

DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES

IZA DP No. 12721

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## ABSTRACT

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# Police Trust and Domestic Violence: Evidence from Immigration Policies\*

Domestic violence is a serious under-reported crime in the United States, especially among immigrant women. While the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) allows battered immigrants to petition for legal status without relying on abusive U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident spouses, we find that intensified interior immigration enforcement has curbed the VAWA self-petition rate. In contrast, sanctuary policies limiting the cooperation of police with immigration authorities have helped counteract that impact. The results, which prove robust to alternative measures of the policies, support the hypothesized changes in victims' reporting in response to the policies. Understanding survivors' responses to immigration policy is crucial given growing police mistrust and vulnerability to crime among immigrants.

**JEL Classification:** J12, J16, J15, K37

**Keywords:** immigration enforcement, trust acts, domestic violence, United States

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*“All people in the U.S. (regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, ethnicity, or immigration status) are guaranteed protection from abuse under the law”*

*U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services*

## **1. Introduction**

Almost 2 million individuals were deported between 2009 and 2013 as consequence of the several immigration enforcement policies enacted since 11/9 (Vaughan 2013). Police testimony, anecdotal reports, and empirical research suggest local police involvement in immigration enforcement increases fear and mistrust among immigrant communities, reducing their willingness to engage with the police (Nguyen and Gill 2015). In response, some states and localities have limited the cooperation of their police with immigration authorities via what have been labeled as sanctuary policies.<sup>1</sup> This paper provides the first empirical evidence on how domestic violence reporting among immigrants responds to intensified interior enforcement and sanctuary policies.

Domestic violence is a serious under-reported crime in the United States (Tjaden and Thoennes 2006), with 20 people being physically abused by an intimate partner every minute.<sup>2</sup> Immigrant women can face greater challenges than their native counterparts when reporting a domestic violence episode. Aside from potentially being economically dependent on their husbands if they do not have working permits, immigrant women rely on their partners for adjusting their immigration status.<sup>3,4</sup> In addition, many of these immigrant women have U.S.-born children (Migration Policy Institute 2019). Fear of losing custody of their kids in a legal battle may further inhibit them from reporting any domestic violence or from seeking help (Kasturirangan, Krishnan, and Riger 2004). Acknowledging these facts, the U.S. Congress

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles Policy Department. 2009. “The LAPD Fights Crime, Not Illegal Immigration.” *LA Times*, Oct. 27. Available at: <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/oct/27/opinion/oe-bratton27>

<sup>2</sup> Domestic violence national statistics retrieved from [www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)

<sup>3</sup> For example, H4 visas holders were not allowed to get employment authorization until 2015.

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.nationallatinonetwork.org/safety-planning/systems-based-safety-and-security-from-the-aggressor/143-english/facts-statistics>

introduced special provisions for immigrant women in its federal law against domestic violence (Violence Against Women Act, afterward VAWA). Specifically, since 1994, VAWA has allowed immigrant women to self-petition for their immigration status adjustment and the status of their children. However, recent changes in immigration policy might have affected immigrant women's reporting of domestic violence by altering the costs and benefits from reporting any abuse. This might have been particularly the case following the Administration's June 11, 2018 decision to disallow protection from deportation on the grounds of domestic violence.<sup>5</sup>

Understanding how domestic violence reports by immigrants is affected by the new policy context is crucial for various reasons. First, it may help us address the high economic and social cost of domestic violence. The direct costs of domestic violence against women alone exceeded an estimated \$3.6 trillion (2014 U.S. dollars) (Florence *et al.* 2018).<sup>6</sup> This figure represents a lower bound since costs to employers, insurance companies and reduced tax revenue since lost work productivity is not included.<sup>7</sup> In addition, it is not a problem that exclusively affects women but, rather, it negatively impacts their children, who are mainly U.S. citizens (Migration Policy Institute 2019).<sup>8,9</sup> In that regard, learning how the reporting of domestic violence is affected by immigration policy could help us avoid present, as well as long-term or future costs. Second, a growing share of the U.S. population might be impacted by the changing immigration policy. Approximately 21 million female immigrants reside in the United States, making up for over 13 percent of the nation's female population. In addition,

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<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/11/us/politics/sessions-domestic-violence-asylum.html>

<sup>6</sup> This estimate includes medical services (\$2.1 trillion), lost work productivity (\$1.3 trillion) and criminal justice (\$73 billion), among other costs.

<sup>7</sup> The per-victim lifetime cost was \$103,767 for women and \$23,414 for men. Government sources pay for an estimated \$1.3 trillion (or 37 percent) of the lifetime economic burden (Florence *et al.* 2018). Unfortunately, these costs are not unique to the United States. For instance, gender-based violence against women is estimated to cost approximately 226 billion euros per year in the European Union. A 10 percent reduction in this type of violence would result in 7 billion euros/year in savings (Jourová 2016).

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/media/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Twenty-six percent of U.S. children live in immigrant families.

the share of married couples with at least one non-citizen partner has been rising (see Figure 1) over the last years. Multiracial women are more likely to experience domestic violence (57 percent) than white women (37 percent) (Florence *et al.* 2018). Hence, gaining a better understanding of how immigrant victims respond to domestic violence in the new immigration policy environment is key in the design of any criminal justice response.

People are more likely to report a crime when they trust the police (Kwak, Dierenfeldt, and McNeeley 2019). Immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies can alter police trust among immigrant women. On one hand, intensified immigration enforcement might increase misreporting due to fear of being over scrutinized and, potentially, placed in a position that jeopardizes the possibility of staying in the country. On the other hand, sanctuary cities policies might increase reporting if women believe that the police is not cooperating with immigration authorities. We use VAWA self-petitions data, together with homicide data, to understand how immigration policies have affected domestic violence reporting among immigrant women.

Specifically, we exploit the temporal and geographic variation in the adoption of immigration enforcement policies and sanctuary cities practices to identify the effect of immigration policies on domestic violence reporting as captured by VAWA self-petitions. We find that the intensification of immigration enforcement reduced the VAWA self-petition rate by 8.3 percent. In contrast, sanctuary policies boost that rate by 6 percent. These impacts do not appear to be driven by changes in domestic violence but, rather, by changes in its reporting.

