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Attrition Through Enforcement the True Middle-ground Solution

President Bush and the rest of the open borders crowd constantly tell the American people that there are only two solutions to our nation's illegal alien crisis – give illegal aliens amnesty or round them up and deport them. This is a diversionary tactic to draw public attention away from **the most effective and efficient solution – Attrition Through Enforcement.**

The principle behind Attrition Through Enforcement is that **living illegally in the United States will become more difficult and less satisfying over time** when the government – at ALL LEVELS – enforces all of the laws already on the books. It is also imperative that the government with the full cooperation of the private sector, implements certain workplace enforcement measures. The goal is to make it extremely difficult for unauthorized persons to live and work in the United States. There is no need for taxpayers to watch the government spend billions of their dollars to round up and deport illegal aliens; they will buy their own bus or plane tickets back home if they can no longer earn a living here.

We know Attrition Through Enforcement will work because, until recently, it has been shown to work even with little or no enforcement. As it currently stands, almost 200,000 illegal aliens self-deport from the United States every year, but imagine how many more would leave if our government refused to award illegal aliens another amnesty, mandated all employers to verify a person's eligibility to work here, cracked down on [identity fraud](#), and enabled local police to [easily transfer illegal aliens in their custody to the feds](#).

Additional Reading

Find the latest information and analysis on the current congressional immigration reform debate at our [Congressional Immigration Action Center](#)

[Attrition Through Enforcement: A Cost-Effective Strategy to Shrink the Illegal Population](#)

— Center for Immigration Studies; April 2006

[Immigration Reform: Recognizing Reality or Surrendering Principles](#)

— notes from the speech given by NumbersUSA Executive Director Roy Beck

People Who Left the Ranks of Illegal Aliens in the Most Recent Year of Official Record

-  **183,000 Self-Deported**
-  **152,000 Amnestied (allowed to adjust to legal status within U.S.)**
-  **63,000 Removed by Federal Authorities**
-  **27,000 Died**

 **456,000 Total**

Attrition Stories

[Click here](#) to read examples of usually small enforcement efforts that stirred illegal aliens to think about leaving

Public Opinion

[Polls show most Americans SUPPORT TOUGHER ENFORCEMENT](#)

By a sixty-eight to twenty-five margin, **Americans** support the ordinances proposed by Hazleton, PA Mayor Louis Barletta and adopted by City Council to suspend the business licenses of employers who hire illegal aliens, penalize landlords who rent to illegal aliens with fines and make English the official language. [Susquehanna Polling and Research](#); February 22-26, 2007

By a sixty-seven to twenty-six margin, **Americans** say they would support an ordinance similar to Hazleton, PA's in their own communities. [Susquehanna Polling and Research](#); February 22-26, 2007

Sixty-five percent of **Arizona voters**

during a panel debate at CPAC (Conservative Political Action Conference) on Saturday, February 19, 2005.

Attrition Through Enforcement will not reverse the pull of the jobs magnet overnight. It may take years for employers to understand the government is serious about enforcement of our nation's immigration laws. As a result of some businesses that neglect to assist the government in weeding out illegal aliens from the workforce, it also may take years for illegal aliens to understand that American employers are less and less willing to hire them. **A cascading effect will occur, however, when the Federal government does its job and more communities take a stand.**

Communities across the nation that have taken action to crack down on illegal immigration often see illegal aliens leave when news about new laws or workplace raids spreads ([See more examples](#)). When the illegal aliens move to another location and that community also cracks down, they will become discouraged and eventually self-deport.

It took 20 years to create an illegal population of more than 12 million, and it may take at least ten years to substantially reduce that number, but the increasing number of self-deportations each year will: (1) steadily improve the quality of life and lessen the cost of government for Americans; (2) make jobs available for unemployed and underemployed legal residents; and (3) discourage further illegal migration from other countries.

