



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on January 25, 2017

Trump Signs Executive Orders to Build Border Wall and Strengthen Immigration Enforcement

During a ceremony at the Department of Homeland Security on January 25 honoring the department's newly confirmed secretary, retired Gen. John Kelly, President Trump signed an executive order to begin construction of a wall on the U.S. border with Mexico, and to improve immigration enforcement, which includes ending the "catch and release" policy practiced by the Obama administration. Under "catch and release," illegal border crossers are issued a "notice to appear" and released instead of being detained and processed for deportation.



A "Notice to Appear" is basically a summons issued to an illegal alien who is released on his own recognizance and ordered to appear before an immigration court at a future date. A large number of those issued such a notice fail to show up for the hearings.

White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said that the first order signed by Trump calls for the construction of "a large physical barrier on the southern border." "Building a barrier is more than just a campaign promise, it's common sense, the first step to really securing our porous border," Spicer told reporters Wednesday. "Federal agencies are going to unapologetically enforce the law — no ifs, ands or buts."

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When asked during an interview with ABC News shortly before signing the orders when construction on the border wall would begin, Trump replied, "As soon as we can physically do it. I would say in months — certainly planning is starting immediately."

Trump also signed an executive order, entitled "Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States," that would strip federal grants from "sanctuary" cities and states that do not enforce federal immigration laws. "We're going to strip federal grant money from the sanctuary states and cities that harbor illegal immigrants," Spicer said.

We noted in a [recent article](#) that more than 200 municipalities (including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, Miami, New York, and Washington, D.C.) have declared themselves to be "sanctuary cities."

In that story, we cited a CNN report last September 1 that quoted a statement from then-candidate Donald Trump regarding sanctuary cities:

Block funding for sanctuary cities ... no more funding. We will end the sanctuary cities that have resulted in so many needless deaths. Cities that refuse to cooperate with federal authorities will not receive taxpayer dollars, and we will work with Congress to pass legislation to protect those jurisdictions that do assist federal authorities.



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The *Washington Post* cited a statement from White House officials who said that Trump's appearance at DHS is meant as the first step in a series of executive actions to begin fulfilling his campaign promises on immigration.

The *Post* also reported Spicer's statement that Trump would immediately sign any orders overturning the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that has allowed more than 700,000 aliens brought to the country illegally as children to apply for two-year work visas.

Trump has promised to overturn DACA, which has been among the Obama administration's most controversial programs.

"The president understands the magnitude of this problem," Spicer said of DACA. "He's a family man. He has a huge heart."

Trump will work to eliminate DACA "in a very humane way," Spicer added.

Photo of President Trump displaying one of the executive orders he signed Wednesday at DHS: AP Images

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