

WebMemo



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Border Security: The Heritage Foundation Recommendations

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The United States was established on principles that support the welcoming of new residents to its shores to learn and embrace American civic culture and political institutions through the processes of immigration and naturalization. Over the past several decades, however, immigration policy has become skewed, falsely presented as an uncompromising decision between unfettered immigration and none at all. Recently, the Obama Administration has begun to call for granting amnesty to the some 10.8 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. as part of a comprehensive immigration reform bill. The Heritage Foundation instead proposes a phased approach to immigration reform centered on border security, interior enforcement, and legal immigration processes.

The following papers offer a comprehensive review of The Heritage Foundation's most recent work on the border security component of immigration reform.

White House Must Stop Playing Politics with Immigration and Arizona Law

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/05/White-House-Must-Stop-Playing-Politics-with-Immigration-and-Arizona-Law>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.

WebMemo No. 2909

May 20, 2010

Congress should reject efforts by the White House to demonize the people of Arizona in a crass effort to further the President's political agenda. Congress should also insist on incremental, com-

monsense policies that will address the pressing need for immigration and border security reforms instead of the amnesty-first approach—which both the American people and Congress roundly rejected the last time it was proposed in 2007.

SBinet: Why Border Security Technology Should Not Be Dropped

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/05/SBINet-Homeland-Security-Should-Not-Abandon-Border-Security-Technology>

By Jena Baker McNeill

WebMemo No. 2906

May 20, 2010

Securing America's southern border is more important than ever. Yet the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is preparing to drop key border security technologies that it has been developing since 2005. This decision makes no sense.

U.S. Strategy Against Mexican Drug Cartels: Flawed and Uncertain

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/04/US-Strategy-Against-Mexican-Drug-Cartels-Flawed-and-Uncertain>

By Ray Walser, Ph.D.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:
<http://report.heritage.org/wm2925>

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Backgrounder No. 2407
April 26, 2010

Mexican drug cartels virtually rule large parts of Mexico, with violence and murder spilling across the U.S. border. In 2009, the death toll reached a high of more than 9,000. While the Obama Administration should be commended for its continuation of the Bush Administration's Mérida Initiative, President Obama and his cabinet have gone too far in placing the blame for Mexico's drug mayhem on U.S. gun laws and American drug use, and many existing policies have yielded modest results at best. Heritage Foundation Latin America expert Ray Walser lays out the comprehensive plan that the U.S. should follow to stem the tide of drug violence.

Time to Decouple Visa Waiver Program from Biometric Exit

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/04/Time-to-Decouple-Visa-Waiver-Program-from-Biometric-Exit>

By Jena Baker McNeill
WebMemo No. 2867
April 15, 2010

While Congress and DHS may see deployment of biometric exit as a necessary step toward understanding the number of visa overstays inside the U.S., the expansion of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) should not be inhibited by the failure to produce a biometric system. Congress should remove this hurdle by decoupling VWP from the exit requirement and paving the way for the admission of new member countries.

Biometric Exit Programs Show Need for New Strategy to Reduce Visa Overstays

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/01/Biometric-Exit-Programs-Show-Need-for-New-Strategy-to-Reduce-Visa-Overstays>

By Diem Nguyen and Jena Baker McNeill
Backgrounder No. 2358
January 25, 2010

Despite Congress's mandate in 2007 that DHS track all foreign visitors biometrically by June 2009, DHS missed the deadline, and biometric exit, as opposed to the current biographic approach, has proved costly without adding much additional security. Following is a plan on how Congress can

break the stalemate—and provide useful data and security for Americans as well as the many visitors who come to the U.S. every year.

Congress Should Stop Playing Politics with E-Verify

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/09/Congress-Should-Stop-Playing-Politics-with-E-Verify>
By Jena Baker McNeill

WebMemo No. 2622
September 22, 2009

Uncertainty over the future of E-Verify will only lead to confusion as the private sector attempts to understand its obligations under this new rule. Congress should clarify this matter by permanently authorizing the program and refining it in a way that encourages employer participation and improves accuracy. Additionally, it should support other effective workplace immigration enforcement tools such as Social Security No-Match.

