

Nick Ganem and Walker Peed

Dr. Gingrich

AP Lang 4th Period

11/17/16

### Illegal Immigration, the Problems Associated With It, and Solutions

The 2016 Presidential Election between Hillary Rodham Clinton and Donald J Trump addressed dozens of issues. Both candidates presented their policy plans on how to fix America's economy, which has it in trillions of dollars of debt; how to preserve the environment; how to change social injustices; and how to deal with radical terrorist organizations. Many saw the election as disgusting due to the dislike of the candidates and depending on who you talk to, each area of policy that is most important varies. Yet, a few areas stand prevalent. One that runs across the board of extreme importance is national security. Lumped under that pressing topic of national security is the matter of illegal immigration.

America is home to millions of illegal immigrants, predominantly from Latin American countries. Many immigrants are escaping harsh marshall law that is prevalent in these countries and come to America in hopes of a better life. They ignore border laws because the process of immigration legally is long and expensive and many of these people do not have either of those two necessities. Deporting these illegals is devastating because many immigrants do not harm America and saw no other option than to illegally cross the American border. However, this process of illegally coming into America poses numerous problems. Many immigrants are taking jobs traditionally held by Americans despite their lack of allegiance to our country. Furthermore, many illegal aliens do not conform to American society but still receive federal benefits, leaving

many Americans homeless and without government attention. While there is no correct answer to this debate, one can assess the apparent destructiveness of this illegal activity despite its moral deterrents. One thing is clear about this institution of illegal immigration and that is that it is a flawed system that needs serious changes and there is not a better time than at the turn of a new presidency in the White House.

### **Arguments for Illegal Immigration**

In order to address the issue of illegal immigration, one needs to understand the reasonings why illegal immigration occurs and why some may protect illegal immigrants, despite its apparent destructiveness. The United States “support[s] an estimated 13 million illegal aliens” (Woolridge). Most immigrants originate from Mexico with others coming from Cuba, Nicaragua, and other Latin American countries. But the one group that has been singled out about this issues are Mexicans. Mexico is subject to harsh and rather dangerous law with inadequate law enforcement compared to the United States. Mexican economy in most urban areas is very unstable and unemployment runs rampant. This causes many urban dwelling families or children to escape Mexico into the United States through the loosely controlled border in the southwestern United States. These immigrants are illegal because they ignore the process of entering the states and neglect becoming citizens or permanent residents of the states. Many manufacturing employers see an opportunity to make a quick dollar by using these immigrants. They employ them much cheaper and some companies have actually recruited illegals to work in factories. This further promotes this process. Immigrants believe that America provides opportunity, as it has throughout history. Unfortunately, many of these immigrants ignore border laws due to expense. As stated previously, many immigrants are poor and because of this, they

cannot afford to endure the lengthy process of coming to the country legally. This has caused many prominent government figures to sympathize with these people and offer asylum, services, and employment to them.

When posing a question about illegal immigration, the topic of economics always comes up. Whether or not illegal persons help or hurt the economy is a very touchy subject and hundreds of economists' opinions differ drastically. A study was conducted in 2007 that concluded that, on average, a family of illegal origin "pay an estimated \$80,000 more in taxes than they will receive in local, state and federal benefits over their lifetimes" (Moore). This estimate proves that illegal persons will work in the country they now reside in. They will contribute to the economy and will boost their own personal economic standing. But, the concept of a general view of immigrant economic impact largely ignores personal economic position of many. You can take a large look of a group as a whole and assume the average is what runs across the board of all in the group. But, you neglect to realize that there are some proponents on the far right and the far left that balance out the average to a reasonable amount. This is why the topic of large-scale economics and illegal immigration is so extremely sensitive and no answer will ever be reached and no solution will most likely ever be concluded.

Despite obvious opposition, many defend that America was "undeniably a nation of immigrants" and that most Americans "are descendants of tired, poor, and huddled masses that came here to find the life they couldn't live in their native homelands" (Moening). This assertion is rather impactful because it makes immigration's opponents seem hypocritical which pokes a hole in logical arguments they may make. Plus, the morality of the entire debate leans to this side. It is devastating that people will break the law just to have a better life. Large numbers

of immigrants are children whose parents want them to have a better life. Because of this, some see it as their moral duty to help these immigrants. And some illegal immigrant's current social and financial state is devastating. Because of this, both sides need to come together to improve this flawed and flimsy system out of the well-being of these immigrants who may need American help.

