

Attitudes Toward Illegal Immigration in the State of Connecticut

CT CITIZENS FOR IMMIGRATION CONTROL

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Background, Objectives and Methodology

Background and Objectives

Connecticut has been in the national news with Mayor John DeStefano's issuing of an ID Card for Illegal Aliens in the City of New Haven. This ID Card gained national media attention and sparked protests in New Haven.

Despite the importance of this issue to all citizens of Connecticut there have been no opinion polls taken among residents of Connecticut to determine their attitudes toward the ID Card or other issues of illegal immigration.

CTCIC conducted a small-scale opinion poll to answer this need.

Methodology

Sixty residents of greater New Haven were contacted via the telephone. Names were chosen at random from the telephone book of New Haven and surrounding towns.

The WATS Room of Rochelle, New Jersey and CTCIC volunteers each conducted approximately half the interviews.

All respondents were U.S. Citizens. Interviewing was conducted in November 2007.

While this study has a small sample, the findings comport with the study done by Sienna College in New York State. That study revealed that 72% of the respondents opposed Governor Spitzer's driver's licenses for illegals. In this survey, 68% of respondents did not want illegal immigrants to have driver's licenses.

CTCIC hopes this study will encourage other such studies of attitudes toward illegal immigration in the State of Connecticut.

Paul Streit
Co-director

Findings

1. Overall Attitudes

Two-thirds of the respondents agreed that illegal immigration is a serious problem in the State of Connecticut.

<u>Overall Attitude Toward Illegal Immigration</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Illegal immigration is a serious problem in the State of Connecticut	67%	23%	10%

Reasons for Agreeing

Respondents agreeing to this statement tended to give detailed explanations of the illegal immigration situation. (All verbatim comments are in the appendix.)

I see what's happening in other cities such as Stamford. Immigrants standing on corners for work. If they crossed the border illegally, they shouldn't be allowed to stand there. They are under cutting other people's opportunities on jobs.

We have too many illegal immigrants, not only in the state but the whole country. As illegal immigrants get benefits, hard working citizens are paying for them through our higher taxes.

They are illegal. I think all illegal immigrants should be arrested. They come here illegally. That is a felony. When you break the law you get arrested. They're here illegally and don't go to jail.

Reasons for Disagreeing

Reasons for disagreeing centered on three points: first, the respondent was not involved personally or negatively with illegal immigrants: second, CT was not a border state; and finally illegals had a right to make a living.

I disagree because I live in a building with diverse ethnic backgrounds and I don't have a problem with any of them. Therefore I see no threat they can cause.

Not a border state. More important issues. Not a border state. Illegal immigrants comprise a small percent of the total population. There are more important issues.

I just don't think it's a serious problem. Everyone has the right to work hard for their own living. I don't know what else to say.

2. Attitudes Toward Illegal Immigrants

Respondents respected illegal immigrants as "hard workers" and only a low percent believed that illegal immigrants "commit more than their share of crime." However, a large percent had no opinion on this issue.

This indicates that respondents have more problems with the effects of illegal "immigration" than they have with illegal "immigrants" themselves.

<u>Attitudes Toward Illegal Immigrants</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Illegal immigrants <u>are hard working.</u>	68%	6%	25%
Illegal immigrants <u>commit more</u> than their share of crime.	22%	37%	41%

3. Attitudes Toward Licenses, ID Cards and Sanctuary

Respondents were against illegal immigrants having driver's licenses.

Respondents did not want ID Cards for illegal immigrants and wanted the State to prohibit sanctuary cities.

<u>Driver's Licenses and ID Cards</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Illegal immigrants <u>should have</u> CT State Driver's Licenses.	27%	68%	5%
Local cities <u>should not issue</u> ID Cards to illegal immigrants.	63%	33%	4%
The Connecticut State Government should prohibit <u>sanctuary cities.</u>	67%	28%	8%

4. Attitudes Toward Affect on Local Towns

Respondents thought that illegal immigrants were an economic burden on towns and cities.

However, they were less sure about the specifics such as paying too much for children of illegals or lowering property values.

<u>Local Issues</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Local taxpayers <u>pay too much</u> for health care for illegal immigrants.	58%	30%	12%
Illegal immigrants <u>are a burden</u> on local towns and cities.	60%	27%	13%
Local taxpayers <u>pay too much</u> for educating children of illegal immigrants.	47%	33%	20%
Illegal immigrants <u>lower property values</u> in the neighborhood	38%	38%	24%

5. Attitudes Toward Economic Impact

Respondents had mixed and somewhat contradictory attitudes toward the overall impact of illegal immigrants.

Respondents disagreed that illegal immigration benefits Americans. However, they were split on whether illegal immigrants lower the wages of Americans.

