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Top 10 Pros and Cons

What are the solutions to illegal immigration in America?

The **PRO** and **CON** statements below give a five minute introduction to the debate on Immigration. (Read more information about our one star to five star [Theoretical Credibility System.](#))

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1. Using the Term "Illegal Alien"

PRO: "The correct terminology for the nearly 20 million persons illegally in the U.S. is illegal aliens. The term undocumented immigrants is purposely incorrect in order to sway the public in favor of special interest groups and only clouds the reality of the situation... The term illegal alien is broader and more accurate because it includes undocumented aliens and nonimmigrant visa overstayers. ...the term illegal alien, being broader in scope, is the accurate term to use. In that immigrant connotes legality, the term illegal immigrant is really an oxymoron."

[IllegalAliens.us](#)

"Calling an Illegal Alien an Undocumented Immigrant Is Like Calling a Burglar an Uninvited House Guest," [illegalaliens.us](#) accessed Jan. 18, 2007

CON: "The National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) is concerned with the increasing use of pejorative terms to describe the estimated 11 million undocumented people living in the United States. NAHJ is particularly troubled with the growing trend of the news media to use the word 'illegals' as a noun, shorthand for 'illegal aliens.' Using the word in this way is grammatically incorrect and crosses the line by criminalizing the person, not the action they are purported to have committed. NAHJ calls on the media to never use 'illegals' in headlines... [and] to avoid 'Illegal alien.' Alternative terms are 'undocumented worker,' or 'undocumented immigrant.'"

[National Association of Hispanic Journalists](#)

"NAHJ Urges News Media to Stop Using Dehumanizing Terms When Covering Immigration," [nahj.org](#) accessed Jan. 19, 2007

2. Amnesty

PRO: "Whether you fine illegal aliens or stick them in English classes or make them say a hundred Hail Marys, at the end of the day, illegals would be allowed to stay and become citizens... That's amnesty. And that's a good thing for America. Amnesty won't depress wages - globalization has already done that. Amnesty will not undermine the rule of law. [...] It sounds counterintuitive, but with immigration, forgiving a crime may be the best way to restore law and order. Amnesty won't necessarily add to the social-services burden. [...] Amnesty would offer millions... a fighting chance at self-sufficiency and social mobility."

[Nathan Thornburgh](#)
Time Magazine reporter
"A Case for Amnesty," Time
June 7, 2007

CON: "Do not grant amnesty to illegal aliens. Regardless of the penalties imposed, any program that grants individuals who are unlawfully present the legal permission to remain here rewards illegal behavior and is unfair to those who obey the law and go through the regulatory and administrative requirements to enter the country legally. Those who enter the United States illegally should not be rewarded with permanent legal status or other such benefits, and they should be penalized in any road to citizenship. Those who enter and remain in the country illegally are violating the law, and condoning or encouraging such violations increases the likelihood of further illegal conduct."

[Heritage Foundation](#)
"Immigration," [MyHeritage.org](#)
accessed Oct. 3, 2007

3. Deportation

PRO: "...deporting aliens is as easy as one, two, three. The next time you hear [U.S. President] George W. Bush or [U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security] Michael Chertoff say how impossible immigration enforcement is, remember this simple formula: one, go to where you know aliens are; two, arrest

CON: "I have listened to and understand the concerns of those who simply advocate sealing our borders and rounding up and deporting undocumented workers currently in residence here. But that's easier said than done... I have yet to hear a single proponent of this point of view offer one realistic proposal for

<p>them; three, deport them. Don't bother asking where aliens hang out. The better question is where aren't they hanging out. Go to a bus stop, a taco truck, a convenience store, the post office or an auto repair shop. No need to round them all up at once. Just arrest one or two every day at different locations around town and the message will soon get out."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Joe Guzzardi</u> ★ English teacher at Lodi Adult School in California "Deportation: As Easy As One, Two, Three," VDare.com Aug. 19, 2007</p>	<p>locating, apprehending, and returning to their countries of origin over 11 million people. How do we do that? ...it would take 200,000 buses extending along a 1700 mile long line to deport 11 million people. That's assuming we had the resources to locate and apprehend all 11 million, or even half that number, which we don't have and, we all know, won't ever have."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>John McCain</u> ★★ ★ U.S. Senator (R-AZ) Statement on the Senate floor Mar. 30, 2006</p>
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4. Mexican Border Fence