To our knowledge, this is the first study examining how interior immigration policies might affect the reporting of domestic violence by immigrant women. As such, it contributes to a growing literature that has analyzed the factors and policies affecting domestic violence. Economic independence, bargaining power, arrest laws and police demography all have an effect on domestic violence (see, for example, Aizer 2010; Stevenson and Wolfers 2006; Iyengar 2009; Miller and Segal 2019). Yet, we lack evidence on how immigration policy might

affect the domestic violence reporting by migrant women. Understanding the role played by immigration policy is crucial given the high economic and social cost and in light of heightened enforcement and the Administration's decision to no longer consider domestic violence as proper grounds for protection from deportation. In addition, the analysis makes an important contribution to the literature analyzing the impact of immigration enforcement (*e.g.* Amuedo-dorantes and Arenas-Arroyo 2019; Amuedo-Dorantes, Arenas-Arroyo, and Sevilla 2018; Bohn, Lofstrom, and Steven 2014), as well as to our understanding of the impact of sanctuary practices.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the institutional framework pertaining to VAWA self-petitions. Section 3 outlines the hypothesized impacts of intensified immigration enforcement and sanctuary practices on the VAWA self-petition rate. Sections 4 and 5 follow with a description of the data used in the analysis and the methodological approach employed, respectively. Section 6 discusses the main findings, as well as the results from various identification and robustness checks. Finally, Section 7 summarizes our findings and concludes the study.

## **2. Institutional Background**

### **2.1 Domestic Violence among Immigrants: Violence against Women Acts**

Women are more likely to be victims of crimes committed by intimate partners than men (U.S. Department of Justice). In the United States, sixty-four percent of female homicide victims were killed by their intimate partner (VPC 2019).<sup>10</sup> According to the U.S. Department of Justice, domestic homicides are typically preceded by prior episodes of domestic violence. The rates of domestic violence are higher for Hispanic women (37.1 percent) than for non-

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<sup>10</sup> Intimidate partner includes husband, common-law husband, ex-husband or boyfriend. Ex-boyfriend cannot be included because the FBI Supplementary Homicide Report doesn't include that category.

Hispanic white women (34.6 percent) and, especially, for immigrant women (Breidling *et al.* 2014).

The obstacles faced by foreign-born women attempting to leave abusive relationships is exacerbated by their immigration status. Immigrant women are more likely to experience social isolation. In addition to cultural differences, they often have their families and friends back in their home countries. They are also more likely than native women to be economically dependent on their husbands, as they often lack work eligibility (*e.g.* H4 visas holders were not allowed to work until 2015). Finally, immigrant women are more likely to depend on their husbands to adjust their immigration status. According to the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) provisions, foreign spouses of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPR) can be sponsored by their spouses as long as they are living together. This requirement tends to discourage immigrant spouses from leaving abusive marriages and, instead, appears to reinforce the prevalence of domestic violence. In that regard, Raj *et al.* (2005) show how the odds of intimate partner violence reporting are higher for immigrant women who had spousal dependent visas, or whose partners either refused to change their immigration status or threatened them with deportation, when compared to other immigrant women.<sup>11</sup> This situation could be exacerbated when immigrant women have U.S. born children—a common occurrence, due to fear of losing the children’s custody in a legal confrontation. For all of these reasons, immigrant women exhibit a higher risk of domestic violence than the general population (Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2007).

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<sup>11</sup> While both men and women can be the victims of domestic violence, women are more prone to this type of violence (Nelson, Bougatsos, and Blazina 2012). Other key demographic traits include age, minority and immigrant status (Breidling *et al.* 2014). According to prior studies, forty-eight percent of Latinas report that their partner’s violence against them increased after they immigrated to the United States. Similarly, a survey of immigrant Korean women to the United States found that 60 percent had been battered by their husbands (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000).

To address this problem, the 103rd Congress included three provisions related to abused aliens in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994:<sup>12</sup> (1) self-petitioning by abused spouse and children, (2) suspension of deportation, and (3) cancelation of removal. The House Judiciary Committee explained that: “the purpose of permitting self-petitioning is to prevent the citizen or resident from using the petitioning process as a means to control or abuse an alien spouse.”<sup>13</sup> The 1994 VAWA was the first federal law addressing domestic violence crimes in mixed-status marriages -a critical aspect since these marriages have been on the rise. As shown in Figure 1, the share of marriages between a citizen and a non-citizen grew from slightly over 7 percent in 2001 to more than 10 percent in 2016.

Under the new legislation, battered immigrant spouses and children could, and still can, gain lawful permanent residency (*i.e.* apply for a ‘green card’) independent of their batterers. Specifically, immigrant spouses can self-petition for their status adjustment if they can prove:

1. The abuser is U.S. citizen or has lawful permanent resident status,<sup>14</sup>
2. The petitioner resides in the United States with the spouse,<sup>15</sup>
3. The petitioner entered marriage “in good faith”,<sup>16</sup>
4. The petitioner’s deportation would result in “extreme hardship” to either her/himself and any children,<sup>17</sup>
5. The petitioner is a person of “good moral character”,<sup>18</sup> and

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<sup>12</sup> VAWA is Title IV of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, P.L. 103-322.

The Violence against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994 and its subsequent reauthorizations in 2000 and 2005 authorized funding related to domestic violence for enforcement efforts, research and data collection, prevention programs, and services for victims.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Congress. House Committee on the Judiciary. Violence Against Women Act of 1993, report to accompany H.R. 1133, 103rd Cong., 1st Sess., H. Rept. 103-395, p. 37.

<sup>14</sup> VAWA I § 40701(a)(1)(C)(iii).

<sup>15</sup> VAWA I §§ 40701(a)(1)(C)(iii), 40701(a)(2)(B)(ii).

<sup>16</sup> VAWA I § 40701(a)(1)(C)(iii)(1).

<sup>17</sup> AWA I § 40701(a)(1)(C)(iv)(II).

<sup>18</sup> VAWA I § 40701(a)(1)(C)(iii).

6. The petitioner and/or a child are or have been subject of domestic violence or extreme cruelty perpetrated by the spouse during the marriage.<sup>19</sup>

There are two steps to applying for a green card (*i.e.* or self-petition to adjust one's immigration status) without the support of an abusive spouse under VAWA. First, one has to file Form I-360, along with the supporting evidence included in the Table C in Appendix A, to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). After USCIS receives the I-360 petition, it acknowledges receipt and starts to review the application. If USCIS believes the petition will be granted with the information provided, it will send a "Prima Facie Approval" letter. While no status adjustment has taken place yet, the migrant can use that letter to qualify for some types of public assistance. Once USCIS approves the I-360, the migrant can take step two, which is to apply for status adjustment (*i.e.* green card or lawful permanent residence) using Form I-485 and supporting documents.<sup>20,21</sup> The overall processing time (until a final decision has been reached) usually takes anywhere between 150 days to 10 months.