In a contradiction, a majority of respondents agreed that illegal immigrants do “jobs Americans don’t want” and benefit the economy. But at the same time, a majority also agreed that illegal immigrants hurt the local economy by taking jobs away from Americans.

<u>Economic and Job Issues</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Illegal immigration <u>benefits Americans</u> .	25%	65%	10%
Illegal immigrants <u>lower the wages</u> of American workers.	45%	40%	15%
Illegal immigrants <u>benefit the economy</u> by doing “jobs Americans don’t want.”	55%	37%	8%
Illegal immigrants <u>hurt the local economy</u> by taking jobs away from Americans.	53%	42%	5%

6. Attitudes Federal Solutions

There was not a consensus on resolving the problems of illegal immigration in the United States among the respondents.

Few respondents wanted amnesty (17%).

The most favored response was ending employment (46%), followed by arrests and deportation (32%). Given the serious consequences of such a deportation policy, this indicates that a sizeable percent of respondents desire a very drastic solution to illegal immigration.

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
End employment of illegal immigrants so they return home voluntarily.	45%	33%	12%
Arrest all illegal immigrants and deport them.	32%	40%	28%
Give all illegal immigrants amnesty.	15%	33%	22%

7. Desire for State Legislation

67% of respondents agreed that illegal immigration is a serious problem. A slightly smaller percent, 65%, supported legislation to address immigration problems.

Support Legislation

Do you support legislation that will:

1. Require all state and local law enforcement officers to receive immigration training.
2. Require all illegal immigrants arrested for a felony to be held for deportation.
3. Impose fines on employers of illegal immigrants.
4. End sanctuary cities and ID Cards for illegal immigrants.

	<u>Support</u>	<u>Not Support</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Do you "support" or "do not support" legislation that would do these four things?	65	22%	13%

8. Attitudes Toward State and Local Responsibilities

Respondents overwhelmingly believed that state, city and local officials had a responsibility for immigration. This contradicts the notion that “immigration is a federal issue.”

Respondents overwhelmingly favored training state and local police in immigration enforcement.

Respondents believed that the State Government was responsible for stopping illegal immigration and there should be laws against employing illegal immigrants.

<u>State and Local Responsibilities</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>DK/NA</u>
Illegal immigration <u>is also a responsibility</u> of city and local officials.	85%	10%	5%
State and local police <u>should be trained</u> in immigration enforcement.	82%	13%	5%
The Connecticut State Government <u>has a responsibility</u> for stopping illegal immigration.	72%	25%	3%
The State of Connecticut should have laws against hiring illegal immigrants.	70%	20%	10%

Verbatim Comments

Respondent Quest. No. Number	Q.1 Response	Verbatim Answer Reasons Why Agree/Disagree to Q.1. "Illegal immigration is a serious problem."
021	DK	No answer
030	DK	Not well informed.
036	DK	I do not know any illegal aliens and do not see it in my community.
038	DK	Hot button. Don't know. Not completely schooled on the issue.
049	DK	I don't really know. I would say it affects the country overall more than the State of Connecticut.
050	DK	This is not a yes or no question. I only consider this a problem that should be addressed.
001	Disagree	I don't see it around me in my day-to-day life.
002	Disagree	I disagree because I don't think they are the ones who cause problems. They are just working people. The people who cause problems are drug distributors
003	Disagree	Not a border state. More important issues. Not a border state. Illegal immigrants comprise a small percent of the total population. There are more important issues.
004	Disagree	Don't have enough information.
005	Disagree	I disagree because I live in a building with diverse ethnic backgrounds and I don't have a problem with any of them. Therefore I see no threat they can cause.
006	Disagree	They fill a lot of voids. Do necessary things nobody else wants to do.
007	Disagree	I don't really think of it as a problem. I don't know of it being an issue.
031	Disagree	I just don't think it's a serious problem. Everyone has the right to work hard for their own living. I don't know what else to say.
032	Disagree	They don't bother me. They work and do what they have to do. They are not in my way.
033	Disagree	Immigration is blown out of proportion. Immigrants do jobs that people wouldn't do. They are willing to do construction or be garbage men even when they're getting a low hourly wage.
034	Disagree	I don't know what problems they are causing. They are only bringing in new workers. They should be able to escape from a country they are having problems in.
039	Disagree	I don't see any signs of it. A country of immigrants.