Homeland Security Department Guts Workplace Enforcement

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/07/Homeland-Security-Department-Guts-Workplace-Enforcement>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.
WebMemo No. 2535
July 10, 2009

The DHS announced it plans to kill some responsible, reasonable workplace verification rules. As a result, the department will likely perform fewer workplace checks.

The PASS ID Act: Rolling Back Security Standards for Driver's Licenses

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/06/The-PASS-ID-Act-Rolling-Back-Security-Standards-for-Driver's-Licenses>

By Janice L. Kephart and Jena Baker McNeill
Backgrounder No. 2288
June 23, 2009

PASS ID would repeal REAL ID, stripping away the substantive provisions that are already making driver's licenses more secure, including a repeal of 9/11 commission identity verification recommendations, information sharing between states, and airport ID security standards. Congress should preserve REAL ID, fund it adequately, and take steps to

ensure its full implementation by moving interested states into the program.

U.S. Border Security: Realities and Challenges for the Obama Administration

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/06/US-Border-Security-Realities-and-Challenges-for-the-Obama-Administration>

By Matt Mayer

Backgrounder No. 2285

June 17, 2009

President Obama's initial actions on border security are largely consistent with those of President Bush. The challenges for Obama will come when the economy improves and the industries that hire large numbers of illegal immigrants increase the incentives for illegal immigrants to cross the border. It is critical to ensure that the Border Patrol receives the resources it needs for training and recruiting.

Visa Waiver Program: A Plan to Build on Success

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/06/Visa-Waiver-Program-A-Plan-to-Build-on-Success>

By Jena Baker McNeill, James Carafano, Ph.D., James Dean, and Nathan Sales

Backgrounder No. 2282

June 12, 2009

Congress established the VWP to strengthen America's relationship with key allies around the globe. Recent reforms have made the program a better tool for thwarting terrorist and criminal travel as well as for combating violations of U.S. immigration laws. Congress should transfer permanent waiver authority to DHS and decouple VWP from the biometric air-exit mandate.

The Ultralightness of Smuggling

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/04/The-ultralightness-of-smuggling>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.

Commentary

April 21, 2009

On the border, you expect strange things to happen. When the Yuma County Sheriff's Office got the call to report to a crash site—a lettuce field just north of San Luis—officers didn't know what to expect. New Mexico had its legendary UFO

encounter at Roswell—maybe this would put Arizona's San Luis on the map. What they found was pretty strange indeed.

Battle for the Border

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/04/Battle-for-the-Border>

By Edwin Feulner, Ph.D.

Commentary

April 13, 2009

Almost two years ago I visited southern California to watch the U.S. Border Patrol at work. The federal government was building a fence and, with help from the National Guard, federal agents were stepping up patrols and slowing the flow of illegal aliens across our southern border.

How to Keep America Safe from Mexico's Drug Wars

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/03/How-to-keep-America-safe-from-Mexicos-drug-wars>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.

Commentary

March 30, 2009

Since 9/11, Washington has poured billions into homeland security grants, yet it's not at all clear that this spending spree has done much to improve national preparedness or security. The grants have become exactly what the 9/11 commission warned against: "pork-barrel" funding mechanisms. Taxpayers would get far more bang for their homeland security bucks if more of the money was channeled where it's really needed—like cooperative law enforcement initiatives to protect our communities along the southern border.

15 Steps to Better Border Security: Reducing America's Southern Exposure

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/03/15-Steps-to-Better-Border-Security-Reducing-Americas-Southern-Exposure>

By Jena Baker McNeill

Backgrounder No. 2245

March 9, 2009

The 9/11 attacks raised concerns over the security of U.S. borders. In response, the Bush Administration employed additional Border Patrol agents,

deployed new technologies at the border, and erected physical barriers. The Obama Administration should continue these measures by increasing training capabilities, supporting SBInet, encouraging states to enter into Section 287(g) compacts, and to create State Defense Forces in order to promote citizen participation in border security.

