

Illegal Immigration: "It's a Crime."

There are few nations in the entire world where people are allowed to enter, work and live without registering or receiving a visa from that nation's government. Every country has a right to protect its borders and to demand to know who is living there. Why do some people feel that is an unreasonable position? The fact is, the United States has been a country that is far more lenient with its population of illegal immigrants than many others. We are and always have been a generous country. By and large, we take care of people in need of medical care, education and a whole host of social services. Few other nations are so generous to their non-citizens. But our generosity has brought us to a breaking point. We cannot continue to ignore the millions of people who are sneaking into the United States to live and work, no matter how heartbreaking their stories of family hardships are back home. Our tax supported systems and many private businesses could be brought to their knees by the weight of so many people requiring services. Our government knows it can no longer afford to ignore the problem of illegal immigration. And neither can law enforcement professionals. We have an obligation to enforce the laws of this land. And laws exist, both federally and locally, making it a crime to illegally enter the United States. I uphold those laws wherever, whenever it is possible and lawful to do so. I have asked my deputies to train with the federal government so they may help in the fight against the illegal immigration. Today, I am proud to say I have the largest contingency of cross certified law enforcement men and women (160 of them) who are out patrolling in an intensified effort to bring illegal immigrants to justice. I have also started an effort inside my jails. Many local police agencies do not want to be in the business of determining a lawbreaker's residency status. An illegal immigrant breaks the law – local police bring them to jail and charge them with the crimes they committed on the streets. My detention officers take this a step further. They are now trained to follow up with each of those arrested and, if the arrestee is found to be in the country illegally, my officers charge him/her with that crime as well. I also started what turned out to be a controversial illegal immigration hotline. I have asked people to call in, anonymously if they wish, with information they may have about anyone here in this county illegally. It is not a witch-hunt. It is not a throwback in time like activists are telling the news media. It is a tip line like any other – a drug hotline, an animal abuse hotline, or silent witness. We take the calls and investigate where we can. If there is enough probable cause, we can make an arrest. It is no different than what police agencies have done with phone tip hot lines for decades. Apparently though, illegal immigration is an emotional topic for some and any law enforcement effort to fight it is deemed unreasonable and considered racial profiling. In reality, however, it is neither. The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office remains the only law enforcement in Arizona to explicitly follow the new state law and arrest not only the human smugglers but also those who co-conspire to be smuggled. Illegal immigration is against the law. I am the head of a law enforcement agency that enforces the laws of the land. I am doing my job as Sheriff of this county when my deputies arrest illegal immigrants. There are some Latino politicians and activists here who have publicly stated my tactics in the battle against illegal immigration are reminiscent of the Third Reich in Germany and that I am acting like a Ku Klux Klan member. They want me to back away from this fight and away from my positions. But backing down isn't an option. I will never back off from enforcing the laws of this county. They might as well get used to it. I am in this fight to stay. If you agree with Sheriff Joe's stance on illegal immigration, perhaps you could consider contributing to his re-election campaign. [Click here to donate now.](#)