Respondent Quest. No. Number	Q.1 Response	Verbatim Answer Reasons Why Agree/Disagree to Q.1. "Illegal immigration is a serious problem."
048	Disagree	I disagree because I think immigration is more towards borders not in the Connecticut area. It's more around California borders and Florida borders.
051	Disagree	I say that because I never personally experienced any problems with immigrants in my area.
013	Agree.	Police officers stop people all the time. He is a police officer and he stops people all the time without licenses, etc.
008	Agree	Immigrants are rotting the fabric of our society. They are stressing the social services financially. That's all I have to say.
009	Agree	I can't think right now.
010	Agree	Take care of our own people first. Healthcare.
011	Agree	I agree because they take away from U.S. citizens economically. They are working more for lower pay and that's not fair.
012	Agree	I agree with that statement because I believe that immigration should be controlled. It can be controlled by building a big wall on the border of the U.S. and Mexico.
014	Agree	I don't want my taxes supporting someone else.
015	Agree	Because I don't know enough, and they keep talking about it.
016	Agree	Because it impacts all communities involved, education, healthcare.
017	Agree	Serious problem all over the country.
018	Agree	I think it's a major issue mainly because their taxes are not put through the proper agencies.
019	Agree	New Haven's mayor allowing amnesty to illegal immigrants.
020	Agree	So much going on in West New Haven with immigrants, but it is not too good.
022	Agree	I agree with that because in New Haven, they are issuing ID Cards to illegals. Mayor DeStefano implemented that and now it's more difficult to get them deported.
023	Agree	Local news. New Haven situation.
024	Agree	I agree because in my opinion they should be legalized as soon as possible so they can pay taxes. They put a strain on the U.S. citizens because we pay taxes and they don't.
025	Agree	I agree because there are too many illegal people. These people are walking around neighborhoods without being

Respondent Quest. No. Number	Q.1 Response	Verbatim Answer Reasons Why Agree/Disagree to Q.1. "Illegal immigration is a serious problem."
		registered. They are complete strangers and have no rights. They are illegal aliens and nothing more.
026	Agree	I see what's happening in other cities such as Stamford. Immigrants standing on corners for work. If they crossed the border illegally, they shouldn't be allowed to stand there. They are under cutting other people's opportunities on jobs.
027	Agree	We have too many illegal immigrants, not only in the state but the whole country. As illegal immigrants get benefits, hard working citizens are paying for them through our higher taxes.
028	Agree	They are illegal. I think all illegal immigrants should be arrested. They come here illegally. That is a felony. When you break the law you get arrested. They're here illegally and don't go to jail.
029	Agree	First, it takes jobs away. They are a burden on the city. They cost money by receiving benefits. They did not pay taxes to be eligible for. What part of illegal don't people understand?
035	Agree	Arrest the mayor.
037	Agree	Know the subject.
040	Agree	I heard of the problem at the borders.
041	Agree	Takes a lot out of the system.
042	Agree	They're good people, doing it the wrong way.
043	Agree	They are causing a financial drain in schools. Health care and the overall city.
044	Agree	The news shows too many people crossing the border illegally. I really don't know.
045	Agree	I don't get out much so based on what I read in the paper, they are taking Americans jobs.
046	Agree	Simply because whatever number you dial you get the option "1" for English "2" for Spanish.
047	Agree	Not in a bad way. Illegal immigrants are under paid. Top-notch companies are not giving them social security and Medicare, which is unfair. Illegal immigrants don't have the chance that others do at taking care of their families.
052	Agree	Just local demographics of ethnicity increasing in the last 10 years by 20%. There seems to be more crimes in town because of these immigrants.

Respondent Quest. No. Number	Q.1 Response	Verbatim Answer Reasons Why Agree/Disagree to Q.1. "Illegal immigration is a serious problem."
053	Agree	N/A
054	Agree	Democrats want illegal immigration for more votes. Republicans want them for cheap labor.
055	Agree	Any immigration that is illegal is serious. Illegal immigration is a very serious problem.
056	Agree	It is a very serious thing.
057	Agree	Strongly believe people should obey immigration laws. Illegal immigration has a negative impact on jobs, etc.
058	Agree	Drains social security funds. Makes a mockery of immigration laws in the United States.
059	Agree	They are here illegally.
060	Agree	Immigrants that are here I illegally complain that they don't have basic rights.

Demographics

18 to 24,	0
25 to 44,	8%
35 to 44,	12%
45 to 54,	26%
55 to 64, or	22%
65 and over	25%
Refused	7%
Employed full-time,	43%
Employed part-time,	10%
Self-employed,	6
Unemployed,	5
A full-time student,	0
A part-time student,	0
A homemaker,	5%
Disabled, or	0
Retired	33%
Refused/Other	7%
Male	42%
Female	58%

Questionnaire

Hello, is Mr/Mrs. _____ there? _____ My name is _____. I'm calling from CT Citizens for Immigration Control. We are conducting a survey on immigration issues.

This is an important survey that will influence laws on immigration in Connecticut. Your opinion is important.