### **Arguments Against Illegal Immigration**

Immigration is a debate of morals. But, it is also a debate of logic. There is no right answer about whether illegal immigration is okay. Despite this, a very strong case can be made about why it poses more problems that are subject to change that inherently overrule the moral debate of illegal immigration. As stated before, America was a country built on immigration. But this immigration was performed legally. Whether it has been through royal charters in colonial days or through the famous Ellis Island in the twentieth century, it has been done legally. Furthermore illegal immigration gives America 12.4 million "immigrants who have no allegiance to [America]" (Woolridge). If you are not American and do not embrace American ideals, then do not expect to be treated the same. It goes against any societal expectation we have. America has thousands upon thousands of homeless, jobless veterans who fought for our country that have less government support than illegal immigrants do.

On top of this, immigrants take American jobs. A 2010 estimate (illegal immigration can only be estimated because of their lack of documentation) showed that nearly "1.5 million jobs [are] taken by illegal alien workers" (Green) that were traditionally held by American factory workers. This statistic alone should provide enough evidence that illegal immigration is harmful

to American society. It is shocking that our country has deemed that illegal people from other countries are more important than the hard-working American people.

Some political figures have vouched for open borders. Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton was tormented by Donald Trump over this topic. Open borders have proven to be destructive. By allowing anyone to flow into our country because we are “loving” and “caring” does not constitute the ethical debate over open borders. By doing this, you are opening the door to numerous dangers to our country, predominantly drug trafficking. Cartels will seize the opportunity to allow their narcotics to pass into America along with their violent members. These drugs will infiltrate America and will make crime shoot way up. Border patrol and the DEA are already having issues with the current loose borders and by opening them up even more, drugs will pour into our country along with their criminal counterparts that could very well threaten the stability of our nation’s security.

While we do not condone statements made by political leaders that all immigrants are “rapists” or “murderers,” immigration does prohibit growth of American’s personal economic positions. Plus, these immigrants are completely neglecting assimilating to American culture. If you are not happy here, then go back. Furthermore, a small argument could be made about the criminal impact of illegal persons. Throughout the last couple years, many notorious murder cases have been investigated involving a person of no documentation. This outrages many traditionally conservative Americans that an illegal person has the audacity to come to America, ignore social norms, violate the law, and be fully protected by the Constitution. But, this is a very small minority and it should not become the stereotype of all immigrants. Now, some

immigrant's had no other choice than to come to this country illegally. This is why compromise and solutions need to be made in order to get this process under control.

## **Personal Position**

### **Walker Peed**

In my personal belief, illegal immigration needs to be stopped completely. The laws against illegal immigration need to be enforced more readily. The overall outcome of illegal immigration causes very harmful effects and makes living in America more dangerous. Drugs and crime pour into our country via illegal immigration and with the goliath gang "The Cartel" these effects are getting worse and worse. The Mexican government claims that as many as 28,000 people have been murdered by the drug cartels since the year 2007. A significant percentage of these murders happened in regions along or near the U.S. border. Having a family member who was on the border patrol i've heard first hand just how dangerous some of these people are. Now that's not to say everyone who comes over is a drug dealer or murderer; some of these people have good intentions. They want to start a new life. They want a better life for their kids and want to get away from the unsafe lifestyle where crime is heavy in some parts of Mexico. A great percentage of latinos that cross the border illegally immigrate here with good intentions in mind. Those type of people shouldn't have to cross the border illegally. But they have to because of how difficult it is to do it legally and be granted a citizenship. According to Pablo Pilco, a religious leader from Peru who did an interview with USA Today, the federal government keeps a ceiling on how many visas they give out keeping the family-based immigration visas at 226,000 a year, and work-based immigration visas at 140, This part of the system is an issue for good hearted people wanting to find work here or start fresh. Which is why

