

OPERATION STREAMLINE FACTS

- Operation Streamline is a program of *en masse*, fast-track criminal prosecution of immigrants in federal courts along most sectors of the U.S.-Mexico border.
- Operation Streamline began in Del Rio, Texas, on December 16, 2005 and was expanded to Tucson in 2008. At the height of the program, Streamline was operating in six of nine sectors on the southern U.S. border with Mexico, in every state on that border but California. It continues to operate in the Tucson, Del Rio, and Laredo sectors today.
- Charges include 8 U.S.C. § 1325 (illegal entry) and/or 8 U.S.C. § 1326 (reentry after deportation), depending on jurisdiction. The District of Arizona leads the nation in prosecutions for reentry after deportation; the Southern and then Western Districts of Texas lead in prosecutions for illegal entry.
- In Tucson, up to 70 people appear in court for the first time, plead guilty, and are sentenced in one mass court appearance lasting two hours or less. All of the defendants receive sentences of between 30 and 180 days in prison. Defendants are shackled during court proceedings.
- Operation Streamline defendants serve their sentences in publicly and privately operated federal prisons throughout the country. Frequently they are sent to a prison located far from their U.S. family and community.
- Personal belongings of Operation Streamline defendants, such as money and identification documents, are routinely confiscated by the Border Patrol upon arrest. Frequently these belongings are never returned. Migrants commonly find themselves deported after serving a prison sentence and stranded in a border city without their most critical possessions.
- Operation Streamline proceedings are rife with violations of defendants' legal rights, as well as abridgement of ethical rules and professional norms established for the legal profession.
- Streamlined people bear lifelong criminal records and severely damaged chances of ever being able to return to the United States with valid immigration status.

THE CRIMINALIZATION OF MIGRATION

- Statutes criminalizing illegal entry and re-entry were passed as part of the McCarran-Walter Act in 1952, but were rarely enforced before 1986. The vast majority of immigrants caught crossing the border without authorization before 2004 were returned or deported through the civil immigration system without criminal prosecution.
- Prosecutions climbed slowly throughout the 1990s and skyrocketed beginning in about 2004, largely as a result of Operation Streamline.
- About half of the individuals prosecuted in federal court *nationwide* in 2015—and *over* half of the individuals prosecuted in federal court in 2014—were prosecuted for crossing the border.
- Approximately 700,000 people have been prosecuted for illegal entry or re-entry, through Streamline or other prosecutions, since Operation Streamline began. Almost 70,000 migrants were criminally prosecuted at the border during federal fiscal year 2015 alone.
- The U.S. spent over \$5.5 billion dollars incarcerating criminally prosecuted immigrants between 2006 and 2011, including \$1.02 billion in 2011 **alone**. Private-prison companies made a profit of over \$246,561 *per day*— \$90 million per year—for incarcerating immigrants on criminal charges in 2011.
- Latinos now make up more than half of all those sentenced to federal prison, despite comprising only 17% of the country's population, largely because of the U.S. government's choice to prosecute large numbers of immigrants for crossing the border, as, contrary to stereotype, both crime and incarceration rates are consistently lower among immigrants than among the U.S.-born.
- The cost to the federal government of holding an immigrant in administrative detention is \$161 per day. Although exact figures are difficult to obtain, cost of incarcerating an immigrant on criminal charges is believed to be similar.
- The two largest U.S. private-prison companies, Corrections Corporation of America and GEO Group, Inc., received more than \$1.4 billion in revenue from federal government contracts in 2011—more than double the corresponding figure from 2005.
- The lobbying arms of private-prison companies provide large sums of campaign donations to federal lawmakers and presidential candidates. Corrections Corporation of America or individuals closely affiliated with that corporation have provided Arizona Senator John McCain with over \$30,000 in campaign donations during the course of his career.