

Straw Men Arguments Used to Promote Sanctuary Status and Amnesty in Maryland

CASA of Maryland, the taxpayer funded illegal alien support group, with help from most of Maryland's federal, state and local elected officials, continues to push for continued sanctuary status and total amnesty for all residing without legal presence in our state. CASA, the local affiliate of the National Council of La Raza, uses many of the flawed arguments below when discussing immigration issues. Maryland's citizens should be aware of the disinformation be disseminated by our elected officials, CASA of Maryland, Catholic Charities, Centro Familia, Identity Inc. and other illegal alien support groups.

1- Civil Rights Abuses – To undercut successful state and local police and sheriffs' use of the 287g program, which assists the federal government in the investigation, apprehension and detention of illegal aliens.

Amnesty Supporter Argument - Increases the risk of racial profiling and leads to civil rights violations.

Correct Answer – It is absurd and insulting to suggest that 287g trained police and sheriffs (Frederick County, Maryland), who regularly interact with the public to enforce a huge range of criminal statutes, would somehow begin to start violating peoples' civil rights using 287g authorities.

- Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials carefully train and monitor law enforcement agencies granted 287g authorities. We are not aware of any 287g related civil rights violations.

- The Supreme Court ruled in 1996 that the fact that many illegal immigrants fall into specific racial categories (Latino/Hispanic), and arrests of illegal immigrants reflect those categories, it does not mean that civil rights violations have occurred.

2- Strained Resources - To undercut successful state and local law enforcements' use of the 287g program. 287g assists the federal government in the investigation, apprehension and detention of illegal aliens.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Will strain law enforcements (police and sheriffs) ability to carry out other important law enforcement functions.

Correct Answer – 287g is a voluntary program. With state and local demand for the 287g Program growing so fast, the Department of Homeland Security has had to reject many applicants due to limited funding available. Our police chiefs and sheriffs are intelligent enough to know if 287g would detract from their other public safety duties (Montgomery and Prince George's Counties excluded).

- We are not aware of any jurisdiction dropping out of the 287g program due to workload, but there is plenty of evidence pointing to declining crime rates in jurisdictions utilizing 287g. Compare declining crime statistics in Frederick County, Maryland (uses 287g) with rising rates for Baltimore City, Montgomery County and Prince George's County.

- Getting illegal aliens/day laborers/gang members off our streets and out of Maryland will lower crime rates and gang violence, freeing up law enforcement/corrections resources for other activities.

3 – Serious Criminals – To avoid arresting and deporting large numbers of illegal aliens, some suggest that Immigration and Customs Enforcement should focus on finding and deporting serious criminal aliens only after they have committed a “serious” crime and to the exclusion of other immigration enforcement.

Amnesty Supporter Argument - Identity theft, Social Security fraud, vandalism, public intoxication, driving while under the influence, and other crimes are all “minor” offenses to be ignored.

Correct Answer – A better approach is to comprehensively identify and work to deport illegal immigrants for their violation of immigration law, rather than waiting to identify them after they have committed a more “serious” crime.

- Aggressively checking the “legal presence” of all those in contact with Maryland law enforcement will improve the quality of life for all Maryland citizens. Maryland law enforcement and corrections officials should not play “Russian Roulette” with the safety of Maryland's citizens.

4 – Family Separation – To focus totally on what happens to illegal alien families when immigration laws are enforced, regardless of benefits to Maryland's citizens, our economy and overall quality of life.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Attempts to sell this “heartbreaking” position as if the only option for illegal immigrant parents who are caught breaking law is the separation from their children.

Correct Answer – Children can travel to their parents' home countries as a complete family and the U.S. Government may even cover the cost of travel. El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico welcome the children of illegal aliens currently residing in the U.S. as citizens of their parents' home countries.

- A significant number of illegal immigrants come to the U.S. alone, leaving family behind in their native country, a “heartbreaking” situation in Mexico and Central America. Many villages have few men left as they have migrated to Maryland looking for jobs. This causes untold social and economic disruption in Latin America.

- These “hard-working, family oriented people” are needed in their home countries to improve local economic and social development. Let’s work together to unite families in their native countries in a dignified and orderly fashion.

