

# In-Class Assignment #2.5: Population & Migration

## Mexico & USA Borders

### Contemporary World 504



#### Topic

The September 17, 2009 issue of “The Economist” magazine had an article called “The continuing crackdown”. This article states how “state and local authorities can have some of their officers trained to enforce immigration laws”. The issue is that “the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) wants more people to use section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act”.

#### Assignment Instructions

Use the article below, your prior knowledge and information from your unit 2 notes to write a 500-word double-spaced thesis essay giving your position on this issue. Be sure to include a thesis statement and to write **pros and cons** of such a policy. Also include many terms and concepts from unit 2. Your essay must clearly demonstrate your understanding of “population and migration”.

#### Illegal immigration

#### The continuing crackdown

Sep 17th 2009 | AUSTIN  
From The Economist print edition

#### Some local authorities are keen to help rumble illegal immigrants

FULL-SCALE immigration reform is clearly on the back-burner. But the Obama administration has been tinkering with immigration policy all year, and now it has announced another tweak. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) wants more people to use section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The programme, commonly known as 287(g), says that state and local authorities can have some of their officers trained to enforce immigration laws. Over the past several years 66 state and local agencies have signed up, from the Missouri Highway Patrol to the police department of Framingham, Massachusetts. Nobody likes criminal aliens and Janet Napolitano, the secretary of homeland security, reckons that 287(g) is an effective “force multiplier.” But expanding the use of 287(g) is turning out to be rather unpopular.

The idea is that police and sheriffs can help the feds capture the bad guys. In practice 287(g) has suffered from mission creep. A report in January from the Government Accountability Office found that the programme lacked internal controls, with the result that the extra 287(g) officers were gumming up the works by catching minor traffic-offenders rather than genuinely criminal aliens. Many activists had hoped that Mr Obama would end the programme. Instead, his administration has embraced it.



Calling for help

Getty Images

The announcement has also outraged immigrant-rights advocates and civil-liberties groups. They maintain that 287(g) is arbitrary and punitive. Marielena Hincapié, the executive director of the National Immigration Law Centre, argues that it actually makes communities less safe because it weakens an already strained relationship between undocumented people and law-enforcers. Crime victims and witnesses are likely to be reluctant to come forward if they fear that they may be deported for their pains.

Section 287(g) is also vulnerable to abuse. One of the programme’s biggest fans is Joe Arpaio, the notoriously tough sheriff of Maricopa County in Arizona. He is under investigation by the Justice Department on allegations that his version of law-enforcement involves racial profiling—picking on Hispanics, in short. Anything that mixes up illegal-immigrant control with ordinary policing clearly runs that risk. Expanding enforcement—or so the president’s critics say—is a poor substitute for full-scale reform. ■