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## THE TRUTH ON IMMIGRATION: UNMASKING THE FICTION PERPETUATED BY PRESIDENT TRUMP IN HIS ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

### Alternative Fact #1: Immigration makes us less safe.

- **REALITY: Immigrants are significantly less likely than native-born Americans to commit crimes.**
  - Studies have repeatedly shown that immigrants in the United States are less likely than native-born Americans to engage in crime.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of immigrants in the United States are peaceful, law-abiding individuals who support their families and communities. In fact, studies have shown that “sanctuary jurisdictions”—states and cities that resist federal government efforts to conscript their local law enforcement agencies into a federal deportation force—are safer and more prosperous than their non-sanctuary counterparts.<sup>2</sup>

### Alternative Fact #2: Immigration limits job opportunities for American workers and is bad for the economy.

- **REALITY: Immigration is a boon to the American worker and economy.**
  - Immigrants create millions of jobs in the United States, foster vital innovations, and contribute over \$12 billion a year to our Social Security fund.<sup>3</sup> 10% of Americans rely for their employment on private companies owned by immigrants.<sup>4</sup> And despite Donald Trump’s assertion that immigrants represent a drain on our public benefits system, low-income immigrants actually use fewer benefits than low-income native-born Americans<sup>5</sup> and will pay \$600 billion into Social Security over the next 75 years.<sup>6</sup> All told, removing every undocumented immigrant from the United States could slash private sector output by over \$600 billion.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richard Perez-Pena, *Contrary to Trump’s Claims, Immigrants are Less Likely to Commit Crimes*, New York Times, (Jan. 26, 2017) available at: [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/26/us/trump-illegal-immigrants-crime.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/26/us/trump-illegal-immigrants-crime.html?_r=0).

<sup>2</sup> Gene Demby, *Why Sanctuary Cities Are Safer*, NPR (Jan. 29, 2017) available at: <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/01/29/512002076/why-sanctuary-cities-are-safer>.

<sup>3</sup> Alexia Fernandez Campbell, *The Truth About Undocumented Immigrants and Taxes*, The Atlantic (Sep. 12, 2016), available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/09/undocumented-immigrants-and-taxes/499604/>.

<sup>4</sup> Adam Bluestein, *The Most Entrepreneurial Group in America Wasn’t Born in America*, Inc. (Feb. 2015) available at: <http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/01/29/512002076/why-sanctuary-cities-are-safer>.

<sup>5</sup> Leighton Ku and Brian Brue, *Poor Immigrants Use Public Benefits at a Lower Rate than Poor Native-Born Citizens*, CATO Institute (Mar. 4, 2013) available at: <https://www.cato.org/publications/economic-development-bulletin/poor-immigrants-use-public-benefits-lower-rate-poor>.

<sup>6</sup> Marshall Fitz, Philip E. Wolgin, and Patrick Oakford, *Immigrants Are Makers, Not Takers*, Center for American Progress (Feb. 8, 2013) available at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2013/02/08/52377/immigrants-are-makers-not-takers/>.

<sup>7</sup> Andy Kiersz, *Donald Trump’s Deportation Plan Would Be An Economic Nightmare*, Business Insider (May 6, 2016); <http://www.businessinsider.com/cost-deporting-undocumented-immigrants-study-2016-5>.

**Alternative Fact #3: The United States allows “uncontrolled entry” from overseas without “proper vetting.”**

- **REALITY: The United States maintains the most rigorous immigration vetting procedures in the world.**
  - Although Donald Trump has repeatedly attacked U.S. vetting procedures, particularly those applied to refugees, these procedures are the most strenuous in history. Every refugee entering the United States has cleared numerous security checks conducted by the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, the CIA, the National Counterterrorism Center, and other federal agencies. The odds of an American getting killed by a refugee in a terrorist attack are an astronomical 1 in 3.64 billion.<sup>8</sup>

**Alternative Fact #4: The U.S. southern border is “wide open.”**

- **REALITY: The southern border is more secure than ever.**
  - Apprehension rates at the southern border have plummeted since the 1980s. And apprehensions of Mexicans specifically have reached their lowest point in nearly half a century. This helps explain why most Americans don’t want Trump’s border wall, which could cost upwards of a staggering \$20 billion to build<sup>9</sup> and \$750 million annually to maintain.

**Alternative Fact #5: The Trump Administration is deporting only criminals.**

- **REALITY: The Trump Administration has made virtually every undocumented immigrant a target for deportation.**
  - Under Donald Trump’s newly released immigration enforcement guidelines, nearly every undocumented immigrant in the United States could fall under a deportation “priority.” This includes immigrants who have neither been convicted of nor even charged with a crime. This means that 11 million immigrants across the country—from the grandmother who’s lived and worked in the United States for forty years to the 6-year-old granddaughter brought here as an infant—could become the target of Donald Trump’s indiscriminate deportation surge.

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<sup>8</sup> Alex Nowrasteh, *Terrorism and Immigration: A Risk Analysis*, CATO Institute (Sep. 13, 2016) available at: [https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa798\\_1\\_1.pdf](https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/pa798_1_1.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Julia Edwards Ainsley, *Exclusive - Trump border 'wall' to cost \$21.6 billion, take 3.5 years to build: internal report*, Reuters (Feb. 9, 2017) available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-immigration-wall-exclusive-idUSKBN15O2ZN?il=0>.