



Letter: Get serious about immigration

September 3, 2018

Everyone agrees that the murder of a lovely young woman is a tragedy. Any murder is a great loss for the family and for the community. It is particularly painful when the accused murderer is someone who shouldn't be free to shadow a young woman, whether it is an undocumented immigrant or a native-born male who has been released from prison by mistake.

As we acknowledge the pain, so must we acknowledge the fact: gender is a far more important part of the story than immigration.

A recent letter cited a GAO report (from 2001, it turns out) that "criminal aliens" make up 27 percent of the federal prison population. But we need to recognize that people are in federal prisons for federal crimes, which usually don't include murder, but do include civil immigration law violations.

More accurate is the recent report published by the Cato Institute — a libertarian organization. "Illegal aliens are less likely to be incarcerated for crime in the U.S. than native-born Americans," Alex Nowrasteh writes.

The author noted that Texas is the only state that keeps data on illegal immigrants. In 2016, he writes, there were 746 murderers who were native-born Texans compared with 32 illegal immigrants and 28 legal immigrants.

There is no question the nation's immigration system needs comprehensive reform. It is also a truism that violence against women is widespread. Why are we all shouting at each other about who is more responsible for crime instead of working together to devise a thoughtful, fact-based immigration?