## **2.2 Interior Immigration Enforcement and Sanctuary Policies**

Not long after the enactment of the first Violence against Women Act, and following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the United States embarked in an impressive buildup of interior immigration enforcement. Between 2003 and 2013, funding for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency –the federal agency responsible for interior immigration enforcement– rose by 80 percent, the number of apprehensions more than doubled, and the number of interior removals increased three-fold.<sup>22</sup> The intensification of interior enforcement was made possible through various initiatives and programs that made it easier for state and

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<sup>19</sup> VAWA I § 40701(a)(1)(C)(iii)(I).

<sup>20</sup> If married to a U.S. citizen, both steps can be done concurrently.

<sup>21</sup> The approval rate has remained constant since 1997.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Budget in Brief*, fiscal years 2003-2013 (<http://www.dhs.gov/dhs-budget>). Data on apprehensions can be found at <http://www.dhs.gov/yearbook-immigration-statistics-2013-enforcement-actions>, Table 33 and data on interior removals can be found in <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/deportation-and-discretion-reviewing-record-and-options-change>

local law enforcement to partner with federal authorities when enforcing immigration law (Nguyen and Gill 2015). Starting in 2002, state and local law enforcement agencies started to partner with the federal government under joint Memorandum of Agreements that deputized officers for them to exercise immigration enforcement within their jurisdictions. Between 2006 and 2010, the budget for the program increased from \$5 million to \$68 million, with the number of participating officers rising over 1,500 (Nguyen and Gill 2015).

As the implementation of the 287(g) agreements grew increasingly costly and controversial due to accusations of racial profiling, the Administration started to roll out the Secure Communities program. Secure Communities—an information-sharing program used in the apprehension and deportation of unauthorized immigrants, started in 2008 and covered every jurisdiction by 2014. The program’s intent was to eventually replace the 287(g) agreements.<sup>23</sup> Under Secure Communities, local law enforcement agencies submit information from arrests to an integrated database with ICE, allowing for the identification of the immigration status and any criminal activity by the arrestee. ICE can then issue a request to hold the individual in question (“ICE hold” or detainer),<sup>24</sup> allowing federal officers to reach the location and initiate deportation procedures if appropriate. By 2013, every jurisdiction in the United States was covered under Secure Communities, compared to just 14 jurisdictions in 2008.<sup>25</sup> The program, which was discontinued after 2014, was reactivated by President Donald Trump in February 2017.

In addition, some states adopted omnibus immigration laws that, aside from the police-based immigration enforcement measures described above, included employment verification

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<sup>23</sup> In November of 2014, due to intense criticism of the program, Secure Communities was discontinued. The program was replaced with the Priority Enforcement Program—an information-sharing program between federal and local authorities that focused on the detention of individuals convicted of serious crimes.

<sup>24</sup> An ICE detainer—or “immigration hold”—is one of the tools used by ICE to apprehend individuals who encounter local and state law enforcement. It is a written request that a local jail or other law enforcement agency detain an individual for an additional 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) after his or her release date in order to provide ICE agents extra time to decide whether to take the individual into federal custody for removal purposes.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.ice.gov/secure-communities>

mandates. The mandates, which could be universal and reach all employers in the public and private sectors or solely refer to public sector employees and contractors, required employers to use the government's free online program to ascertain the employment eligibility of new hires (Amuedo-Dorantes and Bansak 2012). The first omnibus immigration law was the 2010 SB1070 from Arizona, which included the notorious "show me your papers clause" allowing local law enforcement official to make a reasonable attempt to determine the immigration status of an individual suspected of being an unauthorized migrant during a routine stop. In other states, like Alabama, similar bills (*i.e.* HB56) went as far as to require that school administrators verify the legal status of children enrolled in K-12.<sup>26</sup>

Altogether, the various programs and initiatives were responsible for 1.8 million deportations from 2009 to 2013 alone (Vaughan 2013). The impressive growth in deportations largely relied on the collaboration between ICE and local or state law enforcement agencies, particularly through the use and observance of the so-called ICE detainers or holds. Through the issuing of a detainer, ICE can request that law enforcement agencies detain individuals for 48 hours beyond their lawful release date (excluding weekends and holidays). This additional time allows ICE to obtain more information about the arrested immigrant, and to arrange a transfer of custody to begin removal proceedings. Many jurisdictions have complained about the lack of community cooperation with the police as a result of the increased police involvement in immigration enforcement (Khashu 2009). Police testimony, anecdotal reports, and empirical research seem to provide support for this concern, with allegations of how immigration enforcement raises fear and mistrust on the police, negatively impacting immigrant crime reporting (Abrego 2011, Burnett 2017, Nguyen and Gill 2016, Vidales *et al.* 2009, Vishnuvajjala 2012).

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<sup>26</sup> Just as the Supreme Court did with several sections of SB1070, this part of the HB56 law was blocked by federal courts.

As a result, a number of local enforcement agencies from jurisdictions with sizeable immigrant communities have grown concerned that their involvement with ICE might jeopardize decades of advances in community policing, which could limit residents' willingness to contact the police, report crimes, or assist in police investigations (Magnus 2017, Burnett 2017). For instance, in cities like Los Angeles, which is home to 1.5 million immigrants, the Los Angeles Police Department has directly challenged escalations in federal immigration enforcement, stressing the damage that associations between local law enforcement and ICE has on Latino willingness to engage with the police (Gorman 2017). Many localities have thus resisted fully cooperating with ICE. Through formal laws, ordinances, resolutions, regulations and practices involving the refusal to fully comply with all ICE hold requests, some localities have limited their cooperation with ICE on immigration enforcement matters to ensure community trust and cooperation with the police. The adoption of these policies and practices have rendered them the name of "sanctuary cities." While some jurisdictions adopted this practice in the early 2000s, the vast majority joined after 2013 as the implementation of Secure Communities was culminating and interior immigration enforcement reached its peak.

It is in this complex picture of broad intensified immigration enforcement coupled with sanctuary pockets that we seek to understand how immigrant victims' VAWA self-petition rates respond to such policies by altering the reporting of domestic violence and/or the abusive behavior of their offenders.

