



**EXPERT INSIGHT** | Center for Homeland Security and Immigration

# THE CRIMES THAT ARE 100% PREVENTABLE

*By Kristen Zicarelli*

## TOPLINE POINTS

- ★ Our communities are becoming less safe because of a failure to secure the border and enforce immigration laws.
- ★ No law-abiding American should be victimized by an individual who has unlawfully entered the country — an action that is wholly preventable.
- ★ Curtailing the abuse of our border will curtail the abuse of innocent people.

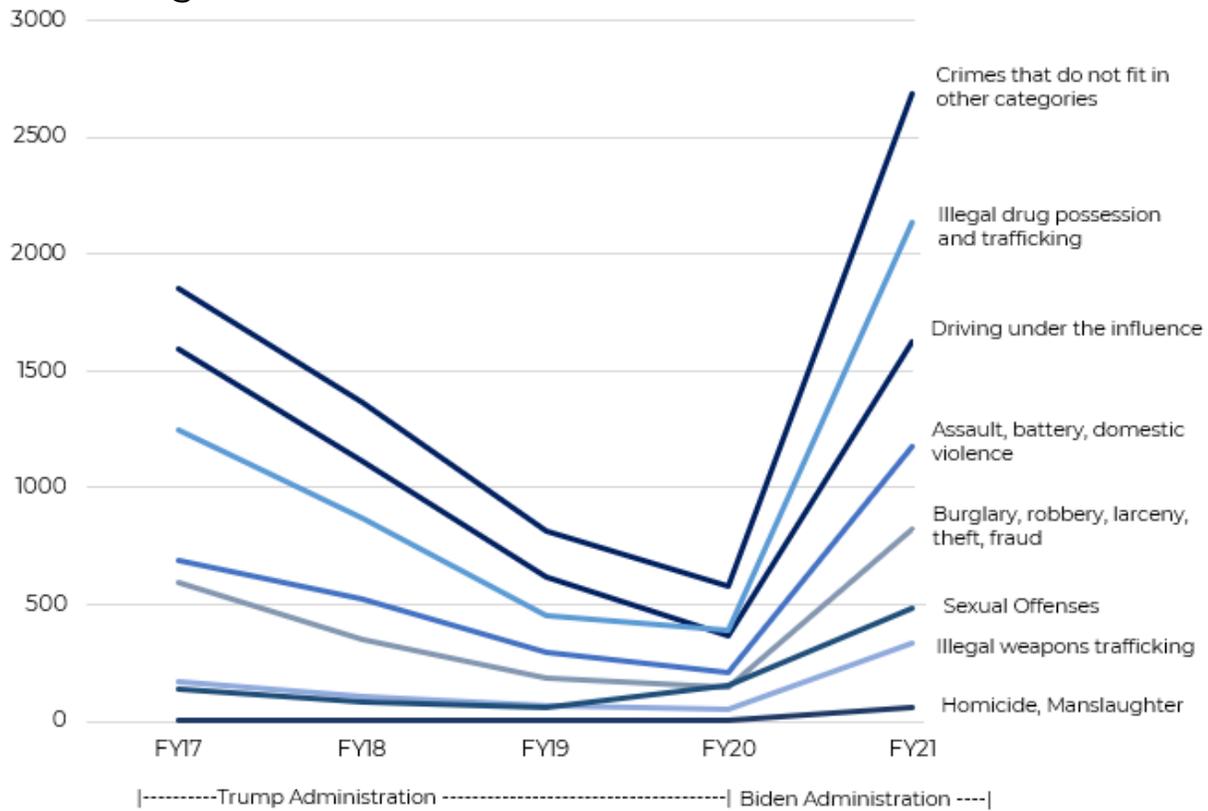
Recently, law enforcement [discovered that](#) Alberto Santacruz, a convicted felon who shot five people at a birthday party in Las Vegas, is an illegal alien who had been deported at least four times and had previously pled guilty to kidnapping.

This is just the most recent example of our communities becoming less safe because of a failure to secure the border and enforce immigration laws. It's also part of a disturbing phenomenon where repeat offenders are coming across our border illegally and abusing innocent people. No law-abiding American should be victimized by an individual who has unlawfully entered the country—an action that is wholly preventable.

The chart below illustrates the spike in criminal alien convictions in FY 2021 when the Biden administration took office, as reported by Customs and Border Control (CBP).\* *Every category* of these convictions has surpassed the totals of any one year during the Trump administration. Some crimes, such as homicide and manslaughter, went from 3 recorded convictions per year from FY17-FY20 to 60 in FY21.



Figure 1: Convictions of Criminal Aliens FY17-FY21



Source: [CBP](#)

\*Though FY22 ended on September 30, 2022, the data for the entire year has not been released yet, so it is not included in this analysis.

Even after conviction and deportation, thousands of violent offenders are still not deterred from reentering the U.S. again and again because of policies that fail to secure the border. The data from our criminal justice system is telling:

- ❖ Texas’s Department of Public Safety [recently reported](#) a total of 263,000 illegal aliens charged with more than 442,000 criminal offenses were held in Texas jails between June 1, 2011, and September 30, 2022.
- ❖ In just one day this August, CBP [arrested](#) four convicted sex offenders and 22 gang members attempting to cross the border near Texas.
- ❖ In just one week in September 2022, Border Patrol [apprehended](#) 21 gang members, two sex offenders, and three criminal aliens with prior convictions for robbery and battery along the southern border.

These criminal offenses included homicide, assault, theft, burglary, drug possession, kidnapping, sexual assault, and more. Texas is unique in its detailed record-keeping, which provides an accurate picture of the damage illegal immigration has inflicted on its communities.



In the case of the cartels, they are ruthless in exploiting others for the singular goal of financial gain. Make no mistake: their profit increases as the border becomes less secure. This year, the Mexican cartel's income from illegal human smuggling has reportedly [risen to 13 billion](#)—the same gross revenue of Fox Corporation in 2022.

Illegal immigration also takes a heavy toll on the American taxpayer, falling disproportionately on citizens in border states, who deal most directly with the egregious results of soaring crime. Keeping criminal aliens in American prisons adds even more of a burden on U.S. citizens, who are forced to fund much-needed law enforcement efforts. The [incarceration cost](#) alone for criminals serving time in federal prisons—such as these aliens—is reportedly between \$35,000 and \$40,000 per year per inmate. With thousands of criminal aliens in prison, the net financial burden on taxpayers comes to more than 1 billion dollars. The extra costs are an unfair and unnecessary tradeoff.

Because the U.S. is a sovereign nation with the right and duty to secure our border, the crimes committed by illegal aliens are *100% preventable*. Instead of standing by as criminals come into our country and threaten innocent lives, we must secure the border to ensure they do not enter in the first place. We need strict prosecution, strong law enforcement, and solidarity with border states in their deterrence efforts. We need legislative reform that originates with a genuine understanding of the threats ordinary Americans face as their streets become increasingly unsafe. And finally, we need to understand that curtailing the abuse of our border will curtail the abuse of innocent people.

An open border is unfair to all American citizens, including those who came to the country legally. And the human cost at the hands of ruthless smugglers is heartbreaking.

Under open border policies, the American people are losing.

