

FACT SHEET

HOW THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION IS PRIMING ITS CASE TO CONGRESS FOR MORE MONEY — AND WHY WE CAN'T FALL FOR IT

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According to [recent reports](#), Congress is considering legislation that would significantly expand federal agencies' capacity to implement President Trump's mass deportation agenda. The Senate is currently considering \$175 billion for border enforcement and \$175 billion for interior enforcement through the partisan reconciliation processes to operationalize his [Day 1 Executive Orders](#). This funding is on top of the annual appropriations funding which, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, awarded [nearly \\$30 billion](#) to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). If Congress accedes to this demand, the consequences will extend far beyond budget numbers: enhanced enforcement capacity will have profound effects on American families, businesses, and communities.

Congress has a vital role in the upcoming budget debate. The actions of our lawmakers in the weeks and months ahead will mean the difference between mitigating or exacerbating harms faced by millions of Americans living in mixed-status households, and these actions will shape the nation's broader economic and social landscape for years to come. Meanwhile, Trump's aggressive immigration enforcement policy—driven by political pressure to produce results—is reviving controversial practices, such as arrests of innocent bystanders and families, and for the first time in recent memory is being dictated by arbitrary enforcement quotas. The importance of the interplay between the two – the policy and purse – cannot be overstated.

WHAT CAN \$350 BILLION BUY?

In FY2024, ICE and CBP received nearly \$30 billion in appropriated funds which already represented [historical highs](#) for the agencies. In addition to these funds, DHS is pulling funding from the Department of Defense and even using facilities in Guantanamo Bay to detain immigrants. DHS can further increase its reach if Congress provides additional funding through the reconciliation process. Through reconciliation, the Trump administration could double or triple its budget from the FY 2024 funding levels even though [border encounters may remain low](#). Below are examples of ways this could hurt American families and immigrant communities:

- ▶ **Multiply ICE's Deportation Capacity.** In FY2024, Congress appropriated over [\\$9.1 Billion to ICE](#), with \$8.7 Billion of it direct to the agency's core operations. Funding via budget reconciliation could easily double ICE's operations over the next decade, with money to spare.
- ▶ **Vast Expansion of Detention Capacity.** In his FY2021 budget request (the [last of his first term](#)), Trump requested funding to support 60,000 beds. Reconciliation and transfers of funding from the Department of Defense could allow his administration to easily meet (or exceed) this figure. For context, ICE's FY2025 funding request, asked for enough funding to sustain 34,000 adult detention beds at an [average daily rate of \\$164.65 per bed](#) (or about \$5.6 million).
- ▶ **More Deportation Officers.** Today, ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) has a [workforce of over 8,500](#) employees, including more than 6,100 deportation officers and 750 enforcement removal assistants. Reconciliation could allow the President to [hire over 10,000](#) more deportation officers. In FY2021, he requested [over half a billion](#) dollars to hire 1,264 ERO officers.

- ▶ **Funding the Border Wall.** Reconciliation could create a 10 year, multibillion dollar slush fund for the wall – a project that has been associated with [fraud](#), [kickbacks](#), and [ineffectiveness](#). In his FY2021 budget proposal, the Trump administration requested [\\$2 billion for the construction](#) of approximately 82 miles of a new border wall system. Annualized over a decade this could amount to over \$20 billion dollars.
- ▶ **Possible Kickback to the State Conducting Immigration Enforcement?** Texas Governor Greg Abbott and his allies in Congress are agitating for the federal government to [pay Texas \\$11 billion](#) for its shadow immigration enforcement efforts. This might kick off a new trend among the states, bolstered by the DHS Secretary January 23, 2025 “[Finding a Mass Influx of Aliens](#)” based on a little used provision of the immigration laws that allows the Secretary to “request assistance from a State or local government in the administration of the immigration laws of the United States” under certain specified circumstances. Under [this law](#), the federal government may “provide funding to a state or local government relating to such assistance from the [Immigration Emergency Fund](#) or other funding available for such purposes.”

INDISCRIMINATE CHAOTIC ENFORCEMENT CAUSING FEAR IN THE COMMUNITY IS THE POINT AND TRUMP WANTS CONGRESS TO BANKROLL IT.

Trump's return to chaotic and indiscriminate immigration enforcement is unsurprising, but the new quota system prioritizing quantity over quality marks a significant shift. The Washington Post was first to report that in its first days in office the Trump White House [imposed quotas](#) on ICE field offices of 1,200 to 1,500 daily arrests—about 75 per office—framing these numbers as “a floor, not a ceiling.” In the weeks since, [frustration over low deportation](#) figures has intensified pressure on agents and led to [reassignment of senior ICE officials](#), despite significant operational challenges like the threat of litigation, logistical constraints, and resistance from local jurisdictions with community trust policies in force. It should come as no surprise that the administration is exploring increasingly aggressive tactics to meet its escalating enforcement goals.

