



Trump's Executive Order on the Border Wall and Immigration Enforcement

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On January 31st, for the first time since Donald Trump became President, Mexican and U.S. officials met in southern Mexico to discuss security initiatives. The two countries are seeking common ground in tense negotiations over security, immigration and trade.

Two Executive Orders signed by Trump on January 25 have strained relationships between the two countries. The Executive Orders call for the immediate construction of a wall and issue directives to crack down on unauthorized immigration, increase security at the southern border and expand agencies' deportation powers. The directives also aim to create more detention centers, add thousands of border patrol agents and withhold federal funds from sanctuary cities.

Trump made it clear that he intends to build a border wall between the U.S. and Mexico and that he intends to make Mexico pay for it, an assertion that the President of Mexico has flatly rejected. Estimates on costs of building the wall range from \$15 to \$25 billion. He is basing his Executive Order on assumptions made that immigrants from Mexico are arriving across the borders in droves, that once arriving they are living off government subsidies, committing crimes and taking away jobs from Americans.

Opponents push back on a few of these points. Analysts believe, though it cannot be proven, that most illegal immigrants enter the U.S. by air, arriving with a visa, and simply don't leave. In 2015, Homeland Security produced a partial estimate of those who overstay their permits. [Out of 45 million U.S. arrivals whose visas expired in 2015, they estimated about 416,500 people were still in the country in 2016.](#)

Another point opponents make is that the immigration problem is a Central America problem, not a Mexican problem. A vast majority of those who immigrate illegally across the border are fleeing other Central American countries with unstable governments such as Honduras and El Salvador. [In 2015, the Mexican government carried out about 150,000 deportations of unauthorized immigrants from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, a 44% jump over the previous year.](#)

They also point out that fewer immigrants from Mexico are coming to the U.S. than in the past. [According to a Pew Study from 2015, more Mexicans left than came to the U.S since the end of the Great Recession.](#)

Questions still surround the details of the plan for the wall. According to an NPR report, “A law already exists that experts say gives Trump the authority to start building the wall. It is the [Secure Fence Act of 2006](#). It was bipartisan and overwhelmingly supported during the Bush administration.”

Construction of a border wall was a keystone of Trump's presidential campaign.

For more information on what effect this may have on Michigan, [see our post on Trump's immigration policy](#).