### **3. Conceptual Framework and Testable Hypotheses**

Our aim is to gain a better understanding of how the intensification of interior immigration enforcement that occurred after 9/11, followed by the adoption of sanctuary practices by local law enforcement agencies, might be affecting immigrants' VAWA self-petitions. The latter will inevitably hinge on migrant victims' valuation of the costs and

benefits associated to filing Form I-360, which will depend on how offenders respond to the immigration policies in place in the first place. We envision different scenarios.

On one hand, intensified immigration enforcement might inhibit some migrant victims from coming forward (*i.e.* increase misreporting) for fear they might face greater than usual scrutiny, possibly revealing information they believe can compromise their ability to stay permanently in the United States. In that case, we would expect intensified immigration enforcement to result in a lower VAWA self-petition rate. On the other hand, it is possible for increased victims' misreporting to embolden some offenders, who may become more likely to abuse their victims (*i.e.* increase domestic violence). The increased incidence of domestic violence could lead to an increase in VAWA self-petitions. As such, whether intensified immigration enforcement reduces (via increased misreporting) or raises (via an increased incidence of domestic violence) the VAWA self-petition rate remains an empirical question.

Similarly, although in the opposite direction of intensified interior immigration enforcement, sanctuary practices could either bolster or curtail the VAWA self-petition rate. On one hand, migrant victims might feel more comfortable with coming forward, especially since local enforcement agencies are typically either directly involved or informed by other public agencies about domestic violence complaints. In that case, misreporting is likely to be somewhat tempered, and sanctuary practices might result in more VAWA self-petitions. On the other hand, offenders, aware of their victims' increased willingness to report, might be more reticent to continue their behavior for fear the crime might be reported to the proper authorities. The decreased incidence of domestic violence might result in a negative coefficient on sanctuary practices. In sum, as with intensified immigration enforcement, whether sanctuary practices increase (via increased reporting by victims) or decrease (via reduced incidence of domestic violence) VAWA self-petitions remains an empirical question.

#### **4. Data**

Our purpose is to learn how intensified immigration enforcement and the subsequent adoption of sanctuary policies might be impacting VAWA self-petitions. Specifically, we wish to first gauge the effect of: (a) intensified immigration enforcement covering the entire country over the 2000s, followed by (b) the restricted cooperation of some police departments with ICE during the 2010s, on VAWA self-petitions. To that end, we combine state-level data on VAWA self-petitions over the 2000-2016 period, with self-collected immigration policy data.

Data on VAWA self-petitions were obtained from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. On average, as shown in Table 1, yearly VAWA self-petitions at the state level averaged 0.36 per 1,000 non-citizens—that is, 36 out of 100,000 non-citizens over the period under consideration.

Additionally, we collect historical data on the various interior immigration enforcement policies previously described in Section 2.2. Since VAWA self-petition data is provided at the state level, we first collect data on state-level interior immigration enforcement initiatives. Specifically, data on 287(g) agreements is gathered from the ICEs 287(g) website,<sup>27</sup> whereas data on omnibus immigration laws and employment verification mandates is obtained from the National Conference of State Legislatures website. Using information on these three state-level initiatives, we construct a dummy variable for each policy (namely:  $IE_{s,t}^{287g}$ ,  $IE_{s,t}^{OIL}$ ,  $IE_{s,t}^{EV}$ ) by state and year. Given the overlap of many of these policies and the use of similar resources, like law enforcement personnel by both the 287g and OIL, plus the fact any reporting of domestic violence is unlikely to depend on just one measure but, rather, the overall tougher enforcement climate created by the various initiatives, we combine them into one index. The use of one index not only addresses the correlation between the various measures, but also facilitates the interpretation of the overall impact of the harsher immigration climate. Specifically, our index is given by:

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.ice.gov/factsheets/287g>

$$(1) \quad IE_{s,t} = \sum_{k \in K} IE_{s,t}^k$$

where  $IE_{s,t}$  is the overall enforcement to which individuals living in state  $s$  and year  $t$  are exposed. In follow-up robustness checks, we experiment with alternative measures of interior immigration enforcement. First, we tryout with an index that makes use of more detailed information on county level policies (*i.e.* local 287(g) agreements or Secure Communities). Subsequently, we also test if our results prove robust to the use of information on the number of deportations per 1,000 non-citizens. Both measures continue to yield alike results.

Table 1 displays some summary statistics for the immigration enforcement index detailed in equation (1). Over the period under examination, the immigration enforcement in equation (1) averaged 1.20.<sup>28</sup> Figure 2 depicts the temporal and geographic variation in the index. By 2013, every state had at least one of the interior immigration enforcement initiatives being examined in place.

We are also interested in assessing the impact of sanctuary policies. To that end, we gather data on the enactment of state level Trust Acts, and construct a dummy variable indicative of the state's adoption of a sanctuary policy in any given year -namely,  $SP_{s,t}$ . Because the vast majority of Trust Acts creating sanctuary communities were enacted after 2013, the share of immigrants in sanctuary areas averaged 5 percent for the 2000-2016 period (see Table 1).<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, there is still a significant degree of temporal and geographic variation in sanctuary policies, as illustrated by Figure 3.

## 5. Methodology

In order to learn about the impact of tougher interior immigration enforcement and the adoption of sanctuary practices on the rate of VAWA self-petitions, we exploit the temporal

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<sup>28</sup> The index values ranged from 0 (no enforcement) to 3 (full-year state-wide implementation of all three immigration enforcement measures being considered).

<sup>29</sup> Table 1 also displays the means and standard deviations for other controls included in our study. For instance, population wise, the share of Hispanics in the various U.S. states averages 10 percent and unemployment rates 6 percent.

and geographic variation in the adoption of both policies shown by Figures 2 and 3 using panel data for the 2000-2016 period:

$$(2) \quad y_{s,t} = \alpha + \beta_1 IE_{s,t} + \beta_2 SP_{s,t} + X'_{s,t} \beta_3 + \gamma_s + \theta_t + \gamma_s t + \varepsilon_{s,t}$$

where  $y_{s,t}$  is our outcome variable –namely, the share of VAWA self-petitions per 100,000 non-citizen population in state  $s$  and year  $t$ . The vector  $IE_{s,t}$  represents the immigration enforcement capturing the intensity of enforcement to which individuals living in state  $s$  in year  $t$  are exposed according to equation (1). Similarly, the vector  $SP_{s,t}$  captures the presence of sanctuary policies in state  $s$  in year  $t$ .