According to a recent Zogby poll, when given the choice between mass deportations, mass amnesty, and Attrition Through Enforcement, [the majority of Americans choose Attrition Through Enforcement.](#) Most polls reported in the mainstream media neglect to include Attrition Through Enforcement as a viable alternative to the two mainstay survey choices (i.e., mass deportations and mass amnesty). As such, it's easy to see why their results are skewed.

[Recent Raids Work, Open Up Jobs for Americans](#)

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents recently conducted a series of raids on Swift and Company meat packing plants in six states and arrested almost 1,300 illegal aliens. We learned three very important things from these raids:

- **Americans take the jobs illegal aliens leave behind :** The day after the raids took place, the media reported that plenty of [legal workers lined up to apply for the jobs](#) left vacant by the illegal aliens who fled or were arrested.
- **Identity fraud and illegal immigration are connected :** Hundreds of the illegal aliens who were arrested are [suspected of using the name and SSN of an American citizen](#). You can fight illegal immigration by fighting identity fraud.
- **Attrition Through enforcement works:** Over 400 illegal aliens skipped town after Swift dropped hints about ICE's suspicions. Once the message gets out that there aren't any jobs for illegal aliens, they leave.

surveyed said they would support letting police officers charge illegal immigrants with criminal trespassing.

[KAET-TV and Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication poll;](#) February 22-25, 2007

Sixty-three percent of **American voters** support or oppose fining businesses that employ illegal immigrants.

[Quinnipiac University Poll](#); November 13-19, 2006

Eighty-one percent of Americans polled support strict criminal penalties on employers who, after repeatedly being cited, persist in knowingly hiring illegal aliens.

[Roper ASW Poll conducted for Negative Population Growth \(NPG\)](#), April 14-16, 2006

Eighty-four percent of Americans believe the most effective way to reduce illegal immigration is to cut off the employment incentive for coming here by instituting tough penalties for businesses that hire illegal immigrants. More than half think this would be "very effective," and another 32% say it would be "somewhat effective."

[The Gallup Poll](#), April 7-9, 2006

[View More Polls](#)

[Click here](#) to see how states and

These raids are a good start, but raids alone will not solve the illegal immigration crisis. **Constant pressure** must be placed on illegal aliens and their employers by ICE and **local governments** as part of an Attrition Through Enforcement strategy.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has said his agency is prepared to launch similar raids on other plants – even those owned by companies that, like Swift, have attested to comply with the voluntary Basic Pilot program to screen employees – and to take additional actions to track down illegal aliens who are guilty of identity theft. NumbersUSA encourages you to help make this happen. **[CLICK HERE to send free faxes to support the raids and ask for revisions to Social Security rules that protect Americans against ID theft by illegal aliens.](#)**

municipalities across the U.S. are enacting tough immigration laws that are forcing illegal aliens to pick up and move.

Unfortunately, most of the reaction to the raids in the media is still being reported from the standpoints of immigration lawyers, pro-amnesty organizations and religious leaders who say it is inhumane to arrest people just because they have broken immigration laws and stolen identities in order to get a job ([click here](#) to see an example). **It is extremely important that Congress continue to hear that public sentiment is overwhelmingly on the side of enforcement rather than amnesty and leniency.**

Attrition Stories

Examples of usually small enforcement efforts that stirred illegal aliens to think about leaving.

[When immigrants flee, crops rot](#)

Roanoke Times (VA); March 5, 2007

"Immigrants heard Colorado's you're-not-welcome-here message loud and clear. Now the state needs its criminals to fill the workers' former farm jobs..."

[Poll: Most support illegals crackdown](#)

Standard-Speaker (PA); March 2, 2007

"The poll, conducted Feb. 22 to 26 with 1,000 respondents, shows that by a 68-25 margin, Americans support the ordinances proposed by Hazleton Mayor Louis Barletta and adopted by City Council..."

[Hispanics complain fear hurts their stores](#)

Cincinnati Enquirer (OH); February 27, 2007

"Hispanic store owners in this Butler County city say the sheriff's outspoken stance against illegal immigration here hurts business and drives people - legal and illegal - out of town..."

