

Trump's War on Migration

Although President Trump has frequently shifted positions on a number of topics, most recently criminal justice [reform](#), he has been steadfast in his immigration policy agenda. From the various [travel ban](#) attempts, [fundraising](#) for his wall, [increased](#) ICE raids, sending [troops](#) to the border to halt migrant caravans, [separating](#) families at the border, threatening [birthright](#) citizenship, and now attempting to revoke asylum for illegal immigrants—xenophobia has proved to be the hallmark of Trump's administration. Now the U.S. is not only constantly away at war, but there is a constant war to be fought on the home front as well—securing the border.

Trump's asylum ban is particularly pernicious, allowing only those who enter at a legal checkpoint the ability to request asylum. This means those who enter illegally would be automatically denied asylum, regardless of context. Had indigenous Native Americans taken up policies like Trump's, the pilgrims would have been denied refuge in America and returned to their European persecutors.

Connecting asylum to ports of entry trap threatened individuals into an even more precarious situation. Individuals fleeing violence from their home countries would be forced to risk possible indefinite detention at the U.S. border or even further [violence](#). At the San Ysidro border "People are often forced to wait in shelters or outdoor camps on the Mexican side, sometimes for [weeks](#)," which leaves refugees incredibly vulnerable. Funneling all asylum seekers towards a port of entry would further overwhelm our already under-resourced immigration system.

The Department of Justice claimed the ban "[aimed](#) to save lives by discouraging asylum seekers from making dangerous, unlawful border crossing." Effectively, the ban would force migrants to cross illegally and then be barred from refuge and asylum afterwards. Given the over-crowding, if everyone seeking asylum, applied as soon as they reached the border, many would inevitably be forced to return to their home country or illegally migrate into the U.S. anyway. The point of this proclamation is not to discourage dangerous immigration, but again to discourage immigration at all. This proclamation makes asylum a war of attrition; suffer through these obstacles or be denied any chance of safety.

California judge John S. Tigar has blocked the asylum ban, arguing that Trump cannot rewrite federal immigration nor "[impose](#) a condition that Congress has expressly forbidden." However, Tigar's ruling has only temporarily suspended the asylum ban until its December 19th hearing. Should the administration continue to push for this, it might follow a fate such as Trump's [travel ban](#) that was ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court. With a 5-4 conservative-leaning composition following Kavanaugh's confirmation, the Trump administration anticipates the Supreme Court will corroborate his xenophobic, fear-mongering agenda. Now more than ever, Democrats need to fortify themselves and push for federal immigration legislation. We need federal dollars to go towards more judges working on asylum cases, and speeding up the process rather than further overwhelming and debilitating it.

