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## Letters to the Editor

### Border patrol is too dismissive



Letters to the Editor

Published: April 26, 2016 6:13 pm

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Sarah Saldana  
(Jae S. Lee/The Dallas Morning News)

Re: “Securing the U.S. border safely and humanely — Sarah Saldaña says ICE carries out judges’ orders and protects women, kids,” Friday Viewpoints.

In her essay, Immigration and



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Customs Enforcement director Saldaña says that newly arrived immigrants and refugees receive a “full opportunity to pursue a claim of asylum or other humanitarian relief.” Yet most of the Guatemalans, Hondurans and Salvadorans who’ve arrived in recent years have been subject to “expedited removal,” which provides no right to see a judge and no access to “humanitarian relief” of any kind.

The fault doesn’t lie with Saldaña’s agency so much as with Customs and Border Protection. When CBP arrests a noncitizen at or near our borders, they must ascertain whether the immigrant fears returning to her country. Too often, they don’t. Human Rights Watch and the ACLU rightly point to the absurdity of CBP’s claim that roughly 95 percent of the Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans it arrests expressly disavow any fear of returning to nations that vie for the highest per capita murder rate on earth.

Saldaña may justly take pride in establishing an Office of Community Engagement. But the “thoughtful scrutiny” she invites will be deservedly savage so long as her agency remains complicit with CBP, summarily deporting refugees who’ve been illegally deprived of the right to seek refuge here.

*Paul Zoltan, Dallas/Lakewood*



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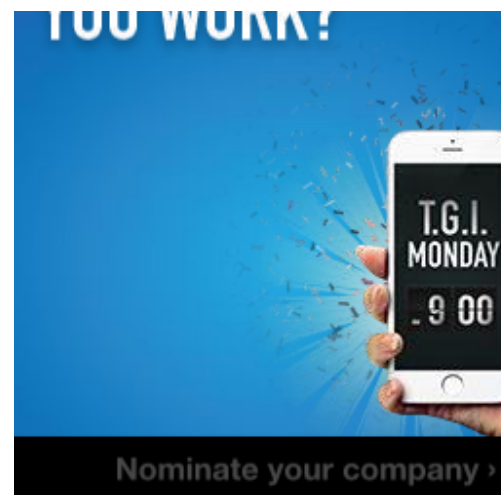
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We welcome and read all letters from readers, and we salute those people willing to sign their names to their opinions. The letters chosen for publication are a representative sampling of the opinions shared with us. We include all published letters on this blog and encourage readers to engage in a civil debate: Attack ideas, if you like, but not one another.

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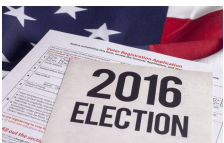
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 **Diogenes** 4 hours ago

"Human Rights Watch and the ACLU rightly point to the absurdity of CBP's claim that roughly 95 percent of the Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans it arrests expressly disavow any fear of returning to nations that vie for the highest per capita murder rate on earth."

If Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans were truly motivated by fear of violence in their own countries so much that they are willing to illegally sneak into another country why wouldn't they simply stop in the first relatively safe adjacent country? Mexico is a spanish speaking country AND it is that much closer to their home countries AND the cultures are much more similar. Could it be that fear of crime in their native countries isn't so much a motivating factor as are "yobs" and first world amenities available in Los Estados Unidos? One would think that even the most dim-witted, amnesty advocate realizes that the United States cannot absorb every single destitute person from Latin America who simply walks across our southern border and claims to be fleeing so kind of persecution.

The true absurdity comes from shyster immigration lawyers attempting to pad their client lists and pocketbooks by convincing illegal aliens about to be deported to claim that they actually came United States because they are fleeing crime and fear for their lives. Everyone, including the shysters and illegal aliens, understand full well what brought them specifically to the United States.

3  Like Reply



**Petenelson277**

3 hours ago

Is Mexico a relatively safe place, to you?

You might Google up the issues of safety for those migrating through Mexico.

1  Like Reply



**Bob\_H**

22 minutes ago

**@Petenelson277** would you consider Chicago a safe place or maybe Detroit, Houston, Baltimore and countless other cities in the US safe....they need to fix their problems in their countries or origin instead of exporting them to the USA>>>Thank you and no reply necessary.

1  Like Reply



**CarlosMartinez**

17 minutes ago

**@Petenelson277** Ok. then, the bottom line is that this boat is full. We simply do not have enough people working to support the masses of people arriving. In fact, this is a sinking boat. There now, it is that simple. They either need to shelter in place, or find another place, such as Argentina, Chile, Ecuador. The U.S. is simply not the only safe haven in the world.