[Roundup of illegals shakes up Mendota](#)

The Fresno Bee (CA); February 27, 2007

"Mendota has been like a ghost town since the sweep, officials said. Residents are afraid to leave their homes to shop or walk their children to school..."

Hundreds of immigrants leave NC slaughterhouse**The Associated Press; February 19, 2007**

"Hundreds of workers at a Smithfield Packing Company plant are quietly leaving their jobs or no longer showing up for work. Those absences at the world's largest hog slaughterhouse in Tar Heel follow a crackdown on illegal immigrants employed there..."

High profile raids leave immigrants in fear nationwide**The Associated Press; February 19, 2007**

"Fear has gripped immigrant families across the country as federal agents raid neighborhoods, work sites and jails in a nationwide crackdown on illegal immigration..."

Mexicans feel brush-off in Pennsylvania town**The Philadelphia Inquirer; February 19, 2007**

"'It is reasonable,' said Steve Camarota, 'for towns to want to reduce the size of their illegal population.' Camarota is director of research for the Center for Immigration Studies, a Washington think tank that is advising Hazleton in its legal case. Win or lose, Camarota said, places like Hazleton and Bridgeport may have already achieved their goal, because the message alone that Hispanics are under suspicion drives immigrants away..."

Texas meatpacking town nearly emptied by immigration raid**The Boston Globe; February 13, 2007**

"The streets of this small, isolated city in the Texas Panhandle are virtually empty nowadays, and 'For Rent' signs decorate dilapidated trailers and shabby 1940s-era military barracks that just weeks ago were full of tenants..."

The Attrition Solution**The Washington Times; February 12, 2007**

"The sensible middle ground -- supported by Americans over amnesty by more than two to one -- is a policy of attrition. Vigorous enforcement of our current immigration laws will substantially decrease the illegal-immigrant population over time. Experience has proven that illegal immigrants who could no longer easily obtain jobs would simply return to their home countries..."

Immigration Raid Leaves Texas Town a Skeleton**Washington Post; February 9, 2007**

"Sales of tortillas and other staples are down. Money wire transactions to Central America have mostly dried up. The 'Guatemalas,' as local residents call them, are almost all gone, and so are a significant number of Mexican nationals. An estimated 12 to 18 children are now living with only one parent since the other was arrested in a massive immigration raid at the biggest employer in town..."

Immigration raids put city's illegal aliens on edge**San Mateo Daily Journal, CA; February 7, 2007**

"Some parents are keeping their children from

school in Redwood City after reports of surprise immigration raids began to circulate late last week..."

New Ordinances Drafted In Valley Park To Drive Illegal Immigrants From City

KSDK, MO; February 7, 2007

"Valley Park city attorney Eric Martin says the measures replace two other ordinances blocked by the courts. 'I think absolutely it does target undocumented persons who are unauthorized to be in this country,' says Martin. That includes people like Mario Tavares. Tavares is a roofer from Mexico who lives in an apartment complex in Valley Park. He says, through an interpreter, if the ordinance is enforced, he would have to move..."

After Immigration Arrests, Hundreds Skip Work At Hog Plant

The Associated Press; January 26, 2007

"Eduardo Pena of the United Food and Commercial Workers union said workers were talking to each other and told each other not to show up to work..."

Illegal immigrants lose state housing

Telluride Daily Planet; January 25, 2007

"'We're moving to Norwood,' Margarita said in Spanish. 'It's going to be a drastic change, but we don't have any other alternative. I don't have the slightest hope of staying...'"

24 Illegal Immigrants Arrested After Asking ICE Officers for Work

FOX News; January 24, 2007

"Twenty-four day laborers in the country illegally were arrested Tuesday when they asked for work from federal immigration agents who had gathered in a parking lot after an unsuccessful undercover operation, authorities said..."

