



Border Security is National Security

A common sense plan by Debbie Lesko



For too long, politicians in Washington have been talking about ways to fix our broken border. Not until the ascendancy of President Trump have we heard and seen a real push to secure our southern border. I applaud the President for making this issue amongst his top priorities.

Should I be elected to Congress I will work diligently to protect my fellow Arizonans and Americans by working with the President to get the job done.

As a state Senator I have visited our Southern border many times, I have met with ranching families and border agents to get their first-hand accounts of the problems they face every day. After years of looking at this problem I have formulated a plan based on their input, and that of others.

While there are many approaches to the basics of how this is done, I believe it must start with my personal principles as to what is right:

- **Good fences make for good neighbors** – Fully and completely build the wall, utilizing physical barriers where needed and implement technology as a solutions based model to fill the gaps.
- **It's a people problem** – we simply don't have enough boots on the ground to cover the vast areas of our porous borders. We need to radically increase funding for personnel and training.
- **It's a privilege to be here** – we won't allow chain migration and people should only be admitted into this country based on the merits.

What follows below is my initial plan to combat illegal immigration. Surely there will be more to do, but I believe these are all good first steps, that must be enacted into law.

Debbie Lesko

Securing the Border

The Wall: First and foremost is building the wall. I support the President's request for \$18 billion in new wall construction and more. This will create a physical barrier in those areas that are practical to prevent illegal crossings. In other areas it means we will have electronic surveillance to detect and apprehend illegal border crossers.

More Boots: We need more people to solve this problem. I advocate for hiring 5,000 new Border Patrol agents, 5,000 new ICE agents with at least 1,000 of them assigned to Enforcement and Removal Operations. According to the Migration Policy Institute, a very liberal group, there are over 300,000 illegal aliens still in our country who have been convicted of a felony. My plan to hire 1,000 ERO officers will help expedite the removal of these felons. I would support the President's request for \$8 billion more in additional personnel and training funds.

Expand Technology: From more ground sensors to unmanned aircraft I strongly believe we need to give our front line officers the tools they need to be successful. This includes the use and building of key roads and other tactical infrastructure beyond wall construction. Again I support President Trump's request for \$5 billion for technology expansion.

Ports of Entry: I believe we need to secure our ports of entry while also streamlining the operations there. I also believe that Arizona as a border state would greatly benefit from having larger and more robust ports of entry.

Actually Follow the Law: Full implementation of Biometric Entry-Exit System. Since 1996 Congress has passed laws that require the executive branch to have an entry-exit system, in fact Congress has passed variations at least seven times to try and get the executive branch to take action. The bi-partisan 9/11 Commission Report said that this should be implemented immediately. That was thirteen years ago and still nothing. I will work with President Trump to ensure this critical component finally is enacted into practice.

Air Asset Intelligence Increase Coordination: I would work with the executive branch to increase funding for the Air National Guard and the Civil Air Patrol to help fill gaps as needed by ICE in terms of greater airborne intelligence. This would include additional federal reimbursements to the Air National Guard. I would also work to provide additional funding for training and flight operations for the Civil Air Patrol in states along the southern border, including additional light aircraft, communications, and command and control operations.

¹ Rosenblum, Marc, "Understanding the Potential Impact of Executive Action on Immigration Enforcement," Migration Policy Center, Washington, DC, 2013

² *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States;* Executive Summary, p. 19.

The Problem Within: Interior Enforcement

Make E-Verify Mandatory: Illegal immigration is a problem of supply and demand. As long as we allow companies to hire illegal aliens this problem will never end. I propose a mandatory E-verify system including federal minimum fines of \$25,000 per violation, and after five violations they would become a federal criminal felony to be enforced by the US Attorney's Office.

Get the Bad Guys Out: I will introduce legislation that allows ERO agents to remove any person who is in the country illegally, who is a known gang banger, convicted felon, no matter the type of felony, and any illegal alien who is convicted of a second Class 1 Misdemeanor for immediate deportation and permanent expulsion.

Permanently End Catch and Release: Illegal aliens who are arrested must be held until they are deported. We must permanently end the catch and release policy of President Obama. This means ERO officers, and immigration courts need more resources to streamline this process so that we never again have millions of people waiting for the judicial process to take place.

Pressure Sanctuary Cities: The federal government must end providing grants to cities which flaunt their disregard for federal immigration laws. We must also grant our citizens a right of private action against cities that release illegal immigrants that later commit crime against these same citizens.

It's a Privilege to be in this Great Country

America First: Before we allow US businesses to bring in cheap labor from other countries we must ensure that American's are fully employed first.

End Chain Migration: I would permanently end the practice of offering green cards to an entire family; instead I would offer it only for spouses and minor children.

Merit Based Immigration: We should not allow people to enter this country because they won a lottery or for diversity, but rather we need to focus on allowing people with high skills, if there is a need in the labor pool.