In addition to our key controls, equation (2) includes a vector of state-level time-varying characteristics (*i. e.*  $X_{s,t}$ ) known to influence domestic violence. The latter include: the ratio of female to male wages,<sup>30</sup> the annual unemployment rate and the natural log of per capita income in a particular state and year. These are included to identify the impact of relative income separately from that of general economic conditions in the state. We also include a series of race and ethnicity controls capturing the share of Hispanics, blacks and Asians, as well as the natural log of the number of women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the state in a given year. In addition, the vector  $X_{s,t}$  includes information on the natural log of homicides, other than domestic ones, to address secular trends in violent crime (see, for example, Aizer 2010).<sup>31</sup> Lastly, to address the unique role played by female officers in the fight and prevention of domestic violence (Miller and Segal 2019), the vector  $X_{s,t}$  also accounts for the share of female officers in each state in a particular year.

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<sup>30</sup> Following Aizer (2010), we construct the ratio of female to male wages. This measure overcomes the endogeneity of individual wages and accounts for the fact that theory predicts that potential, not actual, wages affect domestic violence. The ratio is informative of the exogenous demand for female and male labor, and it is based on the index of labor demand originally proposed by (Bartik 1991). Exploiting the history of sex and race segregation by industry, we construct measures of local labor market wages of women (men) based on wage changes in industries dominated by women (men).

<sup>31</sup> Table B in Appendix A defines each regressor and its source.

In addition to the aforementioned time-varying state-level controls, equation (2) includes a series of state and year fixed effects, as well as state-specific linear trends. Combined, they help capture a variety of statewide policy changes, such as welfare reform, expansions in the EITC, changes in Medicaid eligibility, or state laws potentially correlated to domestic violence rates not captured by the vector  $X_{s,t}$ . They also help us capture linear trends in domestic violence in any given state.<sup>32</sup> Observations are weighted by the non-citizen population in the (state, year) cell, and standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Our interest is on the estimated coefficients:  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$ , which capture the impact of intensified immigration enforcement and sanctuary practices on the VAWA self-petition rate. As noted earlier,  $\beta_1 < 0$  would be suggestive of migrant victims' reticence to report domestic violence and self-petition to adjust their status in the midst of intensified immigration enforcement. In contrast,  $\beta_1 > 0$  would be suggestive of the increase in domestic violence as offenders, aware of their victims' unwillingness to report, feel empowered and emboldened. Likewise,  $\beta_2 > 0$  would be suggestive of migrant victims' willingness to report domestic violence and self-petition to adjust their status when sanctuary practices ameliorate their perception of how helpful the authorities will prove in addressing their complaints. In contrast,  $\beta_2 < 0$  would be suggestive of offenders' fear to perpetrate further attacks on their victims aware of their increased willingness to report.

## **6. Immigration Policy and VAWA Self-Petitions**

### **6.1 Main Findings**

Results from estimating equation (2) are shown in Table 2. The first model specification does not include any of the state-level time-varying traits that might be considered

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<sup>32</sup> In alternative model specifications, we experiment with including interactions between pre-treatment state-level traits with a time trend to account for possible state differences in trends spuriously correlated with the adoption of specific immigration policies, such as differences in the share of voting Republican. Results prove robust to these alternative model specifications.

endogenous, whereas the second and third model specifications do. All model specifications include state and year fixed-effects, as well as state-specific time trends to account for any unobserved state-level time-varying traits not accounted for in our modeling.<sup>33</sup>

Regardless of the model specification used, the estimated coefficients reveal the damage caused by intensified immigration enforcement, as well as the important role played by sanctuary practices in counteracting immigrants' fear to report to the police in the midst of intensified enforcement. A one standard deviation increase in immigration enforcement curbs the VAWA self-petition rate by 8.38 percent; in contrast, sanctuary policies boost the rate by 5.72 percent. Since the two sets of policies often co-exist in a given state, in an alternative model specification displayed in Table D in the Appendix A, we also experiment with interacting both policy indicators. As shown therein, a one standard deviation increase in interior immigration enforcement lowers the VAWA self-petition rate by 1 percent in sanctuary states, relative to 4 percent in non-sanctuary states. Similarly, sanctuary policies raise the VAWA rate by 4 percent in states with no interior immigration enforcement in place, but prove more protective in states with some enforcement in place. For example, at the mean level of interior immigration enforcement, sanctuary policies boost the VAWA self-petition rate by 11 percent.

The fact that interior immigration enforcement curtails VAWA self-petitions, while sanctuary practices bolster them, reveals important information regarding the mechanisms likely at play. In particular, as hypothesized earlier, the findings suggest that migrant victims' reporting is likely driving our results. After all, offenders' response to both policies would suggest each policy would have the opposite impact of what we find. Namely, intensified immigration would bolster the incidence of domestic violence and, therefore, the VAWA self-

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<sup>33</sup> We also experiment with the estimation of model specifications that, instead of including state-specific time trends, they incorporate state-year fixed effects. Results, available from the authors, prove robust to the use of the more restrictive specification.

petition rate, whereas sanctuary policies would inhibit such incidence for fear they might be reported to the proper authorities.

## 6.2 Identification Challenges

In this section, we address a number of identification challenges that could be biasing our results. To start with, we focus on an assumption in most analyses exploiting the temporal and geographic variation in the adoption of policies for identification purposes -namely, the lack of differential pre-trends in the dependent variable across treated vs. control geographic units. In our case, this assumption implies that the adoption timing of the two sets of immigration policies, while non-random, is uncorrelated with pre-existing differences in VAWA self-petitions trends across states once we account for state-level time-varying traits, state and year fixed-effects and state-specific time trends. To assess if that is the case, we estimate the following two regressions:

$$(3) \quad y_{s,t} = \sum_{b=-5}^2 \alpha_b^{IE} D_{IE_{s,b}} + \beta_1 SP_{s,t} + X'_{s,t} \beta_2 + \gamma_s + \theta_t + \gamma_s t + \varepsilon_{s,t}$$

where  $D_{IE_{s,b}}$  is a dummy for  $b$  years prior/after the adoption of interior enforcement initiatives, and

$$(4) \quad y_{s,t} = \sum_{b=-5}^2 \alpha_b^{SP} D_{SP_{s,b}} + \beta_1 IE_{s,t} + X'_{s,t} \beta_2 + \gamma_s + \theta_t + \gamma_s t + \varepsilon_{s,t}$$

where  $D_{SP_{s,b}}$  is a dummy for  $b$  years prior/after the adoption of sanctuary policies.

