

## Memo

To: Interested Parties

From: Simon Rosenberg

Date: Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Re: Thoughts on the New ICE Enforcement and Removals Report

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A new [report](#) released earlier today from ICE, *ICE Enforcement and Removal Operation Reports FY 2014*, contains another year of data showing how Obama era policies have made our immigration system better and border safer.

As background, the undocumented immigrant population in the United States swelled from 3m in the early 1990s to 12m by 2007. After 9/11, and accelerating in the middle part of the last decade, there became a bi-partisan effort to both stop the flow of unauthorized migrants and reform a domestic immigration system badly out of date and inadequately equipped to deal with a undocumented immigrant population of this size. After legislative efforts to reform the system failed for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 2010, DHS pragmatically initiated a series of reforms designed to help the immigration enforcement/justice system cope with a population far beyond what is funded and equipped to deal with. Known as the Morton Memos, these reforms among other things directed the immigration enforcement/judicial system to prioritize two types of unauthorized immigrants for deportation from this vast pool of more than 10 million – those caught entering the country without authorization, and those apprehended in the interior with criminal records.

As the charts and graphs below show, these reforms brought swift and significant reform to the system. The prioritization of border removals has helped keep the net flow of undocumented immigrants to zero after 15 years of gains of on average 500,000 or more, while also helping bring the crime rate down along the US side of the US-Mexico border. In the interior, prioritizing felons not families, the system has become far more focused on removing criminals and leaving law abiding, tax-paying families alone. These reforms have neither “ratcheted up” nor weakened enforcement. They have made our enforcement system smarter, more effective and better. And, as we learned this spring and summer, the many years of investment in capacity building and far better use of limited resources enabled the US government to successfully manage an extraordinary crisis when it hit our border.

The success of the changes begun by DHS in 2010 laid the groundwork for the Executive Actions the President took a few weeks ago. As the President said, his answer for what to do about our broken immigration system was to pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform. But after nine years of trying that path and being blocked, the President simply had to act. The immigration system we have today was never designed or built to handle an unauthorized population of more than 10m people, many long settled and with deep family ties to the

community. By even further refining the enforcement priorities to the border and serious criminals in the interior, the Executive Actions will maintain our successful border policies, make it far easier to remove true criminal threats from the interior rapidly, unclog our badly clogged and unjust immigration judicial system, while freeing up law abiding immigrant with deep family ties to make even greater economic contributions to their country.

Reviewing this new ICE data it is clear that the reforms made by DHS a few years ago were smart and effective. Our immigration system is better and our border safer. The recent Executive Actions built on these reforms, and will in the coming years, even without Congressional action, make our nation safer and our immigration system far better and more humane.

For a much deeper dive on these issues, be sure to read our [recent report](#): “NDN/NPI Report on Central American Migrants and President Obama’s Immigration/Border Enforcement Record.”

