



Springfield Immigrant
Advocacy Network

SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL

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CRIME DATA RELATED TO CITIZENS AND IMMIGRANTS

Violent crime rates, especially for homicide in large cities, have fallen sharply, after a surge during the pandemic. Some, however, use anecdotal examples to make an emotional case against undocumented immigrants.

Foreign-born individuals do not commit crime at a disproportionately higher rate than native-born individuals. For over 150 years, immigrants have never been incarcerated at a greater rate than those born in the United States. Beginning in 1960, the incarceration gap widened - immigrants today are 60% less likely to be incarcerated than the U.S.-born. Below are links to studies led by Northwestern University and Stanford University.

[Immigrants are significantly less likely to commit crimes than the U.S.-born - Northwestern Now](#)

<https://siepr.stanford.edu/news/mythical-tie-between-immigration-and-crime>

Few people are murderers, and undocumented immigrants are statistically less likely to be murderers. Any murderer should be arrested, tried, convicted, and punished to the fullest extent of the law, regardless of their immigration status. At the same time, we should understand that immigration is simply not tied to homicide rates.

We cannot expect the statistics to comfort individuals affected by violent crime. But we should examine why some would promote such a connection with immigrants, and why we would be inclined to believe them.

ILLINOIS LEGISLATION: ILLINOIS WAY FORWARD

- 1. SB 1596 expanded protections against immigrant communities by amending the Criminal Code of 2012 to include hate crimes based on citizenship and immigration status.** The changes also assist law enforcement officials in identifying and reporting anti-immigrant hate crimes separate from other hate crimes, including to the FBI hate crimes database. It enhances penalties for certain crimes by classifying them as **hate crimes if they were motivated, even in part, by the victim's actual or perceived immigration or citizenship status.** This bill responded in part to an alarming spike in hate crimes against many groups, including Asian Americans during the pandemic.
- 2. SB 2665 establishes an Illinois Immigration Impact Task Force to study how state policies and programs affect immigrant residents.** The Task Force consists of 27 members and requires the Department of Human Services to staff and examine issues. This is really important considering that in Illinois, and primarily in Chicago, we have received over 30,000 Ukrainian refugees, and about 25,000 Venezuelan asylum and refugee applicants.