

The Cost of Trump's Immigration Policies



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From the moment he announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States, Trump has been abhorrently transparent in his desire to limit immigration into our country and undermine protections for foreign nationals who are trying to escape life-threatening situations in their home countries. It seems, at this point, like Trump and his administration release a new anti-immigrant policy every day, and his draconian measures have wreaked havoc along the southern border and strained our immigration system. Many of his attempted changes are unconstitutional and have been blocked by the courts. And not a single one has fixed the real problems in our broken immigration system—in fact, they've intentionally exacerbated them. The timeline below provides a complete picture of Trump's tenure thus far around immigration and the border. When you add up all of these actions and look at the full picture, you can see they are costing us dearly and squandering our opportunity to address the real problems we face.

2017

January

- **The Border – January 25:** Trump issues an executive order calling for the construction of a wall on the southern border, more funding for detention facilities, expedited removal of undocumented immigrants, and the hiring of 5,000 new border patrol agents. ¹
- **Sanctuary Cities – January 25:** Trump issues an executive order threatening to deny funding to sanctuary cities, calling for the hiring of 10,000 more Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, and encouraging sanctions against countries that won't accept their deported nationals. ²
- **Travel Ban – January 27:** Trump issues an executive order, blocking admission to the US for at least 90 days for nationals of seven countries (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) who hold nonimmigrant visas or green cards. ³

March

- **Travel Ban – March 6:** Trump issues an executive order to revise the first travel ban (issued January 27th) by removing Iraq from the list of banned countries, clarifying aspects of the travel ban process, and removing a blanket halt on Syrian refugees. ⁴

June

- **Other – June 15:** Trump rescinds the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA) policy, which would have granted DACA-like protections to parents of legal residents and American citizens. ⁵

July

- **Agency Action – July 25:** Jeff Sessions announces that localities receiving Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants from the Department of Justice (DOJ) would need to meet two new conditions: 1) must honor requests by federal immigration officials to receive 48-hour notice prior to releasing certain detainees, and 2) must allow federal immigration officials access to local jails and prisons in order to interrogate prisoners. ⁶
- **Cabinet Changes – July 31:** John Kelly leaves his position as Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS) to become the White House Chief of Staff, replacing Reince Priebus. ⁷

September

- **Dreamers – September 5:** Trump administration announces plans to terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program, leaving Congress with just six months to implement a legislative fix. ⁸

October

- **Dreamers – October 8:** Trump releases a list of immigration policies that he says must be negotiated before he will consider any proposed DACA legislation, including funding for a border wall and restrictions on grant funding to sanctuary cities. ⁹

December

- **Travel Ban – December 4:** The Supreme Court issues a ruling, temporarily allowing the full enforcement of the latest ban on travel to the US by the six identified countries. ¹⁰

2018

January

- **Dreamers – January 9:** The US District Court for the Northern District of California issues a preliminary injunction, blocking Trump from ending the DACA program and requiring the administration to continue to accept applications for renewal. ¹¹
- **Dreamers – January 22:** A 69-hour government shutdown ends after congressional Democrats agree to reopen the government in exchange for Republicans agreeing to work towards finding a solution for the Dreamers and other contentious issues. ¹²

February

- **The Border – February 9:** Congress ends a five-hour government shutdown after passing a spending bill that will keep the government open for another three weeks. Although it was short-lived, it is the second shutdown in just three weeks. ¹³
- **Dreamers – February 13:** The US District Court for the Eastern District of New York issues the second preliminary injunction, temporarily blocking the Trump Administration from ending the DACA program. ¹⁴
- **Dreamers – February 15:** The Senate votes on four immigration bills aimed at finding a legislative fix for expiring DACA program—all measures fail to pass. ¹⁵

March

- **The Border – March 23:** Trump reluctantly signs spending bill to avoid another government shutdown. ¹⁶

April

- **Agency Action – April 2:** DOJ announces new quotas for immigration judges, requiring judges to close at least 700 cases per year. ¹⁷
- **The Border – April 4:** Trump signs proclamation sending National Guard troops to the southern border, stating the border situation has reached “a point of crisis”. ¹⁸

- **Family Separation – April 6:** The Trump Administration announces a new zero-tolerance policy to prosecute everyone who crosses the US border without documentation. This begins the Trump administration's family separation crisis. ¹⁹
- **Dreamers – April 24:** The US District Court for the District of Columbia rules that the Trump administration must continue accepting new applications from individuals seeking benefits under the DACA program, in addition to renewal applications. ²⁰

June

- **Asylum – June 11:** Attorney General Jeff Sessions overrules an Immigration Board of Appeals ruling and mandates that victims of domestic or gang violence no longer qualify for asylum in the US. ²¹
- **Family Separation – June 20:** Trump signs an executive order back-tracking on the zero-tolerance policy that led to family separation. ²²
- **Family Separation – June 26:** The US District Court for the Southern District of California rules that over 2,300 children, separated from their families at the border, must be reunited by July 26th and issues a nationwide injunction banning the separation of migrant families. ²³

July

- **Family Separation – July 27:** More than 700 migrant children are still held under government supervision after the Trump administration fails to meet a court-ordered family reunification deadline. ²⁴

October

- **The Border – October 26:** Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, approves a request from DHS to send an unknown number of members of the military to the southern border. ²⁵

- **Other – October 30:** During an interview, Trump says he would sign an executive order to end birthright citizenship for babies born on US soil, to non-citizens and individuals residing in the country, without legal permission.²⁶