<p>PRO: "I'm pleased that you all are here to witness the signature of the Secure Fence Act of 2006... This bill will make our borders more secure. It is an important step toward immigration reform... The bill authorizes the construction of hundreds of miles of additional fencing along our southern border... We're modernizing the southern border of the United States so we can assure the American people we're doing our job of securing the border. By making wise use of physical barriers and deploying 21st century technology we're helping our Border Patrol agents do their job."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>George W. Bush</u> ★★ ★ U.S. President, Signing of the "Secure Fence Act of 2006" Oct. 26, 2006</p>	<p>CON: "It is deplorable to go ahead with this decision of the wall at the border...The wall will not solve any problem. Humanity made a huge mistake by building the Berlin Wall and I believe that today the United States is committing a grave error in building the wall on our border. It is much more useful to solve common problems and foster prosperity in both countries."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Felipe Calderón</u> ★★ ★ President of Mexico "Mexico Urges Canada to Help Oppose Border Fence," CTV (Canadian national broadcast news) Oct. 26, 2006</p>
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5. Civilian Border Patrols

<p>PRO: "...it is now more important than ever for citizens to rise to the occasion and fill a void in National security. Minuteman Civil Defense Corps... volunteers will now patrol the border with over 100 fully armed Citizens who consider themselves members of the unorganized state militia; we have the legal right and moral obligation as per our Arizona State Constitution and Federal Constitution and our respect for American citizens. Our intent is to send a strong message to the world that we will stand defiant to invaders and protect the borders of our country."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Chris Simcox</u> ★ Founder and President of the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps americanpatrol.com accessed Oct. 11, 2007</p>	<p>CON: "The Border Patrol does this [patrol the border] every day, and they are qualified and very well trained to handle the situation... Ordinary Americans are not. So there's a danger that not just illegal migrants might get hurt, but that American citizens might get hurt in this situation."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Robert C. Bonner, JD.</u> ★★ ★ Former Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection "Border Patrol Considering Use of Volunteers, Official Says," New York Times July 21, 2005</p>
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6. Terrorist Threat

<p>PRO: "Knowledgeable Americans have come to understand that our welcoming immigration policies are easily exploited by terrorists and that porous borders and lax immigration enforcement are no longer an option. With at least 8 million illegal aliens living in the United States and nearly one million new aliens arriving each year, the potential for terrorists entering the United States undetected is high."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>Center for Immigration Studies</u> ★ "Terrorism & National Security," cis.org accessed Sep. 12, 2007</p>	<p>CON: "Illegal immigrants are not terrorists. They want to come legally to do the jobs Americans don't want, but our broken immigration system doesn't allow that to happen. If there were legal channels for these migrants to use, the government could concentrate on identifying the real terrorists. Instead, the government is wasting money and manpower trying to keep out the immigrant workers the U.S. economy needs. That makes the job of finding a terrorist like finding a needle in a haystack."</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>American Immigration Law Foundation</u> ★ "Immigrants Aren't Undermining Our Nation's Security. Flawed Immigration Laws Are," aifl.org accessed Sep. 12, 2007</p>
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7. Economic Burden

<p>PRO: "The economic and social consequences of illegal immigration... are staggering... Illegal aliens have cost billions of</p>	<p>CON: "[E]very empirical study of illegals' economic impact demonstrates... undocumented actually contribute more to</p>
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taxpayer-funded dollars for medical services... Immigration is a net drain on the economy; corporate interests reap the benefits of cheap labor, while taxpayers pay the infrastructural cost... \$60 billion dollars are earned by illegal aliens in the U.S. each year. One of Mexico's largest revenue streams (after exports and oil sales) consists of money sent home by legal immigrants and illegal aliens working in the U.S... This is a massive transfer of wealth from America - essentially from America's displaced working poor - to Mexico."

Colorado Alliance for Immigration Reform (CAIR)★
"Economic Costs of Legal and Illegal Immigration," cairco.org accessed Oct. 24, 2007

public coffers in taxes than they cost in social services. Moreover, undocumented immigrants contribute to the U.S. economy through their investments and consumption of goods and services; filling of millions of essential worker positions resulting in subsidiary job creation, increased productivity and lower costs of goods and services; and unrequited contributions to Social Security, Medicare and unemployment insurance programs. "

Francine J. Lipman★★★
Professor of Law, Business and Economics at Chapman University
"Taxing Undocumented Immigrants: Separate, Unequal and Without Representation," Tax Lawyer Spring 2006

8. Driver's Licenses for Illegal Aliens

PRO: "While increasing our national security is critical, restricting driver licenses (DLs) is an inefficient way to enforce immigration laws and prevent terrorism... Furthermore, press accounts since September 11 have called attention to the fact that the hijackers had obtained DLs when, in fact, the terrorists did not need U.S.-issued DLs to board the planes on September 11; they had foreign passports that allowed them to board. In fact, denying driving licenses to large segments of the population makes everyone in the community less safe. Restricting DLs results in unsafe roads, higher insurance rates, and overwhelmed court systems... Restricting DLs results in the proliferation of false documents."