In an effort to meet that threshold, [observers](#) are concerned [ICE will be incentivized](#) to go after the low-hanging fruit while eschewing more resource intensive but more serious public safety threats. Indeed, arrests of individuals without criminal convictions are [already driving up numbers](#). This seems to be taken out of the playbook from the first year of the Trump's last administration when ICE interior removals of people without criminal convictions [nearly tripled](#) from 5,014 to 13,744 between FY2016 and FY2017, respectively. Similarly, so-called “collateral arrests,” are expected to play a crucial role in meeting new enforcement quotas. These occur when ICE agents, while pursuing specific targets, detain others they encounter who may be in violation of immigration laws. There is a [significant track record](#) demonstrating that increased aggressive enforcement will result in more undocumented individuals with strong community ties and no criminal history being ensnared in immigration enforcement.

Trump's Day 1 Executive Orders and accompanying quota system has significantly broadened ICE's scope, making unauthorized immigrants without criminal convictions increasingly vulnerable. Still, the gap between political expectations and operational realities has created additional pressure on enforcement agencies like ICE to increase numbers and may lead to even more aggressive enforcement tactics to boost overall deportation figures. At the same time, these agencies still must contend with legal challenges on constitutional and other grounds, logistical constraints in processing large numbers of cases, and navigating partnerships with local jurisdictions that narrowly tailor their collaboration with ICE. This time around, the Trump administration is more fully aware of these guardrails and will look to Congress in the coming weeks and months for help removing due process protections and other guardrails.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT'S AT STAKE

Expanding immigration enforcement through increased congressional funding would have profound and far-reaching consequences for American families and immigrant communities alike. The revival of aggressive enforcement tactics, particularly collateral arrests, has instilled deep fear and uncertainty among an [entire generation of American children](#) and their families, making even routine activities fraught with risk. Parents are increasingly avoiding school functions, families hesitate to seek medical care, and community members withdraw from public life to avoid potential encounters with immigration authorities. This climate of fear isolates entire communities, eroding trust in institutions and creating long-term social disengagement that affects not only unauthorized immigrants but also legal residents and U.S. citizens. Moreover, to facilitate this retrograde vision for America, the Trump Administration's plan to pay for it involves [cutting critical services for working Americans](#).

The economic repercussions are just as severe. Businesses that rely on immigrant labor—such as construction, agriculture, and service industries—are facing workforce shortages as employees become reluctant to travel to and from work. Investment giant Goldman Sachs has cautioned that Trump's immigration restrictionism could [cost the U.S. GDP between 0.3 to 0.4 percentage points](#) (for context, U.S. GDP growth was 2.8% in 2024). The threats of deportation also put at risk [over \\$256 billion in purchasing power](#) held by undocumented immigrants, either by deportation itself or by preparations families are making in the event of it.

Perhaps most devastating is the impact on mixed-status families that form the backbone of many American communities. A household may include a father who has lived in the U.S. for two decades working as a machinist, a mother with temporary protected status who manages a small business, and their three U.S. citizen children. When a parent is detained in a collateral arrest, those ripple effects extend far beyond that single household. Local businesses lose valued employees, schools lose engaged parents, and places of worship lose community leaders. For children, the loss of a parent can mean psychological trauma, educational setbacks, and economic hardship that can shape their futures for years to come. Increased funding for enforcement does not just affect those targeted—it destabilizes entire communities, threatening the very fabric of American society.

CONGRESS SHOULD CONSIDER THE COMMUNITY IMPACT OF THIS FUNDING

The return to expansive enforcement practices, driven by an express quota system and facilitated by aggressive tactics like collateral arrests, marks a new wrinkle in American immigration policy. Moreover, the political pressure to increase deportation numbers further intensifies the risk to those directly targeted by the Trump administration and creates widespread uncertainty in immigrant communities. As these policies continue to unfold, their impacts on families, communities, and the broader economy are likely to intensify, raising important questions about the balance between enforcement objectives and community stability. The disconnect between political expectations and operational realities suggests that enforcement practices may become even more aggressive as agencies attempt to meet demanding deportation targets.

In the weeks ahead Congress will have its say on these issues. Before voting to expand enforcement funding, lawmakers must consider the faces of those affected: the honor student who would lose her father, the small business that would lose its owner, the church that would lose its community leader. These are not just stories – they are the reality of what expanded enforcement funding would mean for American communities. The question is not simply about immigration enforcement – it's about the kind of country we want to be and the values we choose to uphold.