

The logo for Marist Circle, featuring the words "MARIST" and "CIRCLE" stacked vertically in a white, serif font against a solid red rectangular background.

MARIST CIRCLE

The Wall Will Not Matter

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The United States Government has reopened following a 35-day long shutdown. The government went into shutdown as a result of the United States Congress and President Trump's inability to come to an agreement on the appropriations bill needed to fund the federal government for the 2019 fiscal year.

Furthermore, the shutdown was a result of President Trump's demand for \$5.7 billion in federal funds in order to build the United States-Mexico wall.

The majority of people do have a strong opinion regarding the wall, regardless of whether they're for or against it. However, when debating this topic, the issue will not get resolved if you simply look at the topic in regards to what you believe is the right, or the moral thing to do. People's emotions are so strong, but if there was an understanding of the other side, then feelings most likely wouldn't be so divisive. Therefore, to create a substantial opinion on the matter, it is important to look at facts.

According to the Pew Research Center, the number of unauthorized immigrants in the US has decreased by 13 percent since its peak in 2007. Meaning today, illegal immigrants make up about 3.4 percent of the population. Amongst that 3.5 percent, Mexicans only make up 50 percent, which has dropped from 57 percent in 2007. In other words, only 1.7 percent of the United States population is undocumented Mexican immigrants.

Furthermore, 58 percent of illegal Mexican immigrants live in six states: California, Texas, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. Of these six states, only California and Texas border Mexico.

According to an academic criminology journal article titled "Does Undocumented Immigration Increase Violent Crimes?" by Michael T. Light and Ty Miller, published on March 25, 2018, there is very little evidence that could defend the assumption that an increase in illegal immigration leads to an increases in crime.

"From 1990 through 2014, data found a negative correlation, meaning that the more a population was made upon unauthorized immigrants, the lower the violent crime rate seemed to be."

Numbers for this statement were found by Cato Institute in 2018, an American Libertarian Think Tank in Washington D.C. The institute found that within Texas, there was a 56 percent decline

in criminal convictions of illegal immigrants compared to native-born Americans in Texas, the conviction rate of legal immigrants was 85 percent below native-born.

On the other hand, if you still believe there needs to be tighter border security, and an increased method in preventing illegal immigration, I don't necessarily disagree.

Again, without straying this argument too far away from morals and emotions behind whether or not the wall should be created, you can always look at these statistics. Ask yourself if it is really worth spending \$5.7 billion dollars on a wall that most likely will not decrease illegal immigration that much.

That money can be spent on other things to improve the United States, such as feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, giving resources to veterans like physical, mental and emotional support, increasing teachers' salaries, developing schools and providing resources to give all children the materials to succeed.

I can understand the argument of needing to support Americans before illegal immigrants. But we, as Americans, are not even supporting Americans enough.