Mexican American Legal Defence and Educational Fund (MALDEF)★
"Immigrant Access to State Driver's Licenses: A Tool Kit for Advocates," maldef.org Jan. 2004

CON: "In an increasingly security-conscious America, access to driver's licenses by people in the country illegally poses serious risks and undermines U.S. immigration law... illegal aliens often use aliases and phony documents, so the alien's identity and residence is not established as a result of the driver's license process... The argument about road safety relies on a faulty assumption that if illegal aliens are legally licensed to drive, they will all have accident insurance. But even if a state requires automobile insurance as a condition of getting a license, that does not keep an illegal alien from canceling the policy the next day. Illegal aliens generally are working in low-wage jobs and have difficulty affording insurance, and their cars are frequently older and more accident-prone. Additionally, illegal aliens often are not able to read road alerts in English."

Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)★
"Economic Costs of Legal and Illegal Immigration," fairus.org Oct. 2005

9. Using State and Local Law Enforcement vs. National Only

PRO: "State and local police are badly needed to help overwhelmed federal immigration authorities apprehend and detain illegal aliens in the interior of our country. Illegal aliens outnumber federal immigration agents by 5,000 to one. Only 2,000 are active in enforcing the immigration laws in the interior of our country. This number is too small to apprehend more than a fraction of the illegal alien population now here... There doesn't appear to be much chance in the near future that the number of federal agents assigned to interior enforcement will reach anywhere near the level that would be required for the feds to do the job by themselves. More than 600,000 state and local law enforcement officers already come into contact with illegal aliens every day. Many of them, in the course of their normal duties on their regular beat, routinely observe and even stop illegal aliens — for example for traffic violations. And the vast majority of these officers believe deeply in the rule of law and want to help protect the security of their country."

NumbersUSA.com★
"Economic Costs of Legal and Illegal Immigration," numbersusa.com accessed June 15, 2007

CON : "Immigration enforcement by local police would likely negatively effect and undermine the level of trust and cooperation between local police and immigrant communities... Undoubtedly legal immigrants would avoid contact with the police for fear that they themselves or undocumented family members or friends may become subject to immigration enforcement. Enforcement of federal immigration laws would be a burden that most major police agencies would not be able to bear under current resource levels. [...] The specific immigration status of any particular person can vary greatly and whether they are in fact in violation of the complex federal immigration regulations would be very difficult if not almost impossible for the average patrol officer to determine. At this time local police agencies are ill equipped in terms of training, experience and resources to delve into the complicated area of immigration enforcement."

Major Cities Chiefs Association★
"Recommendations For Enforcement of Immigration Laws By Local Police Agencies," neiassociates.org June 8, 2006

10. Border Militarization

PRO: "The U.S. Border Patrol simply cannot handle its mission under present restraints. Its job is to protect the American public and preserve the sanctity of our international borders. That cannot be accomplished while our borders are over run by aliens of every nationality and while bureaucrats place unreasonable restrictions on how agents operate. I urge the

CON: "I think we have to be very careful here. That's not the role of our military. That's not the role of our national guard... Let's start with the fact do we even have the capacity?...We've got 75% of the equipment of national guards all across this country is in Iraq. We've got national guard members on their second, third and fourth tours in Iraq. We have stretched our

immediate deployment of U.S. military troops and equipment on our borders to seal them against those who would cause us harm. This could be only a temporary measure to allow us to regain control to again become a sovereign nation."

David J. Stoddard ★★★

*Former U.S. Border Patrol Agent
Testimony submitted to the U.S. House Subcommittee on
Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources
Feb. 22, 2002*

military as thin as we have ever seen it in modern times. And what in the world are we talking about here sending a national guard that we may not have any capacity to send up to - or down to protect borders? That's not their role. I'll listen to the President but I've got a lot of questions about this."

Chuck Hagel ★★★

*U.S. Senator (R-NE)
ABC This Week With George Stephanopoulos
May 14, 2006*

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