- Illegal immigrants knowingly broke our laws and entered Maryland. They need to take full responsibility for their actions.

5 – Detention – To raise alternatives to ICE detention facilities because they work too well. Those in ICE custody and ordered deported actually leave Maryland and the U.S.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Recommends so-called “alternatives to detention” such as electronic monitoring or telephone reporting. Also pushes for “more rights” for the illegal aliens including comprehensive medical and dental care, and an array of comforts.

Correct Answer - Non-detention solutions do not work as the majority of those ordered deported disappear as they have no real ties to the Maryland community. Why would one think that individuals that broke our laws to come here illegally in the first place will automatically comply with our laws after they are caught and ordered to leave? Montgomery County Police estimate that half of the 14,000 outstanding warrants have Hispanic surnames.

- As the vast majority of illegal aliens are only in ICE custody for 31 days, there is no need to waste taxpayer dollars on a comprehensive medical program beyond an initial medical screening. Those that stay longer are usually fighting their inevitable deportation.

- Maryland taxpayers are not obligated to provide comprehensive, non-emergency, medical care which can be obtained once the illegal alien is returned to their home country. Note - Only in Montgomery County, Maryland do our lawless politicians provide comprehensive, non-emergency medical care to illegal aliens and their families (Montgomery Cares Program”).

6 – Flawed Verification System – To maintain a system which allows illegal aliens the ability to gain employment at the expense of U.S. citizens and legal immigrants.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Claims that E-Verify, the federal government’s system that enables employers to hire legal workers while screening out others, is fatally flawed.

Correct Answer – More than 115,000 companies nation-wide successfully use the E-Verify system. The system confirms 99.6% of work-eligible employees, a success rate that any company would be pleased to have. The E-Verify system provides a response to employers within minutes of entering data provided by the employee.

- With millions of American citizens currently out of work, E-Verify should become mandatory for all employers in Maryland and across the United States.

7 – Out of the Shadows – Another “compassionate plea” to justify sanctuary status and amnesty for illegal aliens in Maryland.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Claims that illegal alien families live an underground, crime-ridden, poverty-filled existence one step away from law enforcement and deportation. These poor, downtrodden and abused persons need to be brought out of the shadows of society.

Correct Answer – The only thing we need to get illegal aliens out of is our wallets! Far from living in the shadows, Maryland’s illegal aliens openly: attend our schools and colleges, utilize our hospitals, frequent Day Laborer centers to seek employment while paying no taxes, drive cars with legal drivers’ licenses, purchase homes, receive services ranging from housing assistance, welfare, energy subsidies, food assistance, and use services provided by taxpayer subsidized CASA of MD, Catholic Charities, Identity Inc, Centro Familia and the Latino Economic Development Corporation. Some of Maryland’s illegal aliens actually vote in elections and serve as jurors, both against the law.

8 – Too Many Immigrants to Deport – To create a defacto amnesty by arguing it would be too expensive and traumatic to deport Maryland’s 250,000 illegal aliens.

Amnesty Supporter Argument – Claims that so many illegals have roots in the community that Maryland can ill afford to quickly and forcibly remove them.

Correct Answer – Maryland’s illegal alien population was established over many years by State and local government policies and programs which attracted and sustained their unlawful presence. Drivers’ licenses, Day Laborer Centers and employment opportunities, social and comprehensive medical programs, funding for illegal alien support groups like CASA of Maryland and Catholic Charities and lax enforcement of federal immigration laws, all worked as a magnet to bring illegal aliens to our state.

- With the recent elimination of drivers’ licenses for those without legal presence in Maryland, a major illegal alien attraction has disappeared. This needs to be followed up state-wide utilization of the federal E-Verify program for all Maryland businesses which will eliminate almost all employment opportunities for illegal alien workers.

- Combine E-Verify with improved cooperation with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, stricter enforcement of immigration laws, termination of illegal alien targeted social and comprehensive medical programs, and Maryland’s illegal alien population will steadily self-deport to their native homelands.

- Maryland’s tax dollars, jobs, government services and programs must be reserved for only those with legal presence in our State!

The information above is based in part on an article written by Representative Lamar Smith (R-Texas) ranking Republican member of the House Judiciary Committee, Human Events, May 4, 2009.