Figure 4A and 4B display the estimated  $\alpha_b^{IE}$  and  $\alpha_b^{SP}$  coefficients. Both figures provide suggestive evidence of a break in the trend in VAWA self-petitions surrounding the adoption timing of the policies in question. In the case of immigration enforcement, the negative trend in VAWA self-petitions starts one period prior to the actual implementation of the policy, possibly reflective of the frequent lag between the policy enactment and implementation in some states. And, overall, the negative impact of intensified interior immigration enforcement on VAWA self-petitions seems to take time to materialize, becoming statistically different from zero two years after the policy implementation. However, in the case of sanctuary policies

(Figure 4B), we observe a significant increase in the VAWA self-petition rate immediately after their adoption; nothing prior to that date.

A second identification challenge in any policy analysis refers to the exogenous adoption of the policy itself. In our case, we should be concerned if the adoption of tougher interior immigration enforcement or sanctuary policies by the state is correlated with the rate of VAWA self-petitions (our outcome) at a prior date. To that end, we exploit the information on the adoption timing of the various interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies at the county level, and estimate the following regression using data from the year 2000 -that is, prior to the adoption of any of the policies being examined:

$$(5) \quad Y_c = X'_s \alpha + Z'_s \mu + \varepsilon_s$$

where  $Y_c$  is the year in which the interior immigration enforcement or the sanctuary policy index first turned positive in a given county  $c$ . Using county-level data allows us to more accurately assess the extent to which the state's VAWA self-petition rate could help predict the adoption timing of various enforcement and sanctuary policies. The vector  $X'_s$  is the VAWA self-petition rate for state  $s$  in the year 2000 -that is, prior to the adoption of any interior immigration enforcement or sanctuary policy. The vector  $Z'_s$  contains information on all other state-level controls in equation (2) -namely, the ratio of female to male wages, the unemployment rate, the natural log of per capita income, the share of Hispanics, blacks and Asians, as well as the natural log of the number of women between the ages of 15 and 44, the natural log of homicides and the share of female officers in the state in the year 2000. Our goal is to gauge if the state's VAWA self-petition rate prior to the rollout of interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies can help us predict the adoption timing of the policies being examined. The results from this exercise are displayed in Table 3. The rate of VAWA self-petitions in the state prior to the adoption of stricter enforcement and sanctuary policies does not help us predict the year in which the immigration enforcement or sanctuary policy indexes

first turned positive in any given county. As such, while non-random, neither intensified immigration enforcement, nor the adoption of sanctuary policies across a state, appear endogenous to the state's VAWA self-petition rate.

Finally, we address another concern plaguing most policy analyses -namely, the possibility that individuals might be voting with their feet. In our case, this concern translates to the possibility that immigrants may selectively decide to reside in more friendly states, as captured by states with lesser interior immigration enforcement or a sanctuary policy in place. Note that, if that were the case, our estimates would constitute a lower bound of the impact of interior immigration enforcement on the rate of VAWA self-petitions, and an upper bound of the true sanctuary policy effect. To assess the extent to which migrants might be selectively choosing where to reside, we compute the share of non-citizens in any given state and year, to then gauge if the latter can be predicted by the degree of interior immigration enforcement or the existence of sanctuary in the state either one or two years prior. The results from this exercise are shown in Panel B of Table 3. As can be seen therein, none of the policies appears to help explain the concentration of non-citizens in the state one or two years later, helping palliate concerns that our estimates are driven by the non-random distribution of migrants across states.<sup>34</sup>

### **6.3 Robustness Checks**

Thus far, we have demonstrated that immigration enforcement has curtailed VAWA self-petitions, whereas the adoption of sanctuary practices has helped counteract that impact. In addition, we have shown that the suggested impacts did not predate the adoption of the

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<sup>34</sup> In alternative identification checks, we experiment with instrumenting migrants' likely exposure to the two types of immigration policies being examined using information on what their probable residential choices would have been in the absence of such measures. To that end, we utilize information on the past residential locations of non-citizens (in the spirit of Bartel, 1989; Card, 2001; and Cortes and Tessada, 2011; among many others). As predicted above, we find that the OLS estimates provide us with a lower bound of the true impact of tougher immigration enforcement, and a possibly upper bound of the true impact of sanctuary policies on VAWA self-petitions. Results are available from the authors.

policies, with the policies leading to a clear break in the trend of VAWA self-petitions. Moreover, states' VAWA self-petition rates do not help predict the adoption of the two sets of policies across counties; plus, the concentration of non-citizens across states, while non-random, does not appear to be a byproduct of the presence of either type of immigration policy in the state. All the above palliate concerns about endogeneity biases afflicting our estimates.

In what follows, we address additional apprehensions when gauging the impact of immigration enforcement. The first one relates to the measurement of the immigration policies being examined –namely, interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies. We experiment with two alternative model specifications. First, we re-estimate our model using, instead, an index of interior immigration enforcement that incorporates information on the adoption of county and state level immigration policies, as opposed to exclusively state level ones,<sup>35</sup> as well as a similarly constructed index of sanctuary policies that incorporates information on Trust Acts adopted at the state level, as well as on local level resolutions and initiatives. Column 1 shows the results using the alternative measures. A one standard deviation increase in enforcement, as captured by the new index, curbs the VAWA self-petitions rate by 9.96 percent, whereas sanctuary policies continue to boost the rate by 2.3 percent.<sup>36</sup> A comparison with the results in Table 2, column 3, suggests that the impact of interior immigration enforcement is now estimated with less precision due to the state-level nature of our dependent variable.

Next, we experiment with using yet another measure of the degree of interior immigration enforcement at the state level –specifically, the number of deportations related to immigration charges per 1,000 non-citizens in any given (state, year). The estimate in column 2, Table 4, further confirms the negative impact of intensified immigration enforcement on the

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<sup>35</sup> The construction of this new index is detailed in Appendix B.

<sup>36</sup> The standard deviations for the new interior immigration enforcement index and sanctuary policies are, respectively, 0.76 and 0.21.

