



Anticipating Trump Presidency, Border Patrol May Enforce Law More Diligently

Knowing that the incoming Trump administration will surely enforce U.S. immigration laws more stringently than the Obama administration has, U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents will likely be more diligent in interrogating those caught crossing the border illegally.

While the political appointees overseeing the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP — whose commissioner, Gil Kerlikowske, reports to Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson) may continue to advocate lenient enforcement of our nation's immigration laws until the bitter end, even they know that their days are numbered. Donald Trump has won the election and there's a new sheriff in town.

Brandon Judd, president of the National Border Patrol Council (NBPC) — the union representing 16,500 U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents — suggested in a recent statement that CBP managers are likely to start resisting the lenient enforcement policies put in place under the Obama administration and start enforcing immigration laws.

“They have a new boss. They know it. They need to endear themselves to him.”

“You can expect to see CBP pushing back and holding those people [apprehended for crossing the border illegally],” said Judd. “They’re going want to make it look like they’re in lockstep with [Trump].... We’re already seeing it now.”

Judd was quoted in a November 14 report posted by LifeZette, a news, opinion, and commentary website based in Washington, D.C.

LifeZette further quoted Judd as saying that the processing center at Nogales, Arizona is set to open soon, and that he expects other processing centers to open, which will increase his agency's detention capacity for illegal borders.

He said that career-level supervisors will be more concerned about offending the incoming Trump administration than the outgoing Obama one.

[We reported last April](#) that the NBPC had issued a press release on March 30 announcing that the union was endorsing Donald Trump for president. In that article, we reported that the NBPC's leaders, which included Judd, Kenneth Palinkas, its past president; Shawn Moran; the union's vice president, and Chris Cabrera, a spokesperson for the NBPC's Rio Grande Valley council, had all been vocal in criticizing the Obama administration's lack of enforcement of our nation's immigration laws.

We also noted that in written testimony provided to the House Judiciary Committee in March, Judd





Written by [Warren Mass](#) on November 16, 2016

charged that the Obama administration had “no intention of deporting” many of the illegal immigrants caught trying to cross our border illegally and has ordered that they be released so they don’t clog up the immigration courts. Judd asserted that that the orders were a new “catch and release” policy, which “amounts to amnesty” because it means many illegal immigrants are never asked to leave the country.

LifeZette further cited Judd’s acknowledgement that mid-level CBP supervisors do not have the authority to overturn orders coming down from their higher ups, such as one requiring them to release anyone who has been in the United States continuously since January 1, 2014. They are required to release these illegal immigrants without even issuing a notice for them to appear in immigration court.

However, Judd predicted that Border Patrol agents would be more aggressive in trying to determine if those caught at the border are telling the truth about their residency and requiring them to prove that have, in fact, been in the country since the beginning of 2014.

“We didn’t even question them [in the past],” he said. “It was taken at face value.”

In a statement posted on the DHS website on November 10, in which he noted that the number of illegal aliens apprehended trying to cross our southwest border rose to 46,195 in October, compared with 39,501 in September and 37,048 in August, DHS Secretary Johnson adopted a seemingly tough stance suggesting that his department might crack down on illegal immigration during the final months of the Obama administration:

Our borders cannot be open to illegal migration. We must, therefore, enforce the immigration laws consistent with our priorities. Those priorities are public safety and border security. Specifically, we prioritize the deportation of undocumented immigrants who are convicted of serious crimes and those apprehended at the border attempting to enter the country illegally. Recently, I have reiterated to our Enforcement and Removal personnel that they must continue to pursue these enforcement activities.

Those who attempt to enter our country without authorization should know that, consistent with our laws and our values, we must and we will send you back.

While the election of Trump just two days earlier may have influenced the rank-and-file CBP agents to lean toward the Trump position on tough immigration enforcement, it is unlikely that Johnson was similarly impacted. One can only surmise that Johnson’s latest statements promising that his department will enforce our immigration laws and get serious about deporting illegal aliens are but an 11th-hour effort to improve his tarnished reputation for being a champion of amnesty and establish a better historic legacy before he leaves office in January.

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