



Obama Administration Has Released 167,000 Illegals With Criminal Records

There are nearly 167,000 convicted criminal aliens with final orders of removal who are still in the United States and “currently at large.” This number appears to be directly related to the Obama administration’s lax deportation policy, with deportations from the interior of the United States down 34 percent during the past year.



These startling figures were made available on October 15 by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit research organization that specializes in providing statistics related to both legal and illegal immigration.

According to Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at CIS, immigration enforcement activity by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) declined significantly in 2014. Vaughn offered the following statistics:

- Total deportations credited to ICE, the majority of which were illegal aliens arrested by the Border Patrol and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at our ports of entry, declined 15 percent from 2013 to 2014.
- Deportations from the interior of our country dropped 34 percent from 2013, and are 58 percent lower than the peak in 2009.
- The number of criminal aliens deported from the interior also declined 23 percent since last year, and declined by 39 percent since the peak in 2011.
- “Catch and release” policies continue. In 2014, deportation processing was initiated for approximately 143,000 aliens out of the 585,000 aliens encountered by ICE agents. Tens of thousands of those who were released had been labeled as a criminal threat.
- The number of aliens who have received a final order of removal, but who are still in the United States, has risen to nearly 900,000. Nearly 167,000 of these are convicted criminals who were released by ICE and are currently at large.

The source of the data compiled by CIS is ICE’s *Weekly Departures and Detention Report (WRD)* as of September 22, 2014.

The CIS report noted that ICE enforcement records contradict the Obama administration’s claims of stringent enforcement. Last April, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson defended the administration’s record on enforcing immigration policy and disputed criticism from Republican



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senators that it has been lax on enforcing immigration laws. “I don’t understand those who say we are not enforcing the law,” Johnson said on ABC’s *This Week*. “We are enforcing the law every day.”

In an address before the House Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Gala on October 2, President Obama showed his true colors when it came to enforcing our immigration laws. “The actions that we’ve taken so far are why more than 600,000 young people can live and work without fear of deportation. That’s because of the actions I took and the administration took.”

Obama continued: “When states like Alabama and Arizona passed some of the harshest immigration laws in history, my Attorney General took them on in court and we won.”

During that speech, Obama bragged about his policy to implement portions of the DREAM Act by executive action via the Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA), after Congress repeatedly turned down the proposal. DACA is a memorandum authored by the Obama administration on June 15, 2012 and subsequently implemented by then-Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano. It directs U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to practice “prosecutorial discretion” toward some individuals who were brought to this country illegally as children and have remained in the country illegally.

“Prosecutorial discretion” is, for all practical purposes, amnesty.

The CIS report attributes the lower deportation rates over the last year to “consistently lower levels of enforcement activity, particularly in the interior, caused by Obama administration policies that are euphemistically known as prosecutorial discretion, which in practice have shielded tens of thousands of illegal aliens from deportation.”

Furthermore, notes the report:

The total deportation figures include cases resulting from arrests by all DHS agencies. The mix of types of deportation cases — that is, border vs. interior cases — has changed significantly since 2008. In 2008, most of the deportations carried out by ICE were interior cases that originated with an arrest by an ICE officer. In 2012, the number of interior cases dropped sharply and the number of border deportation cases referred to ICE grew sharply. Ever since then, the majority of deportations credited to ICE have been border cases.

Because of this change in emphasis in immigration law enforcement, “interior cases,” that is, immigrants who have already crossed our borders and have settled within the United States, are being prosecuted at a lower rate than illegals who are apprehended at the border and immediately sent back. Yet it is exactly this type of illegal alien that poses the greatest risk to our safety and security.

Contrast this policy with the policy our government once followed regarding organized crime figures. One prime example was Salvatore “Lucky” Luciano. It is important to recognize that Luciano had entered the United States with his family legally in 1907 at the age of 10, and had even become a naturalized U.S. citizen. He became involved in street gangs as a teenager and eventually became the leading Mafia crime boss in the United States. Luciano was convicted of criminal activity in 1936 and was sentenced to 30-50 years in prison. In 1946, New York Governor Thomas Dewey commuted Luciano’s sentence (reportedly as a reward for his cooperation with U.S. authorities that aided the World War II effort) on condition that he would not resist deportation to Italy. On February 10, 1946, Luciano’s ship sailed from Brooklyn to Italy. He never set foot in the United States again.



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Today, under the Obama administration’s “prosecutorial discretion” policy, illegal aliens (who have already committed the crime of illegal entry) — even if they have compiled an additional criminal record — are being released in large numbers into our nation’s interior instead of being deported.

Some of these illegal aliens are guilty of not just petty crimes, either. In an August 15 letter to Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Thomas Winkowski, principal deputy assistant secretary of ICE, acknowledged that in Fiscal Year 2013, ICE released 36,007 criminal aliens from custody. The letter admitted that 169 of these had a “homicide-related conviction,” and that 131 have been “issued a final order of removal.”

Winkowski’s letter was sent in reply to a June 9 letter Grassley sent to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson. In his letter, Grassley noted: “According to multiple news reports, in 2013, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) released from its custody 36,007 immigrants who had been convicted of a crime and were awaiting the outcome of deportation proceedings.” More seriously, noted the Iowa senator, “This included 116 individuals who had been convicted of homicide, with a total of 193 homicide convictions [among] them.”

It is painfully apparent that our immigration law enforcement has weakened considerably since “Lucky” Luciano was deported in 1946.

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