Are you eighteen years of age or older? (IF NOT, ASK TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE 18 OR OVER)

- 01 Correct respondent on line
- 02 Switching to correct respondent
- 98 Refused

→ **THANK & TERMINATE**

A1. Are you a citizen of the United States? [] yes [] no → **IF NO, THANK & TERMINATE**

A2. Are you registered to vote? [] yes [] no

I am going to read you a statement, please tell me whether you "agree," or "disagree."

Agree Disagree No answer/ Don't know
DO NOT READ

1a. **"Illegal immigration is a serious problem in the State of Connecticut."** Do you ... (READ CHOICES. DO NOT READ "NO ANSWER")

[] [] []

2a. You said that you (insert answer Q1a). Why do you say that? (Record verbatim below)

- | | | | |
|--|---------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 3. Connecticut legislators are considering legislation that would do the following four things: (READ NUMBERS, READ SLOWLY.) | Support | Do not support | No answer/ Don't know
DO NOT READ |
| 5. Require all state and local law enforcement officers to receive immigration training. | | | |
| 6. Require all illegal immigrants arrested for a felony to be held for deportation. | | | |
| 7. Impose fines on employers of illegal immigrants. | | | |
| 8. End sanctuary cities and ID Cards for illegal immigrants. | | | |
| Do you "support" or "do not support" legislation that would do these four things? | [] | [] | [] |

Now, I am going continue to read some statements. Again, please tell me whether you "agree," or "disagree."

(NOTE: RANDOMLY PICK A STARTING ITEM. DO NOT ALWAYS START WITH THE FIRST ITEM. WORK DOWNWARD, AND THEN BACK TO THE TOP TO COMPLETE ITEMS.)

- | | | | |
|--|-------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| | Agree | Disagree | No answer/ Don't know
DO NOT READ |
| 4a. Local taxpayers <u>pay too much</u> for educating children of illegal immigrants. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4b. Local cities <u>should not issue</u> ID Cards to illegal immigrants. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4c. Local taxpayers <u>pay too much</u> for health care for illegal immigrants. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4d. Illegal immigration <u>is also a responsibility</u> of city and local officials. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4e. Illegal immigrants <u>are a burden</u> on local towns and cities. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4f. The State of Connecticut should have laws against hiring illegal immigrants. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4g. The Connecticut State Government <u>has a responsibility</u> for stopping illegal immigration. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4h. Illegal immigration <u>benefits Americans</u> . | [] | [] | [] |
| 4i. Illegal immigrants <u>commit more</u> than their share of crime. | [] | [] | [] |
| 4j. State and local police <u>should be trained</u> in immigration enforcement. | [] | [] | [] |

- 4k. Illegal immigrants hurt the local economy by taking jobs away from Americans. [] [] []
- 4l. Illegal immigrants should have CT State Driver's Licenses. [] [] []
- 4m. Illegal immigrants are hard working. [] [] []
- 4n. Illegal immigrants lower property values in the neighborhood [] [] []
- 4o. Illegal immigrants lower the wages of American workers. [] [] []
- 4p. Illegal immigrants benefit the economy by doing "jobs Americans don't want." [] [] []
- 4q. The Connecticut State Government should prohibit sanctuary cities. [] [] []

5. Which of the following do you think the government should do...(ROTATE START ITEM)
- | | Agree | Disagree |
|--|-------|----------|
| a. Arrest all illegal immigrants and deport them. | [] | [] |
| b. Give all illegal immigrants amnesty. | [] | [] |
| c. End employment of illegal immigrants so they return home voluntarily. | [] | [] |

D1. The following questions are for classification purposes only. Into which of the following categories does your age fall? **(READ LIST.)**

- 01 18 to 24, []
- 02 25 to 34, []
- 04 35 to 44, []
- 04 45 to 54, []
- 05 55 to 64, or []
- 06 65 and over []
- 98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused []

D2. Are you...? **(READ LIST. ACCEPT ALL THAT APPLY.)**

- 01 Employed full-time, []
- 02 Employed part-time, []
- 04 Self-employed, []
- 04 Unemployed, []

D2a Are you....

- 05 A full-time student, []

- 06 A part-time student, []
- 07 A homemaker, []
- 08 Disabled, or []
- 09 Retired []
- 98 **DO NOT READ:** Refused []

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Interviewer Name: _____ Date: _____ Time:

RECORD LAST NAME (FROM PHONE LIST): _____

RECORD TOWN (FROM PHONE LIST) _____

RECORD NUMBER: (FROM PHONE LIST) _____

RECORD GENDER OF RESPONDENT **(DO NOT ASK.)**

- 01 Male []
- 02 Female []