An immigration raid aids blacks for a time

The Wall Street Journal via Pittsburgh Post Gazette; January 17, 2007

"For the first time since significant numbers of Latinos began arriving in Stillmore in the late 1990s, the plant's processing lines were made up predominantly of African-Americans..."

What To Do About Illegal Aliens – Part II

The Family Security Foundation, Inc; January 16, 2007

"To discourage illegal aliens from being in the United States we should adopt policies and procedures that discourage them from coming while simultaneously making it more difficult for them to stay. Some of these actions could include..."

Some detained Swift workers will be offered plea bargains

The Greeley Tribune (CO); January 16, 2007

"One of the provisions that is mandatory in all these plea agreements is that the defendants waive deportation and agree not to come back into the country," District Attorney Ken Buck said...

More illegals expected to leave Worthington, MN

Minneapolis Star-Tribune; January 8, 2007

"[Sister Karen] Thein said that she expects the flight of Hispanic families from Worthington will increase in the coming months. A sense of fear, even among legal workers, is great and persistent, she said. And some families of detained workers having trouble making ends meet are at the end of their patience even with help, Thein said. 'There's just a dignity [issue] for some families who are tired of asking for help,' she said..."

Jobs Who Won't Do?

New York Post; December 22, 2006

Last week, as part of a broader identity-theft and illegal-document probe, immigration and customs agents raided Swift & Co. meat-processing plants in six states - rounding up hundreds of illegal workers. Yet the plants managed to stay open - albeit with serious manpower shortages. **What happened next? The Rocky Mountain News reports, 'The line of applicants hoping to fill jobs vacated by undocumented workers taken away by immigration agents at the [Greeley, Colo.] plant . . . was out the door...'"**

Unions: Fewer Hispanic immigrants hired since Swift & Co. raids

The Associated Press; December 19, 2006

"Local 22 union president Dan Hoppes said Tuesday that between 40 and 50 new workers have been hired at the Grand Island plant since the raids. 'The lion's share of those people were Caucasian,' Hoppes said. Before the raids, roughly 90 percent of the Greeley plant workers were Hispanic, said Local 7 union president Ernie Duran..."

Stop 'aggressive' raids, advocates plead

Des Moines Register; December 16, 2006

"There were signs in Marshalltown that many Hispanics not arrested in the crackdown were leaving the community. Hispanics made up 13 percent of the city's population of 26,000 when the 2000 census was taken..."

Hopeful applicants look to find open jobs at Swift & Co.

The Greeley Tribune (CO); December 15, 2006

This is another example of the multiple benefits of attrition through enforcement. Not only do the illegal aliens move away, but jobs are made available for legal residents in the community who are not in the labor force, or who can move up the ladder from a lower job.

ACLU vows to act as sheriff's watchdog in immigration enforcement

Hamilton Journal News (OH); December 15, 2006

"Neighboring officials in Warren County also expressed concern Thursday, but of a different nature. They fear an influx of illegal immigrants if Butler County becomes too inhospitable..."

Immigration enforcement stuns Cleveland families

Cleveland Plain Dealer; December 3, 2006

"Our goal is to restore integrity to the immigration

laws, and part of that is removing individuals who do not have valid status,' said Greg Palmore, a spokesman for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE..."

Day-labor dispute simmers

The Arizona Republic; December 1, 2006

"In the Valley, work centers have been at the heart of a hostile battle over how cities should deal with undocumented workers. Non-profits and business owners don't want to attach themselves to controversial projects, fearing loss of funding and business. Last year, state lawmakers passed a law that prohibits cities from funding day-labor centers..."

Hispanics rue city's new rules

Chicago Tribune; October 29, 2006

"[Illegal immigration] destroys small cities," he said. "What we're doing is historic. We have found a way for local communities to fight back," said Hazleton, Pa. Mayor Lou Barletta..."

