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Letters to the Editor

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Fear-mongering no substitute for vetting

In December we learned that a number of undocumented immigrants have been working at the president's golf club in New Jersey. His staff evidently found them to be at least equal to native-born workers in their ability and willingness to work.

I don't have as much trouble with that as I do with the hypocrisy of the president's pronouncements. He is telling Americans these people are rapists, murderers, drug dealers, human traffickers, etc. I have a friend who put out a message on Facebook asking why anyone wouldn't believe in the need for a wall to protect our lives from these people. While the use of fear may be a potent political tool, it drives people apart.

The use of a “national emergency” on our southern border seems an attempt to stoke fears and appear to his base to be tough on immigration. Actually, according to Customs and Border Protection, there were more than four times as many people apprehended on the southern border in 2000 than last year. Among undocumented people in the U.S., the number who overstayed their visas has outnumbered those who crossed the border every year since 2007. We do have some national emergencies, but not having a wall all along our southern border isn't one of them.

Does the president's base not realize that labeling a group of people as immoral, criminal, etc. is the very definition of racism? And yes, there have been individuals who have broken the law and done some terrible things, but as was demonstrated by the Cato Institute's study of people in Texas, “Criminal convictions and arrest rates for immigrants were well below that of native Americans.”

The U.S. is entering a period where our population is aging and we need younger workers to help support the system. Talk to someone in the farming industry about what would happen to them if all undocumented workers were expelled. I have no problem with vetting people who come in, but please, no fear-mongering at the expense of any group of people.