



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 12, 2017

Illegal Immigration Down by Two-Thirds, Thanks to Tough Talk, Action

The latest report from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency shows the impact of words and actions on illegals seeking access to free benefits available to them just by crossing the nation's southwest border. The number of individuals caught crossing that border in March — 16,600 — was a 30 percent decrease from February and a 64 percent decrease from the same month a year ago.



President Donald Trump's campaign promises to build the "big, beautiful wall" as one of many efforts to stem illegal immigration flooding into the country from Mexico turned into actions when he began signing executive orders to start the process.

His attorney general, Jeff Sessions, expanded on Trump's determination to stem the flow on Tuesday during a speech he made at Nogales, Arizona. He issued a memorandum to federal attorneys to ramp up their efforts to prosecute illegals, including those who harbor or assist them, with special priority given to those with criminal records and those who were previously deported. Sessions also instructed the Justice Department to pursue charges even for relatively minor infractions such as identity fraud, document theft, or forgery as well as fraudulent marriages arranged to obtain legal immigration status.

Sessions stated:

For those [who] continue to seek improper and illegal entry into this country, be forewarned: This is a new era. This is the Trump era.

The lawlessness, the abdication of the duty [by the previous administration] to enforce our immigration laws, and the "catch-and-release" practices of old are over.

Sessions then spoke of the criminal cartels responsible for importing illegal drugs into the United States:

Depravity and violence are their calling cards, including brutal machete attacks and beheadings. It is here, on this sliver of land, where we first take our stand against this filth.

Later that night Sessions, being interviewed on Fox News' "Hannity," expanded his remarks, directing them to those still considering taking the risk of entering the United States illegally:

The border is not open. Please don't come.

You will be apprehended if you do come, and you will be deported promptly. If you're a criminal, you will be prosecuted, and if you assault our officers, we're going to come at you [like] a ton of bricks.

When he was informed of the latest numbers from the CBP, he expressed surprise at how much the flow of illegals had been staunched already:

I knew strong Presidential leadership — unlike the wishy-washy-ness we've seen in the past —



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would impact the flow, but not as much as we've seen already. The numbers are down 70 percent since President Obama left office. So it's really a remarkable achievement.

It's not only the words but the actions that are working to turn the tide. Sessions said that 25 immigration judges have already been sent to detention centers along the border to help expedite the deportations, with another 50 to be assigned before the end of the year. And there will be another 75 judges sent to the border next year as well, "reflecting," said Sessions, "the dire need to reduce the backlogs in our immigration courts."

And then there are the actions already taken by the administration: 200 construction companies have already responded to the administration's requests for proposals to build the wall, while some funding to begin design and construction of it has already been committed. More funding requests for the wall are in Trump's budget, along with funding requests for 5,000 more border patrol agents and 10,000 additional immigration enforcement officers.

The drop in illegal immigration could be temporary, with potential illegals waiting to see whether these words and actions actually turn out to be effective over time. Some are comparing the drop to the spike in the stock market which was driven by anticipation that many of Trump's promises regarding regulations, tax reform, and infrastructure spending were actually going to come true. With the rejection of RyanCare as a replacement of ObamaCare, the stock market has taken a wait-and-see attitude. As Ronald Colburn, who retired in 2009 as deputy chief of the U.S. Border Patrol, put it:

There is this symbolic holding of one's breath by the transnational criminal organizations and by the governments of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, because of the new administration in place.

They are watching and waiting to see if Congress and the American people and the administration have the will to follow through ... if they do, then we may see this is a continuing downtrend.

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