



## **BORDER SECURITY IMPACTS OF EXECUTIVE ACTION**

President Obama's planned Executive Action on immigration has the potential to have a detrimental impact on border security. History has shown that a permissive interior enforcement environment coupled with the perception of amnesty, or a "permiso" becomes a powerful "pull-factor" that encourages more illegal immigration. As a result, we can expect a new wave of illegal immigrants to cross our borders, potentially overwhelming the Government's ability to deal with increased traffic, as was witnessed this summer with the surge of Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC).

When the Federal Government considers amnesty for certain populations of illegal immigrants, illegal border crossings rise sharply.<sup>1</sup> Spikes in illegal border crossings occurred in 1986 leading up to and after the passage of Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), in 2005/2006 when Congress began discussing immigration reform again, and again in 2013/2014 when deferred action for certain undocumented young people through a program called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

### **Key Points to Consider**

- Despite the fact that recent border crossers will not be eligible for relief under the Executive Orders, history has proven that illegal migration will likely rise as a result of this Executive Action.
- An influx of illegal immigration will further strain Border Patrol resources, making it much more difficult for agents to secure and achieve operational control of the border. Criminal aliens and terrorists may try to exploit the expected surge of new illegal crossers by slipping through the cracks.
- On November 6, **1986**, IRCA was passed.<sup>2</sup> In all, more than 3 million aliens applied for the programs intended to offer legal status primarily to people who were in the United States at the time when the bill passed. Despite the legislation's stipulation that only aliens who were lawfully in the United States since 1982 could apply for amnesty. During the year-long debate on IRCA, there was a 34% increase in the number of alien apprehensions from the previous record high in 1985.<sup>3</sup>
- On May 12, **2005**, the first major comprehensive immigration reform legislation (S.1033, McCain-Kennedy) since the passage of IRCA in 1986 was introduced. Of particular concern, during this period the U.S Border Patrol saw the first increase in apprehensions since 2001.

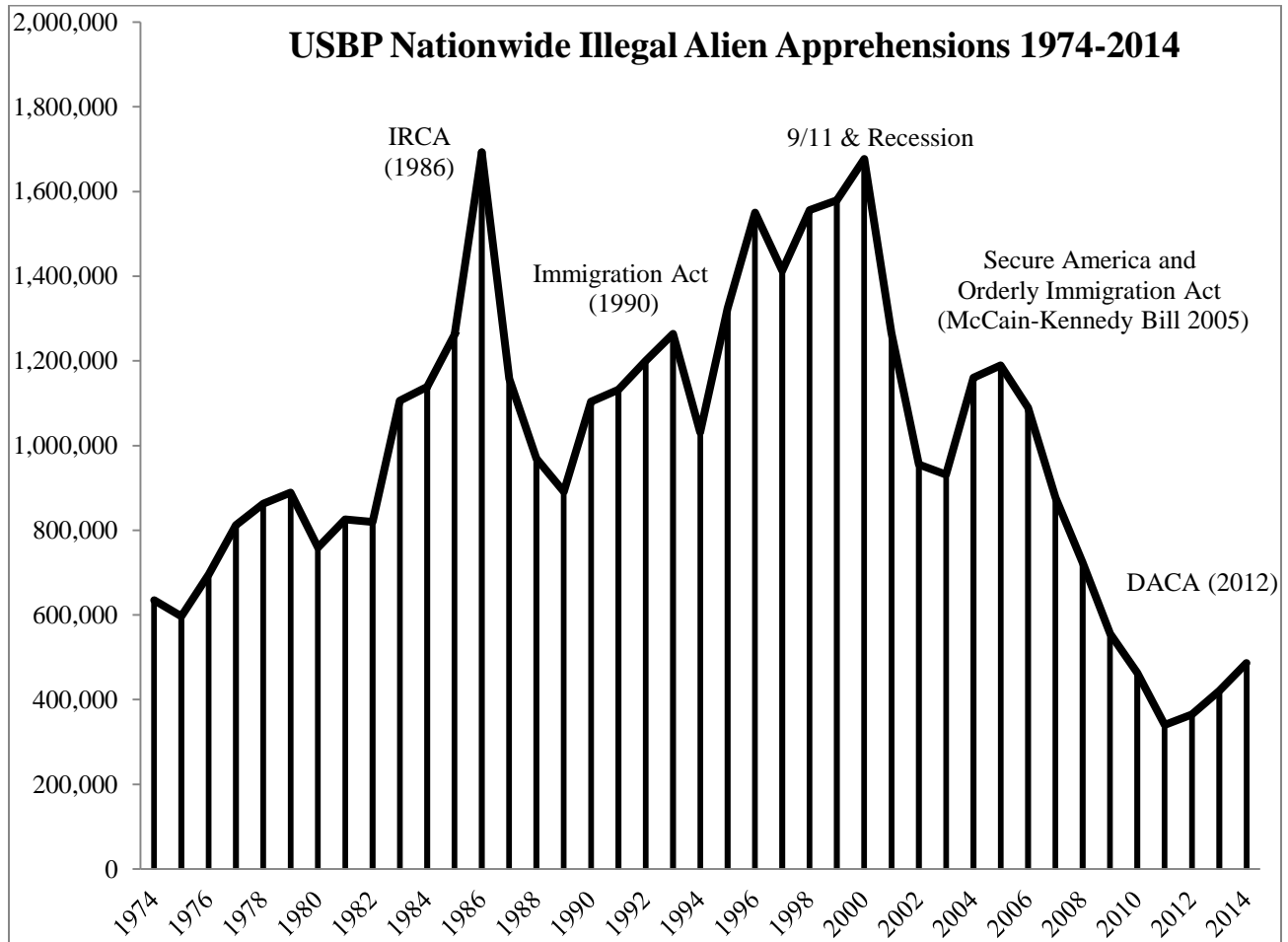
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<sup>1</sup> Findings are based upon staff interpretations of Border Patrol Apprehensions year by year.

<sup>2</sup> P.L. 99-603

<sup>3</sup> Data on Apprehensions based on Border Patrol Apprehensions from 1925-2010 provided by CBP.

- In July **2012**, then Secretary Janet Napolitano signed a memorandum calling for deferred action for certain undocumented young people through DACA. Perceptions of a relaxed enforcement environment in the United States led to a humanitarian crisis on the Southern border as more than 60,000 children from Central America illegally crossed the border. While these children would not be eligible for relief under DACA, it created an environment of confusion and misinformation that has contributed to the recent influx of UACs.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Sappenfield, Mark. "Illegal immigration: how 'humanitarian crisis' on border could hurt Obama." [The Christian Science Monitor](#).