the process of migrating here and becoming a citizen needs to be renewed and become more efficient. In fact all aspects of immigration and border security need to be renewed. You have a dwindling voluntary and sometimes untrained force patrolling the borders claiming to be securing it. You have over nine million illegal immigrants here where some of them are here to bring drugs and weapons into our country. You have families with infants trying to come over legally to make a better life for themselves but can't do it due to the rigorous corrupt process of immigrating here. The entire process needs to be changed. According to John Stossel, a writer for Reasons.com, "Immigrants co-founded most of Silicon Valley's start-ups and the Patent Office says immigrants invent things at twice the rate of native-born Americans." For reasons such as these making the process of legally immigrating here should be more lax but the issue that arises when discussing legal immigration is that, how will we differentiate the so to speak bad from the good. Relating this question back to John Stossel's article, simple background checks and interviews could almost eliminate this entire problem. In my personal opinion I believe we should use our advanced technology to our advantage when securing our border. Drones, satellite surveillance, motion detectors, etc the list could go on and on. Why aren't we utilizing these tools? Why is crossing the border illegally easier than doing it legally? These type of questions need to be addressed and if they're not and nothing changes i'm afraid over the years the outcome will be worse than expected. This leupold for terrorists and other affiliated organizations needs to be hindered to make our country a safer place.

**Nick Ganem**

Illegal immigration is an issue that needs to be attacked from two angles, with each angle sympathetic to both sides of the debate. National security is something that cannot be messed

with. Within the last decade, immigration “has been expanded four fold by various acts of Congress beginning in 1965” (Elder) that allow for the weakening of border patrol. Saying illegal immigration is not a problem is shocking. Would you like it if someone entered your home, ignoring privacy, and expected to be treated as an equal while not accepting your social terms? Furthermore, some of these immigrants are criminals. By allowing for borders to be more open, drug trade becomes stronger and crime becomes more prevalent. While a wall may not be the answer, serious change is needed. Border patrol needs to be stronger. Immigrants who come and do not pay taxes, do not follow the law, and do not conform to American ideals need to be deported. If you come to the country illegally and expect to be treated the same as someone who contributes to society, then you do not belong in that society. Also, illegals have been proven to take many American jobs. Imagine losing your traditional job to someone who is not from this country and is here illegally. This strongly counters many liberal arguments because how can someone say that illegals are more important when they take an American’s livelihood.

Yes America prides itself on diversity and non-conformity, but this involves Americans and this country needs to put Americans first and not the citizens of another country. In America, the amount of homeless veterans is growing exponentially because veteran’s affairs funds have been siphoned off to protect persons of illegal documentation. Not all immigrants are bad and that’s why I believe that each case of immigration needs to be taken more seriously and given a more personal touch to decide who belongs and who doesn’t belong. But, open borders are not the answer to this problem as some left-wing members assert. Look at what open borders has done for Europe. In Europe, the amount of terror attacks by foreign people has skyrocketed. The Paris attacks, the Belgium Airport attacks, the Munich shootings, and the Berlin train stabbings



were all done by immigrants without background checks. National security is not something to be given leniency. And this is why I believe illegal immigration poses more problems than solutions. But, there are compromises that can be made to help get this problem under control.

### **Compromise, Solutions, and Conclusion**

To solve this problem without harming or impeding on the lives of the many hard working illegal immigrants, we have come up with a compromise to make the immigration process easier and more efficient while still keeping our country as safe as possible. Three problems arise when discussing immigration, one being the process of legally immigrating here, two being what to do with the 13 million illegal immigrants that live in this country, and three being how to protect our border. The first issue, the harsh and long process of trying to legally immigrate here needs change. We have come up with a compromise to make the process easier and much quicker. This would be done using tax dollars to create a specialized department for the immigration process. The second issue involves the 13 million illegal immigrants that already reside in this country. One possible compromise is that the government would be obligated to treat each and every illegal immigrant individually, looking at track records and performing interviews with them to make a judgment on whether or not they should be granted citizenship. When addressing the third issue expertise is needed to know just how much the government can spend on securing the border. In an ideal situation we believe a large trained patrol force is necessary accompanied by cameras, motion sensors, and drones. But this is all done by a strong economy. Raising federal taxes is a short-term solution that would be obvious. But, a more tolerable option would be to use the money that is currently used to house and protect immigrants. If the interview process previously stated is effective, then the ones chosen to stay

are the ones who are contributing to the economy and who are financially stable, so therefore, they should not need the government aid. By using these excess funds, these options to strengthen border patrol become more feasible.

