



State of the Union fact check: Legal immigrants do not cause crime, records show

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President Trump said several times that the U.S. must limit legal immigration for the sake of national security, but national crime statistics do not back up that claim.

"Most tragically, they have caused the loss of many American lives," Trump said.

More than 13% of the U.S. population is foreign-born, but only 5.6% of inmates held in federal, state and local prisons are foreign-born, according to a report released this month by the Department of Justice.

Those numbers are backed up several studies, including a report from the libertarian Cato Institute that found the incarceration rate for native-born Americans is 1.53% compared to 0.85% for undocumented immigrants and 0.47% for legal immigrants.

Trump was correct when he said that two recent terrorist attacks in New York City were committed by immigrants who entered the country through family-based immigration, which he refers to as "chain migration," and the diversity visa lottery, which grants visas to people from underrepresented countries. But similar attacks have been rare.

A report released this month by the departments of Justice and Homeland Security found that 402 foreign-born immigrants have been convicted of terrorism-related charges in U.S. federal courts since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. But the report does not show how many of the convicted people entered the country through "chain migration" or the diversity visa lottery.