



## ***Frederick's self-destructive views on immigration***

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Kudos to [Dan Rodricks](#) for making the connection between Frederick County's economy and its short-sighted, hateful official policy toward the undocumented workers and consumers who live there ("Frederick County's reputation for mean," Aug. 15).

The county's participation in the federal program cited by Mr. Rodricks is little more than a short-term effort to chase scarce public funds at the expense of the lasting and significant economic contributions that all immigrants make not only to local markets but to national and international ones as well.

Immigrants, documented and otherwise, have been shown time and again to be a net economic plus for America and Americans. Their contributions in the form of tax revenue, consumption of goods and services, and additions to our culture and technology far outweigh any social or public costs incurred by their presence. Even the Cato Institute, no one's idea of a bleeding-heart think tank, has cited the importance of immigrants to our economy.

Mr. Rodricks quotes Blaine Young, the president of Frederick County's Board of County Commissioners, as boasting that Frederick is the Maryland county "most unfriendly to illegal aliens." Mr. Young's words, vicious as they are, are ultimately less than the empty rhetoric of a politician. As the case of Roxana Santos painfully illustrates, describing the undocumented as "illegal" obscures and demeans the human dimension of immigration, while compounding the human tragedy often connected to it.

The overwhelming majority of people in the U.S. without current visas originally entered through lawful means, or arrived without choice as children. Their lack of status in the eyes of the U.S. government solely reflects the failure of that government to fix its broken system of immigration. A system without rules that everyone can follow cannot be called the rule of law.

Frederick County, like the rest of Maryland, exists in a world where money moves around at the speed of light. That will not continue unless people who earn and spend that money can travel at something close to that speed. If the county and its leaders fail to accept that fact, no amount of local festivals or promotions will guarantee its economic future, or that of our state and country.

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