VAWA self-petition rate. A one standard deviation increase in the state deportation rate lowers the VAWA self-petition rate by approximately 4.4 percent.<sup>37</sup>

A second concern with the results in Table 2 might refer to the measurement of our outcome measure -that is, the share of VAWA self-petitions per 1,000 non-citizens. It is reasonable to inquire about the stability of the results to redefining the share as a function of the foreign-born population in the state. Column 3 in Table 4 displays the results from such an exercise. Both policies continue to display similar impacts. In sum, the main findings prove robust to the use of alternative policy and outcome measures.

Finally, columns 4 and 5 display the results of two additional robustness checks. If sanctuary policies raised the share of VAWA self-petitions, we would expect an increase in the divorce rate to occur following the adoption of sanctuary policies as women leave abusive relationships. To assess if this has occurred, we use American Community Survey (ACS) (Ruggles *et al.* 2019) and create the divorce rate of non-citizen women by state and year from 2007 through 2016.<sup>38</sup> As placebo test, we also construct the ratio of widowers among non-citizen women -a ratio that should not be significantly impacted by sanctuary policies. As we would expect, the estimates in column 4, Table 4, indicate that the same one standard deviation increase in interior immigration enforcement lowers the divorce rate among non-citizens by 9 percent, whereas sanctuary policies boost it by 2.6 percent. Yet, we find no alike impact on the ratio of widowers (column 5). Overall, these results provide further support of the hypothesized impact of intensified interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies on the VAWA self-petition rate.

## 7. Mechanism at Play

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<sup>37</sup> The average level of deportations is 63.41, with a standard deviation of 10.68.

<sup>38</sup> The variable “divorced in the past year” is available since 2008.

Thus far, our findings are supportive of a robust and negative impact of immigration enforcement on the VAWA self-petition rate—an impact mitigated by the adoption of sanctuary policies. The sign of the estimated coefficients is suggestive of the important role that both policies can have on victims’ willingness to come forward and report domestic violence incidents to the proper authorities. To assess if the observed impacts are occurring due to a change in victims’ reporting, as opposed to a change in the occurrence of domestic violence itself, we differentiate between the impacts of two types of immigration policies: *employment-based* enforcement and *police-based* enforcement. The former consist of employment verification mandates checking the work eligibility of immigrants, which can restrict their employment opportunities if undocumented, but rarely result in apprehension or deportation of undocumented immigrants. In contrast, police-based immigration enforcement refer to the set of initiatives enforced by the police and directly linked to the apprehension and deportation of undocumented immigrants.

Table 5 shows that both type of measures have a negative impact on the VAWA self-petitions rate. Both types of policies increased enforcement -regardless of whether it is directly linked to deportations or simply access to job opportunities, leading to fewer VAWA self-petitions. As hypothesized in Section 3, if the impacts of intensified enforcement were stemming from changes in the incidence rate of domestic violence, we would be expecting the latter to increase with enforcement as offenders’ embolden in their victims’ fear to come forward. Rather, the negative sign on both policies suggests that the impact of intensified immigration enforcement originates from victims’ misreporting, either because they find it harder to gain economic independence and break away from an abusive relationship, and/or because of fear of being scrutinized and have a harder time securing a permanent immigration status if they go to the police.

Yet, only representative survey data can allow us to decipher if the observed decrease (increase) in VAWA self-petitions following the implementation of tougher interior immigration enforcement (sanctuary policies) was the result of changes in victims' reporting or, rather, in the incidence of domestic violence. The latter could be the case if, for example, offenders curtail their behavior as they perceive a higher probability of being caught as policing intensifies in areas with more enforcement. Likewise, they would increase their offending when policing in their areas is perceived as somewhat laxer.

Alternatively, one might be concerned about the role of intensified immigration enforcement on the migrant stock's composition -not only through deportations, which reached 400,000 per year during the 2008-2012 period (Vaughan 2013),<sup>39</sup> but also in luring new migrants. If low-skill, low-income immigrant women -both traits often associated to a higher incidence of domestic violence (Aizer 2010), became less likely to be part of the migrant stock as the immigration policy climate hardened, it could be possible for VAWA self-reports to drop; not because of curtailed reporting by women but, rather, due to reductions in domestic violence incidents. Similarly, if a laxer cooperation between law enforcement agencies and ICE helps attract migrants,<sup>40</sup> especially women of low socio-economic status, the incidence of domestic violence could rise and, along with it, the rate of VAWA self-petitions.

Because of the well-known extended misreporting in domestic violence, including in emergency room use data (Frieze and Browne 1989; Rhodes *et al.* 2011),<sup>41</sup> the only way to assess if changes in domestic violence are reflective of changes in victimization, as opposed to changes in reporting, would be to have reliable and representative self-reported data on

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<sup>39</sup> More than 90 percent of deportees were men (Capps *et al.* 2016).

<sup>40</sup> Table 3 already assesses if the composition of the population, in terms of non-citizen share, changed with the adoption of the policies. We are unable to find evidence of that being the case.

<sup>41</sup> Only a share of domestic violence victims seek help in emergency room departments (Frieze *et al.* 1989). Using U.S. data over a four-year period, Rhodes *et al.* (2011) documents that less than 80 percent of female victims of intimate partner violence visit emergency departments, and 72 percent are not identified as victims of abuse.

victimization at the (state, year) level. Unfortunately, such data are not publicly available.<sup>42</sup> Hence, we turn our focus to a related type of criminal incident unlikely to suffer from misreporting –namely, domestic homicides. Domestic homicides are typically preceded by prior episodes of domestic violence and, consequently, domestic violence and domestic homicide should be highly correlated.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, if intensified interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies were impacting VAWA self-petition rates by lowering the incidence of domestic violence incidents, we would also expect to observe subsequent reductions in domestic homicides, with the opposite being the case with sanctuary policies.<sup>44</sup>

To explore if that has been the case, Table 6 displays the results from regressing various measures of domestic, as well as non-domestic, homicide rates on the policy variables capturing intensified immigration enforcement and the adoption of a sanctuary policy. In column 1, we look at all domestic homicide rates, regardless of whether they were committed by a partner or another family member. In column 2, we experiment with excluding domestic homicides committed by an ex-spouse from the domestic homicide rate in column 1, since domestic violence committed by ex-spouses might not qualify for a VAWA self-petition if partners were separated for more than 2 years. In column 3, we look at all other (or non-domestic) homicides. Finally, in columns 4 and 5, we split domestic homicides into those committed by a partner versus those committed by other family members.<sup>45</sup>

Regardless of the homicide measure used, we fail to find evidence of a statistically significant relationship between any of the two types of immigration policy measures and

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<sup>42</sup> The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) collects representative data on victimizations. However, the data are not publicly available at the state level.

