



US Immigration Newsletter

April 28 2018

Volume 6, Number 1

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Commentary



In an effort to preserve already-stretched administrative resources, the US Immigration system has traditionally enforced laws on a priority basis. As per established policies, newly arrived immigrants and those with serious criminal histories were the main focus of deportation efforts while most other groups of removal non-citizens were left alone.

Under the Trump Administration, these long-held guidelines have been completely torn apart. Today, undocumented immigrants of all types have become a target for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This shift in focus is best summed up by the Department of Homeland Security's new memorandum which states - "*prosecutorial discretion shall not be exercised in a manner that exempts or excludes a specified class or category of [noncitizens] from enforcement of the immigration laws.*" In other words, history and context are no longer applicable barometers for judging deportation cases.

The effects of these decisions are already being felt in homes across the United States. In 2017 alone, we've seen ICE arrests jump by over [42% to around 110,000](#) and if things continue apace then that trend should continue over the next year as well. Many of these arrests relate to unauthorized immigrants who have been in the country for years, many of whom have raised families in the country. In a disconcerting turn of events, we're seeing many immigrants picked up during routine UCIS appointments in which they were attempting to [obtain](#)

legal status.

As families are torn apart and minority communities bear the full economic impact of these new DHS policies, one must ponder whether the benefits of purging undocumented immigrants from the country are worth the exorbitant cost.

Immigration Judges Ordered Up Clearance Rates

Earlier this month, Attorney General Jeff Sessions put forward new Justice Department guidelines which would require the judges to clear upwards of 700 cases per year to receive a *satisfactory* annual rating. Under the new rules, judges would be forced to complete hearings in a more *timely* and *efficient* manner.



However, immigration activists argue that this guideline could influence the integrity and impartiality of court decisions, as judges would be forced to rush through hearings in an effort to meet their new quotas.

Currently, the average number of cleared cases stands at around 678 cases per year, which means that most judges would need to make significant efforts to cover the new requirement.

The War On Immigration is Hurting Silicon Valley



For years, highly skilled immigrants have been a main source of innovation within the US tech industry. According to a recent report from The National Foundation for American Policy, more than half of the country's billion-dollar start-ups including such noticeable names as Tesla and Google have been partially or wholly founded by immigrants.

With this in mind, the Trump Administration's move to crack



down on the H1-B skilled migrant visa, the H-4 spouse visa, and the F-1 student visa, has been met with significant consternation in Silicon Valley.

This month, tech lobbying group FWD.us released a report backed by such luminaries as Bill Gates, and Mark Zuckerberg which stated that immigration was an economic driver and competitive differentiator for U.S. companies, and that wholesale immigration reform should be prioritized over piecemeal restrictions.

While these objections seem to have fallen on deaf ears so far, the clash between tech and Washington is far from over.