Addressing the problem of the employment of undocumented persons is much more complicated. Millions of jobs are taken by illegals. This, in turn, takes many American jobs, which hurts millions of American's financial state. The sole cause of this is that many employers actively seek out these workers because they are much cheaper to pay. Some states, however, have recognized this problem and have taken action. In Arizona, a traditionally conservative state, has criminalized the active employment of illegals. If an employer is found to have recruited illegals, "the Act imposes misdemeanor criminal penalties of up to \$3,000 in fines for each unauthorized alien and/or imprisonment of up to six months" (Green). This is a great solution to preserve the integrity of American business by also keeping Americans in the workforce. Employers can hire illegals as long as they do not recruit them out of personal profit. Another strong piece of support of this solution is cost. According to Vernon M. Briggs Jr., "[t]he 'costs' of immigration need to be taken into account as much as do the 'benefits' when it comes to designing the appropriate policy" (Briggs Jr.). By enacting actual policy to regulate illegal immigration in the workplace through fines, the profit of this venture will help make immigration enforcement stronger, thus supporting the previous compromises. This, we believe will hopefully solve the issue of illegal immigration.

Illegal immigration has plagued the political landscape for the last decade. As politicians bicker on Congress' floor about what to do with them, perhaps they can find more and more compromises instead of acting out of their own personal beliefs. Not all illegals are bad people,

but not all are good or beneficial. Because of this, each case of immigration needs to be treated individually. If the person is approved to enter the country due to their economic impact, social position, and readiness to become an American, then they are welcome to stay. This will not only stimulate immigration, but will enhance our country's reputation. Illegal immigration poses more problems than benefits and that truth is clear. Both sides are at faults in this debate. Right-wing conservatives claim that "all immigrants are bad and that they all need to go." This is not true, obviously, but the left is guilty of this as well. Not all immigrants are innocent people. They broke the law and cannot be coddled because of it. Characterizing an entire group based on the actions of a few is morally not justifiable. Similarly, liberals label all conservatives as "racist" or "sexist" because of the actions of a few. But, conservatives call liberals whining millennials who are uneducated, which also isn't true. Labeling is not the way of going about things. Because of this, solutions need to be made and compromise needs to be enacted. But, most importantly, Americans need to always come first because this country prides itself on the freedom of its hard-working citizens.

Bibliography

Briggs, Jr., Vernon M. "Statement on Immigration and Illegal Aliens", March 11, 1999."

*Immigration and Illegal Aliens: Burden or Blessing?*, 2007 ed., Gale, 2007. Information Plus Reference Series. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.

Elder, Bill. "Statement on Immigration and Illegal Aliens", August 2, 2001."

*Immigration and Illegal Aliens: Burden or Blessing?*, 2007 ed., Gale, 2007. Information Plus Reference Series. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.

Green, Thomas C., and Ileana M. Ciobanu. "Deputizing - and then prosecuting - America's businesses in the fight against illegal immigration." *American Criminal Law Review*, Summer 2006, p. 1203+. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.

Moenning, Josh. "Illegal Immigration Creates Prejudice Against Legal Immigrants." *Illegal*

*Immigration*, edited by William Dudley, Greenhaven Press, 2002. *Opposing Viewpoints*. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.

Moore, Stephen. "Statement on Immigration and Illegal Aliens", April 4, 2001."

*Immigration and Illegal Aliens: Burden or Blessing?*, 2007 ed., Gale, 2007. Information Plus Reference Series. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.

Wooldridge, Frosty. "Illegal Immigration Threatens America." *Illegal Immigration*, edited by

Margaret Haerens, Greenhaven Press, 2006. *Opposing Viewpoints*. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*.