November

- **Cabinet Changes – November 7:** Attorney General Jeff Sessions resigns at the request of President Trump and is temporarily replaced by his chief of staff, Matthew Whitaker.²⁷
- **Dreamers – November 8:** US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upholds a preliminary injunction against the Trump administration's attempt to end the DACA program, ruling that the administration's reasons for ending the program were arbitrary.²⁸

December

- **Asylum – December 20:** DHS announces individuals attempting to enter the US without legal permission or proper documentation could be returned to Mexico while waiting for immigration proceedings.²⁹
- **The Border – December 22:** For the third time during Trump's presidency, a partial government shutdown begins after lawmakers are unable to come to an agreement on border wall funding.³⁰

2019

January

- **The Border – January 19:** The Trump Administration issues a \$5.7 billion plan to secure the southern border and end the partial government shutdown; it is rejected by Congress.³¹

- **The Border – January 24:** Two measures to end the partial government shutdown—one that includes \$5.7 billion in border wall funding and another with no funding for the wall—are rejected by the Senate. ³²
- **Asylum – January 24:** DHS implements new *Remain in Mexico (Migrant Protection Protocols)* policy, forcing some asylum seekers to wait in Mexico while their case is being processed. ³³
- **The Border – January 25:** The 35-day government shutdown ends after Congress and Trump reach an agreement for continuing resolution to fund the government without paying for the border wall. ³⁴

February

- **The Border – February 3:** The Pentagon announces that another 3,750 troops will be sent to the southern border to help place razor wire along the border and assist with surveillance operations, bringing the total number of active and National Guard troops to nearly 6,000. ³⁵
- **The Border – February 14:** Several immigration groups file a lawsuit in The United States District Court for the Northern District of California, challenging the Trump administration's *Remain in Mexico* asylum policy program. ³⁶
- **The Border – February 15:** Trump declares a national emergency after signing a spending bill with \$1.375 billion in funding for barriers on the southern border. ³⁷
- **The Border – February 26:** In a 245-182 vote, The House passes a resolution to overturn Trump's declaration of national emergency on the southern border; the resolution goes to the Senate for a vote. ³⁸

March

- **Dreamers – March 12:** House Democrats introduce the Dream and Promise Act of 2019, which would establish a pathway to permanent residency and citizenship, for Dreamers and recipients of the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) programs. ³⁹
- **The Border – March 14:** The Senate votes on a resolution to overturn Trump's national emergency declaration at the southern border. The resolution passes 59-41. ⁴⁰
- **The Border – March 15:** Trump issues his first veto, rejecting a congressional resolution to overturn his national emergency declaration at the US-Mexico border. ⁴¹
- **The Border – March 26:** The House fails to overturn Trump's veto for a resolution that would have blocked his national emergency declaration at the border. ⁴²
- **The Border – March 26:** Trump orders DOD to transfer \$1 billion for new border barrier construction along the US-Mexico border. ⁴³
- **The Border – March 29:** Trump threatens to shut down the US-Mexico border if the Mexican government doesn't "immediately" stop all undocumented migrants crossing into the US. ⁴⁴

April

- **The Border – April 2:** Trump walks back his threat to close the southern border, after widespread opposition from his own party. ⁴⁵
- **The Border – April 5:** The House of Representatives file lawsuit against Trump administration over the President's declaration of a national emergency in order to secure border wall funding. ⁴⁶

- **Asylum – April 8:** The District Court for the Northern District of California grants a preliminary injunction, blocking the Trump administration from requiring asylum seekers to remain in Mexico while they wait for an immigration court to hear their case. ⁴⁷
- **Cabinet Changes – April 7:** Secretary of DHS, Kirstjen Nielsen “resigns” from her position and is temporarily replaced by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) commissioner, Kevin McAleenan. ⁴⁸
- **Travel Ban – April 15:** The White House is weighing proposal to restrict travel for nations with a high percentage of visa overstays in the US. The plan would negatively affect mostly African countries. ⁴⁹
- **Asylum – April 16:** Trump administration continues *Remain in Mexico* policy after Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit places a hold on the District Court’s April 8th order to review submitted arguments on why the program should either be put on hold or remain in place. ⁵⁰
- **Agency Action – April 19:** Video surfaces of militia groups in New Mexico detaining groups of migrant families at gunpoint and then handing them to CBP agents. ⁵¹
- **Asylum – April 29:** Trump orders new restrictions on asylum seekers at the southern border, which would force them to pay for asylum and work permits, create indefinite detention, and rush their cases through court without ensuring access to legal support. ⁵²

May

- **The Border – May 1:** The White House asks Congress for \$4.5 billion in emergency aid to address migrants crossing the southern border. ⁵³
- **The Border – May 1:** DHS is expected to start a DNA testing pilot program at the southern border next week. ⁵⁴

- **Family Separation – May 2:** As of May, the Trump administration have separated at least 389 children from their migrant families since a federal court ordered the administration to stop the practice back in June 2018. ⁵⁵
- **Cabinet Changes – May 6:** Trump names Mark Morgan, former head of CBP under the Obama administration, as new director of ICE. ⁵⁶
- **Agency Action – May 6:** It is revealed that ICE is providing local police with a way to work around ‘sanctuary’ jurisdiction policies by allowing local authorities to make immigration arrests. ⁵⁷
- **Asylum – May 7:** The US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reverses a preliminary injunction in favor of the Trump administration, ruling that they may continue implementing the *Return to Mexico* program until the court makes a final decision about the program. ⁵⁸
- **The Border – May 30:** Trump threatens Mexico with 5% tariffs, increasing 5% each month until 25%, on goods exported to the United States, unless Mexico “substantially stops the illegal inflow of aliens.” ⁵⁹

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