

Enforcement Without Reform: *How Current U.S. Immigration Policies Undermine National Security and the Economy*

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ABSTRACT

This report examines how current U.S. immigration policies undermine National security and the economy. It questions the U.S. government's longstanding approach to the problem of undocumented immigration. Since the mid-1980s, the federal government has tried repeatedly, without success, to stem the flow of undocumented immigrants with all sorts of immigration-enforcement initiatives such as deploying more and more agents, fences, flood lights, aircraft, cameras, sensors along the southwest border with Mexico, increasing the number of worksite raids and arrests, expanding detention facilities to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants apprehended each year, and creating new bureaucratic procedures to expedite the return of detained immigrants to their home countries. Despite the enormous fiscal, economic, and human costs of these measures, they have yet to make a demonstrable dent in the number of undocumented immigrants entering the country. Globalization has also been accelerating for decades, facilitating the rapid movement of goods, services, capital, information, and people across international borders. Yet, U.S. policy makers persist in a quixotic attempt to impose restrictions on immigration. The enforcement-without-reform approach of the past two decades has needlessly created an unsustainable contradiction between U.S. immigration policy and the U.S. economy and the latter is winning.