



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Border Communities Know ICE's Impunity All Too Well

Estefania Castaneda Perez, University of Southern California

The Department of Homeland Security shutdown has officially passed one month as lawmakers **continue to debate** limits on ICE's use of force. Though we've arrived at this legislative standoff due to aggressive, and sometimes fatal, immigration enforcement actions in cities in our country's interior, for communities along the U.S.-Mexico border, such abuses are nothing new. As I reveal through my **academic research**, immigration agents have operated with near-total impunity at the border for decades.

I uncovered patterns of excessive violence, coercion, and abuse at land ports of entry, through which more than **200 million people** including workers, students, and visitors legally enter the U.S. every single year. The link between agents' actions on the streets of American cities and the way they operate at the southern border is inevitable—yet something the current conversation about ICE and potential reforms overlooks.