Like Reply

**EricStengel1**

18 hours ago



This is the million dollar question, isn't it Mr. Zoltan? Of course your view is biased as an immigration attorney since the majority of your income is made from humanitarian NGOs that receive federal funding in contracts each FY to run the immigration game. One point you fail to mention is the statistic of those violent perps that enter the US illegally. I am sure there are many "refugees" intent on damaging the sovereignty of our borders through drug smuggling, money laundering, trafficking of humans, etc. Of course, another majority are those that grow tired of living in a third world country and don't have the luxury of living in the Lakewood area of Dallas...

3 Like Reply



**BrianBaldwin**

4 hours ago

**@EricStengel1** You seem to be talking about something quite different than Zoltan, namely crime. Zoltan is talking about the lack of opportunity to discover and prove that there is a danger to a person in returning him/her that is present in "expedited removal", and more: that the statistics CBP uses to justify its practices seem an unrealistic representation of the situation. Human and drug smuggling are crimes, but it's no crime to be in danger where you live from crime, political oppression and poverty. Those are humanitarian concerns and our laws supposedly protect people arriving at our borders from being put back into such extreme jeopardy. Expedited removal, if it prevents a reasonable effort to discover whether returning an individual is safe might not be following the law. That's what Zoltan is talking about.

I doubt Zoltan would have a problem with the expedited removal of human and drug smugglers or violent criminals, as long as there is reasonable evidence of the person's involvement in these things. What would be questionable is an expedited removal process that intentionally or unintentionally shortchanges reasonable time and effort in the gathering, analysis and presentation of evidence and skips straight to removal. Zoltan claims that is happening in present CBP practices.

I question the relevance of statistics on human and drug smugglers and violent criminals you say Zoltan ignores. These seem to me separate matters from humanitarian concerns and dealt with quite separately in intent, law, and in practice.

Like Reply



**EricStengel1**

2 hours ago

**@BrianBaldwin @EricStengel1** No Brian, I am not speaking of something different, but rather closely related in regard to due process and which

governmental organization has direct oversight for the influx of OTMS into the US. Obviously, manpower and finances will always be an issue at securing the border and is a hot topic as reflected in the GOP debates. Should ICE or CBP be in charge of this oversight per the current directives? Also, poverty is not a crime unless it can be demonstrated that such oppression is a result of being made to participate in a particular "social group" per US Citizenship and Immigration Services current code. If you would like some statistics in regard to crime, here are some from a recent DHS press release: "The number of convicted criminals removed from the interior continued to increase, as 91 percent of ICE's FY 2015 interior removals and returns were individuals who were previously convicted of a crime, compared to 86 percent in FY 2014, and just 67 percent in FY 2011." "

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In FY 2015, CBP officers at ports of entry arrested 8,246 people wanted for serious crimes, including murder, rape, assault, and robbery. Officers also stopped 225,342 inadmissible individuals from entering the United States through ports of entry, an increase of 14 percent from FY 2014."

"Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson made the following statement concerning these numbers:

*"Last year's removal and return statistics are characterized primarily by three things: first, last year's removal numbers reflect this Department's increased focus on prioritizing convicted criminals and threats to public safety, border security and national security. Second, the removal numbers were driven by the dramatic decrease in those apprehended at the border in FY 2015 -- 337,117 -- the second lowest apprehension number since 1972, reflecting a lower level of attempted illegal migration at our borders. Third, to improve the transparency of our efforts, for the second year in a row, we are releasing the immigration statistics of CBP and ICE together, rather than piecemeal, to provide a single, clear snapshot of our overall immigration enforcement picture."*

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2015/12/22/dhs-releases-end-fiscal-year-2015-statistics>

2   Like Reply



**EricStengel1**

1 hour ago

@EricStengel1 @BrianBaldwin - poverty is

not a legitimate reason (not crime) as stated above

2  Like Reply



**BrianBaldwin**

53 minutes ago

**@EricStengel1 @BrianBaldwin** You've thoughtfully posted the director's remarks before. (And I appreciate them and the statistical information provided.) I'm struck by how the statistics reflect the administration's prioritization of resources that directs them at criminals. They seem to me to show the success of the very thing Republicans are fighting in court and call "lawless", yet appear to be working by removing higher numbers of criminals. Nonetheless, some remain focused on removing all aliens here illegally and oppose anything short of that goal.

My point reflects yours, but tries to focus on purely humanitarian concerns -- distinct from criminal activities -- for those innocent of any crime other than crossing the border illegally to escape untenable conditions, who, if returned to their homelands, would be in grave danger. It is not a focus on criminal elements but on the innocent escaping conditions of inhumane danger. It is a focus reflecting my belief that these concerns are meritable and should not be short changed in practice.

Like Reply



**Bob\_H**

17 minutes ago

**@BrianBaldwin** Maybe they should try to change the culture instead of fleeing and allowing it to flourish...or it will never change...just like it hasn't in the last 50 years...

Like Reply



**CarlosMartinez**

15 minutes ago

**@BrianBaldwin @EricStengel1** Enough already. We simply cannot take in anymore. They need to shelter in

place.

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