



## **Another Fatally Flawed Study on Illegal Alien Crime from the Cato Institute**

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An honest researcher will embark on any study by asking a question, then offer an answer that is based on whatever the best relevant data reveals. Unfortunately, many “research experts” for the open-borders lobby have instead opted to begin with whatever conclusion best supports their mass-immigration narrative, then twist, frame, or fabricate whatever underlying data they cite so that it appears to support a foregone conclusion – usually that immigrants, and illegal aliens, are somehow better than Americans.

The most recent study on immigrant crime (with a primary focus on illegal alien criminality) from the notoriously open-borders Cato Institute is a prime example of this.

In Cato’s report, Michelangelo Landgrave and Alex Nowrasteh attempt to claim that illegal aliens are half as likely to be incarcerated as U.S. citizens. However, when you examine their methodology, it becomes obvious that they rely on questionable research methods, and leave out large demographic sub-sets, based on shaky assumptions. Because of this, their conclusions are unreliable.

Listed below are just a few of the most egregious flaws in their report:

The authors rely on faulty, voluntary data from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Even mainstream organizations like Pew Research acknowledge that many illegal aliens are slow to volunteer information about themselves to the federal government. That’s why reputable research organizations assume a certain undercount when relying on ACS data. Hesitation to self-report personal information is only increased when surveys include questions about criminal history. So, from the start, the primary source used in this study will yield an undercount of incarcerated illegal aliens because it relies on self-reported data.

They also misstate illegal alien crime data from Texas. The authors sliced and diced data from Texas’ Department of Public Safety, claiming that the original data offered by the state was far too high, and that illegal aliens in Texas are half as likely to be incarcerated as U.S. citizens. The real numbers, however, tell a different story.

Based on data compiled between June 2011 and February 2019, 25,000 illegal aliens are booked into Texas state and local jails annually, on average. That means 1.3 percent of the illegal aliens estimated to be living in Texas find themselves incarcerated in a state prison or local jail in any given year, which is 60 percent greater than the 0.75 percent of lawful immigrants and U.S. citizens who find themselves incarcerated in the state annually. This data corroborates what the

Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) found by examining federal data from the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). So, despite both Texas and the federal government being in agreement on the number of incarcerated illegal aliens, the authors of the Cato study insist that these numbers are more than three times too high.

Landgrave and Nowrasteh only include illegal aliens between the ages of 18-54. This leaves out a large number of incarcerated individuals. In many cases, if the crime is severe enough, states will prosecute 14-17 year old defendants as adults. These criminal illegal aliens are excluded from the Cato report. Furthermore, their figures would also leave out all crimes committed by those 55 or older, despite a plethora of studies finding that the percentage of inmates over 50 more than doubled between 2000 and 2015, and continues to grow.

Those are just the highlights. Ultimately, Cato excludes so much data in the name of correcting for possible errors that their conclusions become completely unreliable. In contrast, FAIR recently took a look at hard data reported by states to the federal government in order to create a realistic portrait of criminality among illegal aliens. In stark contrast to Cato's findings, FAIR found that illegal aliens are three times as likely to be incarcerated as citizens or lawfully-present immigrants. As noted previously, these findings match up with what is being reported in states like Texas, where crimes committed by illegal aliens are tracked closely.

Illegal immigration imposes a major economic and safety risk to both American citizens and immigrants who are living in this country legally. Fake news and poorly constructed studies will not change this fact. Americans deserve the truth, and organizations like FAIR are among the few that are willing to take an honest and in-depth look at the facts when it comes to immigration.