### **Some Supporting Charts and Graphs –**

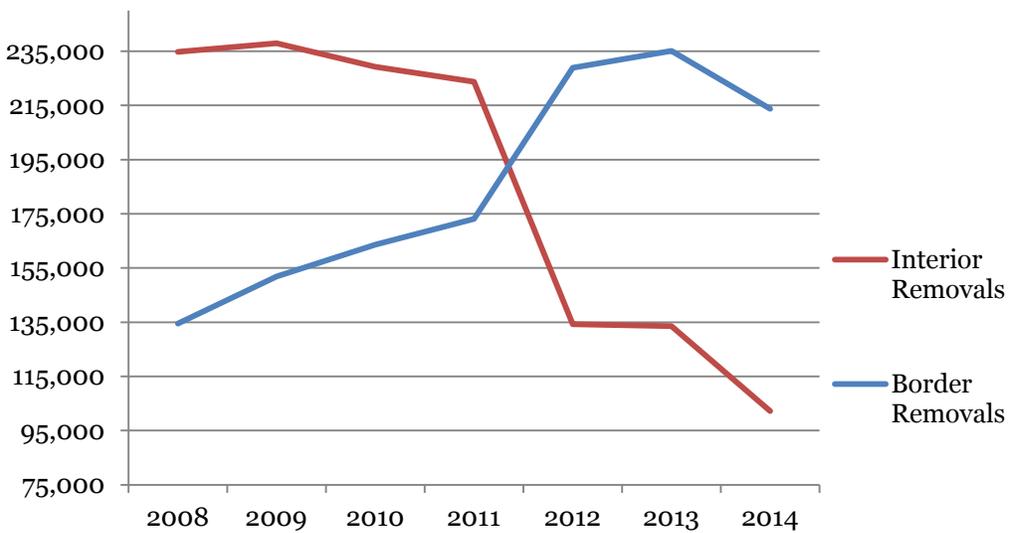
*All data pulled from recent DHS/ICE reports except for the Pew graph at the end.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Removals</b>	<b>Returns</b>	<b>Total</b>
2001	189,026	1,349,371	1,538,397
2002	165,168	1,012,116	1,177,284
2003	211,098	945,294	1,156,392
2004	240,665	1,166,576	1,407,241
2005	246,431	1,096,920	1,343,351
2006	280,974	1,043,381	1,324,355
2007	319,382	891,390	1,210,772
2008	359,795	811,263	1,171,058
2009	391,932	582,648	974,580
2010	383,031	474,275	857,306
2011	387,134	322,124	709,258
2012	418,397	230,386	648,683
2013	438,321	178,371	616,692
<b>2014</b>	<b>414,481</b>	<b>162,814</b>	<b>577,295</b>

## Total DHS Returns and Removals FY 2001 - 2014

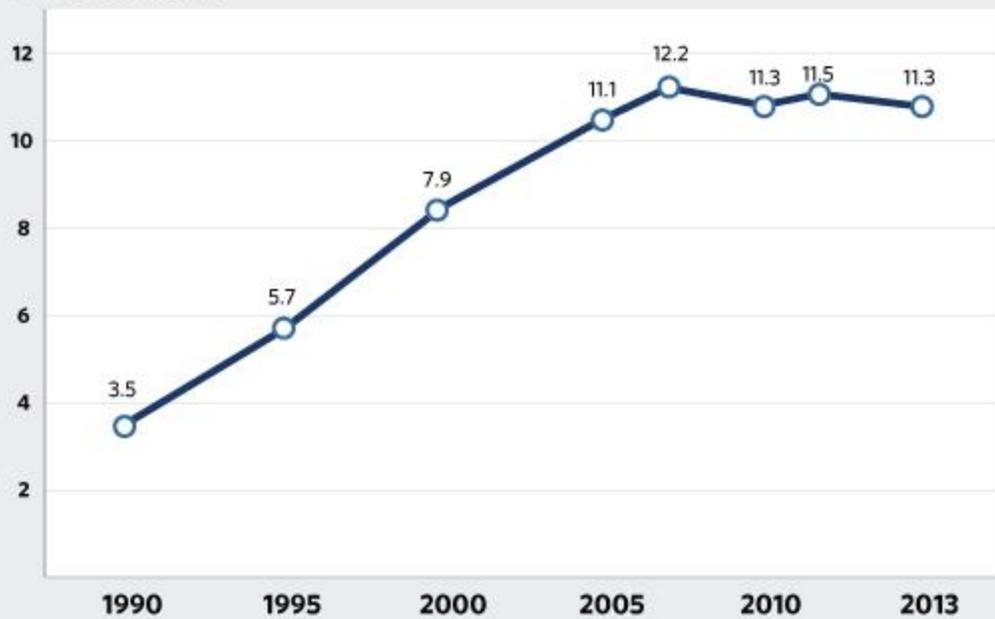


## Interior and Border Removals



## GROWTH IN UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANT POPULATION HAS LEVELED OFF

Millions of people



SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH CENTER