per 100,000 residents in 2008, the most recent year for which comprehensive data is available from the F.B.I. In 2000, the rate was 532 incidents per 100,000."

### **4. Drug Seizures Are Up**

Another misconception is that the border is porous and allows drugs to flow freely from Mexico into the United States. This is also not true, drug seizures along the Southwest Corridor are up when compared to years past.

In written testimony before [Congress Secretary Napolitano](#) listed the following as indications that their strategy was working:

“Our efforts are achieving their desired results at the border. This year, CBP and ICE seized a combined 911,800 kilos of narcotics along the southwest border – an increase of 36 percent. Outbound currency seizures nationwide also increased 74 percent – totaling more than \$57.9 million. From late March to November 2009, CBP seized \$22.1 million in southbound currency at land border ports of entry – an increase of nearly 300 percent over the previous year.

“According to DHS estimates that U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers intercepted \$282 million in illegal currency, a 35 percent increase over the prior two years. Authorities seized in excess of 7 million pounds of marijuana, cocaine, heroin and other drugs, up 16.5 percent. Agents

confiscated 6,800 weapons heading for Mexico, a 22 percent increase over the previous two-year period.”

### **5. Illegal Migration Into the US Has Dropped**

The administrations increased emphasis on enforcement has contributed to a slowing a slowing of illegal migration into the United States from Latin America. According to [The Pew Hispanic Center](#):

“The annual inflow of unauthorized immigrants to the United States was nearly two-thirds smaller in the March 2007 to March 2009 period than it had been from March 2000 to March 2005.”

“This sharp decline has contributed to an overall reduction of 8% in the number of unauthorized immigrants currently living in the U.S.-to 11.1 million in March 2009 from a peak of 12 million in March 2007, according to the estimates. The decrease represents the first significant reversal in the growth of this population over the past two decades.”

[The Pew Research report](#) also notes that the flow from Mexico has greatly diminished as well:

“While the Mexican unauthorized population living in the United States has not changed significantly since 2007, the inflows from that country have fallen off sharply in recent years.

“According to the center’s estimates, an average of 150,000 unauthorized immigrants from Mexico arrived annually during the March 2007 to March 2009 period—70% below the annual average of 500,000 that prevailed during the first half of the decade.”

There were 7.8 million unauthorized immigrants in the labor force in 2009, or 5.1% of the total. The size of the unauthorized labor force peaked in 2007 and declined in both 2008 and 2009. There were 7 million unauthorized immigrants employed in March 2009.”

These statistics indicate that there has been a significant drop off in the entrance of undocumented immigrants into the United States. Not all of this can be attributed to the efforts of DHS; a weak economy most likely also has given many immigrants pause in crossing the border. Nonetheless the drop in undocumented immigrants is significant and real and ramped up enforcement by DHS had something to do with that.

## **6. Much Greater Cooperation with Mexico**

Another piece of the puzzle in making the border safer has been an enhanced cooperation between Mexico and America. This has been fostered through two very important initiatives, the Merida Initiative and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Initiative:

**The Merida Initiative:** is a multi-year program, run by the State Department that is committed to demonstrating that the United States' shows its commitment to: “work in partnership with governments in Mexico, the nations of Central America, the Dominican Republic and Haiti to confront criminal organizations whose illicit actions undermine public safety, erode the rule of law, and threaten the national security of the United States.” According to the State Department the Initiative will provide equipment and training in support of law enforcement operations and technical assistance to promote the long-term reform, oversight and professionalization of our partners' security agencies. In 2008, Congress approved an initial \$400 million for Mexico and \$65 million for Central America, the Dominican Republic and Haiti

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Initiative:** is the only major agreement signed between the United States and Mexico during President Felipe Calderon’s final visit to America, this legislation pledges to strengthen cooperation between our two countries by enhancing the economic competitiveness by expediting lawful trade, while preventing the transit of illegal merchandise between their two countries, facilitating lawful travel in a manner that also prevents the illegal movement of people between their two countries, sharing information that enhances secure flows of goods and people, and disrupting and dismantling transnational criminal organizations and punishing their members and supporters.

These two programs have become important ways that the United States and Mexico can work together to create an important dialogue on border safety. Additionally it introduces other important dimensions to the current debate on how to make the border a better place. Discussions on trade, infrastructure, ports of entry and the circular flow of labor are all necessary parts of creating safety along the border.