



Facts show that immigrants obey the law

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Mike Nielsen asserts that I was wrong in my saying that illegal immigrants “do not significantly add to the high crime rates and are less crime-prone than native Americans.” In his rebuttal, he quotes from the America Thinker, a conservative website (Lead article when I looked: “Vegas gunman’s use of bump stock reduced casualties”) and uses Randell Hoven, a lecturer in electrical engineering at Washington University as his source. Mr. Hoven has no academic qualifications to write on this subject. My sources are Ph.D.s and organizations that study immigration and criminal justice full-time.

Police Foundation says, “the perceptions that the foreign-born, especially ‘illegal aliens,’ are responsible for higher crime rates ... are not supported empirically; instead, they are refuted by the preponderance of scientific evidence. Both contemporary and historical studies, have shown that immigration is associated with lower crime rates and lower incarceration rates.”

The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies said in an article, “here are the actual facts on immigrants and crime, (legal and undocumented) immigrants are less likely to commit crimes than people born in the United States.”

Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy analyst at the Cato Institute’s Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity (a libertarian group), published an article, “Immigration and Crime — What the Research Says,” which stated: “Both the Census-data driven studies and macro-level studies find that immigrants are less crime-prone than natives with some small potential exceptions.”

FactCheck.org said after checking Trump’s claim that Mexicans bring in crime, etc., that “there’s one catch: There’s no evidence that undocumented immigrants commit more crime. What’s more, a slew of studies has found that immigrants as a whole — both legal and undocumented — commit less crime than native-born Americans.”

One study in criminology found that “violent crime rates tended to decrease as metropolitan areas experienced gains in their concentration of immigrants” or another way to say this, the more immigrants in a city, the less crime.

A 2007 report by the American Immigration Council, concluded that “for every ethnic group without exception, incarceration rates among young men are lowest for immigrants, even those who are the least educated.”

CBS said in a news report that the data on crime and immigration was slim, but “despite this, Mears and others who study this subject seem to agree that most research indicates immigrants commit crime at lower rates than native-born citizens.”

One study in the *Journal of Criminology and Public Policy* looked at recidivism among inmates at the Los Angeles County Jail, and the authors wrote that their results “lend no support to the ubiquitous assertion that deportable aliens are a unique threat to public safety.”

In a report by Walter Ewing, Ph.D., Daniel E. Martínez, Ph.D., and Rubén G. Rumbaut, Ph.D., from the American Immigration Council, “For more than a century, innumerable studies have confirmed two simple yet powerful truths about the relationship between immigration and crime: Immigrants are less likely to commit serious crimes or be behind bars than the native-born, and high rates of immigration are associated with lower rates of violent crime and property crime. This holds true for both legal immigrants and the unauthorized, regardless of their country of origin or level of education. In other words, the overwhelming majority of immigrants are not ‘criminals’ by any commonly accepted definition of the term.”

Mike, as you suggest: Let the reader decide who to believe.