Texas' Inhumane and Illegal Anti-Immigrant Actions vs. Undocumented Immigrant Amnesty

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The open borders and immigrant invasion rhetoric is a myth permeated with hate. Open immigration borders have not existed since 1920. National and Texas's racist immigration history against Mexican Americans and Mexicans is undeniable. The changing immigrant demographics from majority Mexico-origin to other Latin-American and foreign countries has not lessened that history.

Today, Texas is the poster child for xenophobia, vilifying, and indisputable human rights-violating policymaking targeting immigrants. Operation Lone Star is a five billion plus taxpayer-supported discriminatory and abusive operation targeting perceived migrants and others for arrest, prosecution, and incarceration on state misdemeanor and felony offenses. Mexicans are the dominant espoused immigrant crime offenders.

The recent Texas 88th legislative session demonstrated the inhumanity, illegality, and waste of taxpayer dollars by proposing and passing more severe anti-immigrant bills - SB4, SB6, SB11, HB4, and HB6. Texas nativist and right-wing political leadership is determined to seize federal immigration responsibility and policy illegally.

In his book, "Defending Latina/o Immigrant Communities: The Xenophobic Era of Trump and Beyond," Alvaro Huerta focuses on re-framing their contributions from that of the most vilified and scapegoated groups in the United States. Instead, Latino immigrants must be viewed as productive members of the U.S. and debunked the xenophobic tropes, lies, and myths about them.

The book provides a Latino contribution narrative through a composite of over forty essays written over ten years. While the narrative is a significant voice to counter and educate many from the endless xenophobic narratives, history is clear that Latino immigrants are not criminals, social burdens, and national security threats. The real threat to America has been the regular recurrence of xenophobic and duplicitous immigration policies and their abuse dating back a hundred years.

Texas's immigrant population is over five billion, representing 17.3% of the state population, of which 61% are between the ages of 16 and 64. Three billion of the immigrant population are

U.S.-born residents living with at least one immigrant parent. They fill critical worker shortages across the skills spectrum, from high-tech positions to agriculture, construction, hospitality, and service jobs. Over 437 thousand immigrants are entrepreneurs generating business income of twelve billion dollars. Immigrant household income totals $187.4 billion, their spending power is 142 billion, and they contribute 45.4 billion in taxes.[1]

Amnesty is a beginning pragmatic step in supporting a more inclusive and pro-immigrant policy agenda. Voters support creating a path to citizenship and other protections for immigrants.[2] The top ten reasons for this policy path are:

1. Immigrants will continue to help make America better. Their labor across many industries continues to be the underbelly of economic growth.
2. Immigrants represent the best example of a strong work ethic, contributing more as productive citizens than they have either asked for or been given by America.
3. Immigrants are resilient regardless of integration barriers and add to America's growing diversity and character strengths.
4. Many policymakers, right-wing elements, and racists unjustly scapegoat immigrants.
5. Immigration is problematic because of weak enforcement of current laws, business worker exploitation, and political/policy whims and discriminatory rationalizations influenced by America's economic and social conditions.
6. Since the early 1900s, American policymaking has demonstrated the abuse and marginalization of immigrants, particularly from Mexico.
7. Indigenous Mexicans inhabited the Americas as natives long before White Europeans.
8. Mexican and Mexican American lands were stolen, and their history was assaulted and nearly ameliorated.
9. Mexicans, as a people, were born of determination and dignity despite the experience of conquest, genocide, and rape.
10. They are part of a proud and advanced ancestry dating back to the Mayans, Incas, Toltecs, and Aztecs – they are me.

Amnesty, with a human rights and cost-effective foundation, can end decades of immigrant injustice and lead to realistic immigration policy.

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[1] https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/texas/
[2] https://www.immigrantjusticefund.org/press/2022/2/28/new-poll-shows-majority-of-likely-voters-support-bold-action-on-immigration