



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on June 7, 2011

Colorado's Jails Full of Illegal Aliens

Colorado is suffering a massive increase in the number of foreigners in its jails, and many of the miscreants are illegal aliens.

[According to](#) the *Denver Post*, the number has jumped 51 percent since 2005 to nearly 2000. As well, the paper reported, the number of foreigners with "detainers," meaning they are subject to deportation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, has more than doubled since 2001.

Housing all these foreigners costs the taxpayers a fortune, and the authorities in Colorado are not happy about paying the bill.



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Numbers

[The paper reports](#) than 1,953 inmates in state prison are foreigners. As well, those with detainers from ICE jumped from 680 to 1,500, the paper reported, quoting the area ICE director.

That cost the state some \$58 million, or \$30,000 a year per inmate, in 2008. [According to](#) the *Post*, in 2008, "the federal government's State Criminal Alien Assistance Program reimbursed Colorado \$3.3 million, or about 6 percent of the state's costs. The amount has since dropped to \$2.9 million even as the number of foreign inmates continues to rise. In 1996, by comparison, Colorado got \$5.3 million from the same program and had only 618 foreign-born inmates, less than a third of the current number."

Those dollar figures don't set well with Attorney General John Suthers. "To receive less than full reimbursement for the use of state facilities to house illegal immigrants is an unacceptable, unfunded federal mandate," [he told](#) the paper.

New Law

Such is the problem that state legislators want the prisons to parole "non-violent" offenders who likely won't commit a crime. According to the *Post*, SB 241, signed by the governor in late May, would permit the release of such prisoners, who would then be turned over to ICE for deportation.

The bill says there will be a "presumption" subject to parole-board discretion that such offenders will be turned over to ICE for deportation.

[The state prison staff] is determining how many inmates fall under the parameters of the bill and will present their names to the parole board. If ICE does not deport the inmates, the board could rescind the parole.

Other states feel the pain of incarcerating illegals as well. Texas recently passed a bill that would make being an illegal alien in Texas a parole violation, the penalty for which would be reimprisonment. [The bill says](#) a condition of parole for an illegal alien is being turned over to the ICE. And even if ICE doesn't order him deported or deport him, he must leave the United States "as soon as possible after release"



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and "not unlawfully return."

Otherwise, he goes back to jail.

[According to](#) the Federation for American Immigration Reform, illegal alien criminals cost the the federal and state governments nearly \$17 billion annually. They cost the federal government some \$7.8 billion annually, and between police, court and state prison expenditures they cost the state \$8.7 billion.

Federal Help

Another concern of state officials across the country is that ICE [routinely frees](#) dangerous criminals it cannot deport. Thanks to a decision from the U.S. Supreme Court, ICE may not imprison an illegal for more than six months simply because it cannot deport them. In many cases, ICE cannot deport criminal aliens because their home countries refuse to take them back. If Congress passes the [Safe Communities Act](#), sponsored by Rep. [Lamar Smith](#), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, that would change. ICE would be permitted to hold immigrants as long as necessary.

Smith [recently released data](#) showing that ICE has released 8,000 criminal aliens since 2009. Aside from not deporting nearly 134,000 illegals — some criminal, some not — between 2001 and 2004, ICE also dropped the ball on criminal aliens as well, [The New American reported](#) last week.

Between 2001 and 2004, ICE reported, it released 27,947 criminals aliens, adding that 20,967 (75 percent) of these criminal aliens originated from countries where the notorious Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang members are known to be active. MS-13 is the brutally violent gang from El Salvador. Between 2001 and 2005, ICE released 45,008 illegals from countries somehow involved with terrorism either by sponsoring terrorism or supporting the terrorists.

Thus, Smith would rewrite federal law to accommodate the reality that some countries will not permit the repatriation of their citizens, or that some aliens simply disappear after released from jail. [Smith's bill permits](#) the government to detain dangerous alien criminals indefinitely: "an alien may be detained ... without limitation, until the alien is subject to a final order of removal."

Ignoring the Obvious

Hilariously, the opening sentence of the piece in the *Denver Post* [reports thusly](#): "Criminals find their way to Colorado prisons from Mongolia, Iraq, the Czech Republic, the Fiji Islands and 75 other nations." The article does not say how many "criminals find their way to Colorado prisons from" Mexico, nor why such an obvious fact was omitted from the piece.

Photo: In days past: Criminal aliens to be deported from the United States are loaded on a bus going to the Miami International Airport from the South Florida Reception Center, May 30, 1996: AP Images



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