E-Verify Expires: Time for Congress to Reauthorize the Program

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/03/E-Verify-Expires-Time-for-Congress-to-Reauthorize-the-Program>

By Jena Baker McNeill
WebMemo No. 2332
March 9, 2009

E-Verify helps responsible employers hire legal workers in an economically viable manner. It and other similar programs are the type of business-friendly and cost-effective programs that Congress should be supporting. Consequently, Congress should reauthorize and fully fund E-Verify.

An Analysis of Federal, State, and Local Homeland Security Budgets

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/03/An-Analysis-of-Federal-State-and-Local-Homeland-Security-Budgets>

By Matt Mayer
Center for Data Analysis Report No. CDA09-01
March 9, 2009

Despite a rich history in which states and localities have taken responsibility for their own affairs, the U.S. federalizing more and more of the homeland security mission. Washington's one-size-fits-all solutions rarely succeed. The country's homeland security needs are too diverse, federal resources are physically too far from any one location to secure rapid response, and federal decision making is notoriously inept.

U.S., Canada Working Together on Improving Border Security

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/03/US-Canada-Working-Together-on-Improving-Border-Security>

By Jena Baker McNeill and Diem Nguyen
WebMemo No. 2329
March 6, 2009

Initiatives to secure the U.S. from potential terrorists in Canada should respect both nations' sovereignty and addresses common concerns without hindering either nation's economic viability.

Back to the Border for the National Guard?

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/03/Back-to-the-border-for-the-National-Guard>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.
Commentary
March 3, 2009

Sending brigades of our already overstretched military to the border would doubtless grab a few headlines, but it's a less-than-optimal strategy for winning the long war on our border.

Obama Pursuing Homeland Security Lite

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/02/Obama-pursuing-Homeland-Security-Lite>

By James Carafano, Ph.D.
Commentary
February 17, 2009

The Administration must start sending out very strong messages that there are no time outs in the terror war.

Growing Instability in Mexico Threatens U.S. Economy and Border Security

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/02/Growing-Instability-in-Mexico-Threatens-US-Economy-and-Border-Security>

By James Roberts and Ray Walser, Ph.D.
WebMemo No. 2290
February 12, 2009

Mexico's ongoing political stability and economic health are critical to the prosperity and national security of the U.S. The Obama Administration must make confronting the many challenges facing America's southern neighbor both a foreign and a domestic policy priority.

Adding Visa Waiver Restrictions: The Wrong Course for Congress

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/01/Adding-Visa-Waiver-Restrictions-The-Wrong-Course-for-Congress>

By Jena Baker McNeill, James Carafano, Ph.D., and James Dean

WebMemo No. 2248
January 27, 2009

Congress should not destroy the VWP by instituting unworkable requirements. Doing so would decrease security and alienate U.S. allies while battering America's already-damaged economy.

Key Questions for Janet Napolitano, Nominee for Secretary of Homeland Security

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2009/01/Key-Questions-for-Janet-Napolitano-Nominee-for-Secretary-of-Homeland-Security>

Key-Questions-for-Janet-Napolitano-Nominee-for-Secretary-of-Homeland-Security

By Jena Baker McNeill

WebMemo No. 2204

January 13, 2009

The U.S. Senate will soon render its advice and consent to the nomination of Governor Janet Napolitano (D-AZ) as the new DHS secretary. In giving its advice and consent, Senators should explore Governor Napolitano's views on issues across the homeland security spectrum. Consequently, the Senate should consider these preliminary questions.

Making Reform Possible. By following the recommendations contained in the documents listed above, Congress and the Obama Administration will finally be able to secure America's borders—a critical first step toward comprehensive immigration reform.