



## Will immigrants stay away under Trump? Or hide and be terrified?

Andy Hurst and Liz Jones

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Build a wall.

Increase deportations.

Stop protecting kids who came here illegally.

President-elect Donald Trump made these promises on the campaign trail. We asked five people to consider how Trump's presidency could affect Washington's rising population of undocumented immigrants. Scroll down to read all the stories, or click on the points of view you'd like to read.

Jorge Baron: Expect return to workplace raids

Ira Mehlman: We don't have resources for undocumented immigrants

Graciela Nunez Pargas: Crime rates have gone down, despite our presence

Mike Gempler: Nearly half of farmworkers are here illegally. Who will do the agricultural work, if not them?

Matt Manweller: I think you'll see far fewer immigrants with Trump as president

### **Jorge Baron**

*Executive director, Northwest Immigrants Rights Project*

We believe there will be a drastic increase in the detention and deportation of immigrant community members, both documented immigrants as well as those who are undocumented.

We expect this will happen in several ways: The return of workplace "raids" in which immigration agents detain people who are working; attempts to undermine due process protections for immigrants undergoing the deportation process; and the elimination of some of the modest limits that the Obama administration put in place when it comes to immigration enforcement.

We are also concerned about the possibility of the "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA) program being taken away, which could mean that over 17,000 young people in our

State, most of whom are now working or continuing their education, would lose their work permits, ability to access certain scholarships for higher education, and most importantly, their protection from deportation.

An increase in the number of deportations of Washington state residents means U.S. citizen children left behind without their parents, neighbors with long ties to the state ripped away from their communities and valuable employees taken away from their workplaces. These policies will make all of us less safe and less prosperous.

The biggest misconception of undocumented immigrants is that they have a negative impact on our communities and our country, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary:

We are told that undocumented immigrants lead to higher crime rates or cause crime; however, as the Cato Institute put it last year, “immigrants are less crime prone than natives.”

We are told that undocumented immigrants are taking jobs from U.S. citizens, even though, according to the Bipartisan Policy Center, “research indicates that immigrants play a vital role in supplementing the labor force, filling jobs that would otherwise remain vacant or disappear.”

On taxes: Undocumented immigrants paid over \$11 billion in state and local taxes in 2013. At the federal level, they’ve helped with Social Security, as the Social Security Administration itself found that undocumented immigrants: “contributed roughly \$12 billion to the cash flow of the program for 2010.”

### **Ira Mehlman**

*Media Director, Federation for American Immigration Reform*

For decades, Congress and successive administrations have ignored the impact of mass immigration, legal and illegal, on American workers and taxpayers, the environment and on vital social institutions.

Instead, the focus has been on the demands of immigrants and on businesses that want greater access to their lower cost labor. The new administration seems more likely to recognize that while immigration is always beneficial to immigrants, it can often have an adverse impact on American citizens and communities.

Likewise, while the concerns of business are important, those concerns must be balanced against the interests of workers. If the American public is, indeed, seen as the primary stakeholders in immigration policy, then the focus of executive policy and legislative action is likely to be different than they have been in recent years.

The first step the new president could take after taking office would be to recognize that immigration laws exist to protect important public interests and roll back the countless executive policy decisions taken by President Obama that have placed 87 percent of all immigration law violators off-limits to enforcement.

Regardless of one’s views on immigration, we must all recognize that all people — immigrants and native-born — must be treated with respect, dignity and civility. The debate must focus on immigration policy and how it affects the interests of people in our state and across the country.

As an example, at a time when our state is out of compliance with a court order to adequately fund public education, the adverse impact on many Washington children (particularly in poorer school districts) is being exacerbated by the special needs of large numbers of new students who require ESL instruction and other programs. These kids are not to blame for the failures of our elected officials. But situations like these remind us that we do not have unlimited resources and why we need to set and enforce reasonable limits on immigration.

**Graciela Nunez Pargas**

*University of Washington graduate, DACA program enrollee*

Under Trump, there will be an increased focus on border enforcement and national security. Families that have been separated by ICE will have little-to-no hope of timely reunification and family sponsorships will face additional hurdles and surveillance.

This change will feel like we have taken several steps back into mid-20th century racism and xenophobic attitudes so the effect on immigrants will be mixed, depending on their residence and location across the country.

I wanted comprehensive immigration reform, but given President-elect Trump's stance and plans for the continued militarization of the border with Mexico, I would want to see the protection of the 11 million undocumented immigrants already residing within the United States.

Trump is a businessman; he is known to have hired and paid undocumented immigrants in exchange for cheap labor. Basically, he gains nothing besides a fearful population and resistance from the nation's biggest cities, like Seattle and New York.

The undocumented population in the U.S. has become permanent over the years – largely because the increased surveillance at the border that makes the trip back risky and deadly.

We do not pose national security risks; we are your lawnmowers, farm workers, journalists, and even lawyers. The national crime rate has not grown with our presence — in fact, it has gone down. The threat immigrants face is greater than such misleading notions that have fueled such hysteria.

**Mike Gempler**

*Executive director, Washington Growers League*

President-elect Trump has stated that he wants to: "Turn off the jobs and benefits magnet."

This means the Trump administration will likely push for mandatory use of E-verify at the time of hire. That would eliminate employment of the undocumented in the regular (non-black market) economy.

This would be a game changer for the agriculture industry, because the U.S. Department of Labor estimates that nearly half (46 percent) of seasonal agricultural workers are undocumented.

If that happens, where will the agriculture workforce come from? If the Trump administration employs an “enforcement-only” immigration policy, an enormous labor shortage will occur and substantial economic damage will be incurred by Washington state agricultural employers.

My organization would like to see a process for people who have been working here in the U.S. without documentation to gain legal status so that they can continue working here legally. The temporary visa program doesn't have the capacity to handle that many people. We need another way to match people from other countries with jobs here in the U.S.

This is especially important for agriculture. Many of these people are homeowners and business owners and have children who have been born here in the U.S. I would also like to see DACA passed into law. This is a point of basic fairness.

All of the undocumented people that I am aware of are very focused on making money to support their family, here in the U.S. and back in their home country. They don't use many services and they don't complain because they are afraid of being noticed.

**Matt Manweller**

*State representative, R-Ellensburg*

For immigrants who are already here, not much will change under Trump. But for potential immigrants, I think you will see a lot less of them.

We often forget that one of the president's biggest powers is the "bully pulpit." The president sets the tone. And Trump's tone has been critical of illegal immigration.

I would liken it to what we are seeing in the auto industry. The president can't stop American auto companies from producing abroad. His trade comments, however, are creating pressure on producers to stay in the U.S. Something similar will happen with immigration, but in the opposite direction.

We often have academic discussions in this country about whether illegal immigration is a net cost or a net benefit to the economy and the U.S. budget. Regardless, I think Americans have a right to know all the social welfare benefits illegal immigrants have access to, what it costs taxpayers, and if legal immigrants and citizens are having benefits curtailed because of illegal immigration.

Political correctness aside, the integration of two societies at different socioeconomic statuses has significant costs on the "receiving" society. The integration of what was once East and West Germany illustrated those transition costs and are similar to what many border states in the U.S. face today. Many border state schools and health care systems are simply overwhelmed.