Collier sheriff: Immigration enforcement part of our job

Naples Daily News, FL; 10/06/2006

"The objective is to remove as many of the approximately 12 million to 20 million illegal aliens through direct contact or enforcement attrition at work sites as possible. It would be much less difficult to remain anonymous in a hypothetical group of 20 million people than a population of 1 million to 3 million..."

We Can Enforce Our Immigration Laws, If We Try

Council on Foreign Relations; 06/23/2006

"As for polls, they show the public will accept amnesty for illegals if you give them no other option, or give only mass deportations as an option. But the House of Representatives has an alternative: attrition through enforcement. By more than two to one, the public likes a policy of steady enforcement and making illegals go home over time, instead of amnesty and increased legal immigration..."

Immigration bill faces tough foe Key congressman labels Senate plan 'a nonstarter'

San Francisco Chronicle; 05/27/2006

"With the border controls and the enforcement of employer sanctions, the jobs for illegal immigrants will dry up,' [House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. James] Sensenbrenner said. '... And if you can't get a job because employer sanctions are enforced, my belief is that a lot of the illegal immigrants will simply go back home voluntarily...'"

Commentary: A THIRD WAY

Palm Beach Post; 05/07/2006

"[A]ttention through enforcement requires no magic wand - just consistent, comprehensive application of the immigration law with the tools available, enabling us to back out of a problem that took many years to develop..."

**Downsizing Illegal Immigration:
A Strategy of Attrition Through Enforcement**

CIS; 05/2005

"This strategy of attrition is not a pipe dream, or the idle imaginings of a policy wonk. The central insight is that there is already significant churn in the illegal population, which can be used to speed the decline in overall numbers..."

"This Is A Battle For America's Identity"

TIME Magazine; 04/02/2006

"It is not a choice between mass round-ups and expulsions on the one hand and amnesty on the other--there's a middle way, the only thing that can work, and that is attrition. Attrition through enforcement: instead of allowing the illegal population to grow every year, we start enforcing the law inside the country..."

Attrition through enforcement will work

The San Diego Union-Tribune; 04/02/2006

"This attrition approach is the only workable alternative in any case. Mass deportation is obviously unrealistic: If the 7 million illegal immigrants in the work force (the rest do not work) disappeared overnight, there would be significant disruptions. It's not that the economy ever "needed" these workers, but rather that the economy has accommodated itself to their presence and going cold turkey would be painful..."

**Attrition Through Enforcement:
A Cost-Effective Strategy to Shrink the Illegal
Population**

CIS; 04/2006

"A strategy of attrition through enforcement could reduce the illegal population by as many as 1.5 million illegal aliens each year. Currently, only about 183,000 illegal aliens per year depart without the intervention of immigration officials, according to DHS statistics..."

Congress at Odds Over Immigration

PBS Online NewsHour; 03/15/2006

"There is a middle way, and I think it's the House way. It's attrition through enforcement. We make life more difficult for illegal aliens here, and we significantly reduce the number of illegal aliens coming in, and many more will self-deport. We think 150,000 to 200,000 illegal aliens go home on their own each year; the goal is to make a whole lot more do just that..."

Use enforcement to ease situation

Arizona Republic; 10/23/2005

"If America becomes less hospitable to illegals, many more will simply decide to go home. To do this, we should enforce the law barring illegals from holding jobs by using the national databases that already exist to ensure that each new hire is legally entitled to work here..."

Immigration problem needs an attrition policy

Arizona Republic; 08/28/2005

"What's needed is a policy of attrition of the illegal population through across-the-board enforcement. This would involve both conventional measures, like arresting and deporting more illegals. But an attrition strategy would also involve other measures - firewalls, you might say - to make it as difficult as possible for illegal aliens to live a normal life here..."

**Not Amnesty but Attrition:
The Way to go on Immigration**

National Review; 03/22/2004

"We know that when we actually enforce the law, eroding the illegal-immigration population is possible. So, what would a policy of attrition look like? It would have two key components..."

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