<sup>43</sup> Office of Justice Programs National Institute of Justice at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/jr000250.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> We use homicide data from Supplemental Homicides Reports (SHR) within the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program (U.S. Department of Justice 2018).

<sup>45</sup> Due to the greater prevalence, we focus on domestic homicide cases with a female victim and a male offender (Violence Policy Center 2019).

domestic (as well as non-domestic) homicide rates. In other words, domestic homicide rates do not appear to have significantly changed with immigration policy. The lack of significant changes in domestic homicides, which are not likely to suffer from misreporting but are positively correlated to domestic violence incidents, provides further suggestive evidence of the impacts attributed to intensified interior immigration enforcement and sanctuary policies not being driven by changes in domestic violence but, rather, in its reporting.

## 8. Summary and Conclusions

In this paper, we identify the impact of recent immigration policies on domestic violence reporting by immigrants, as captured by their VAWA self-petitions. Specifically, exploiting the temporal and geographic variation in the adoption of tougher immigration enforcement and sanctuary city policies, we show that immigration enforcement curbs the rate of VAWA self-petitions by 8.38 percent; whereas the adoption of sanctuary practices partially offsets that impact, raising the rate of VAWA petitions by 5.72 percent. Additionally, we provide evidence of the channel through which these impacts are likely taking place -namely, through victims' reporting.

The findings, which prove robust to a number of identification and robustness checks, underscore one of the many unintended consequences of tougher immigration enforcement, as well as the value of safeguards that guarantee immigrants feel safe to come forward when they are victims of crimes. To our knowledge, this is the first study examining how immigration policies are affecting the reporting of domestic violence by migrant victims. Aside from contributing to the literature on the consequences of immigration policy on immigrants and their families ( *e.g.* Amuedo-Dorantes, Arenas-Arroyo, and Sevilla 2018), the analysis informs about domestic violence survivors' behavioral responses to public policies. In the same line as (Miller and Segal 2019), our results provide further evidence of individuals being more likely to report a crime when they trust on the police. Improving the reporting of crimes is key in ensuring safety and criminal justice at a time of growing police mistrust by minorities, heightened immigrant vulnerability to crime due to migrants' reluctance to contact law enforcement, and the magnitude of domestic violence worldwide.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The World Health Organization describes violence against women as a “global public health problem of epidemic proportions.” For a detailed discussion of these costs and the urgency of this problem, please visit: [http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2013/violence\\_against\\_women\\_20130620/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2013/violence_against_women_20130620/en/)

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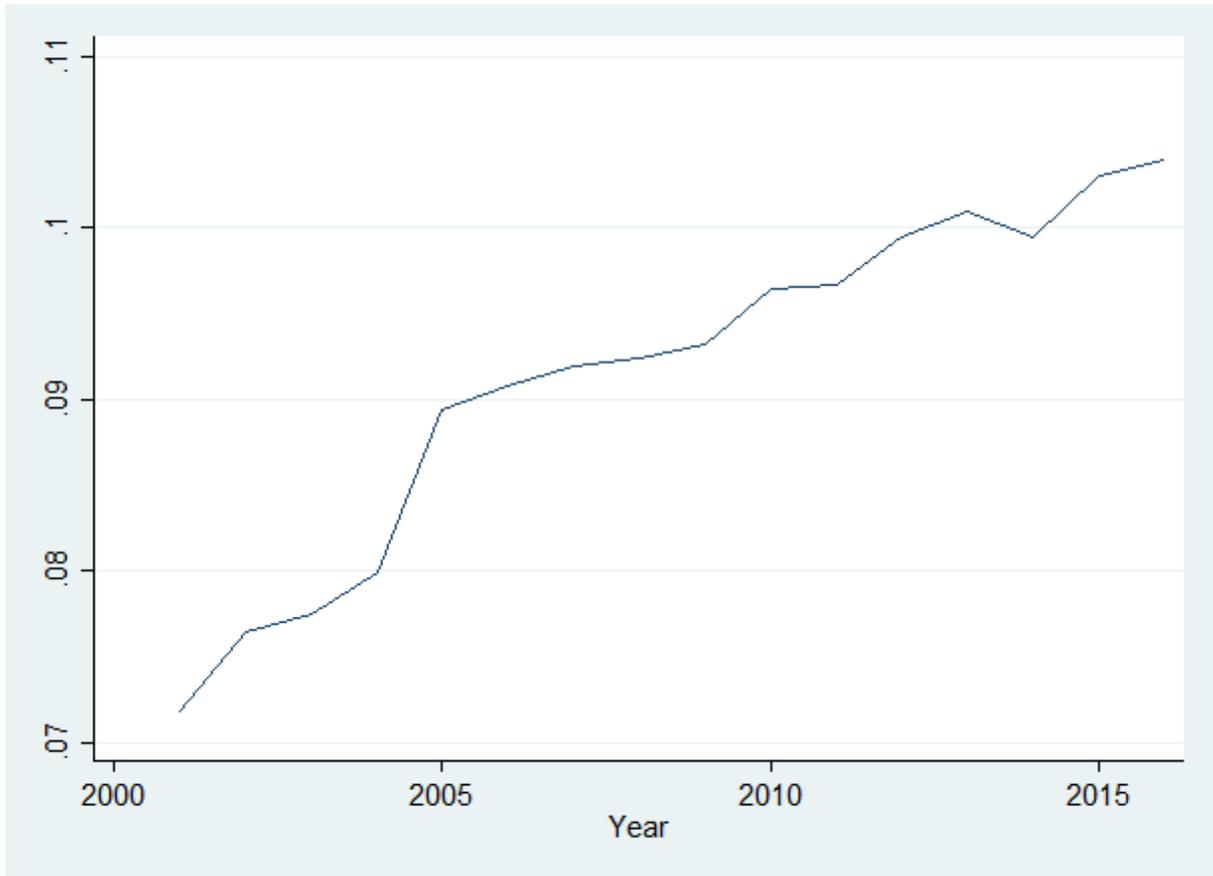
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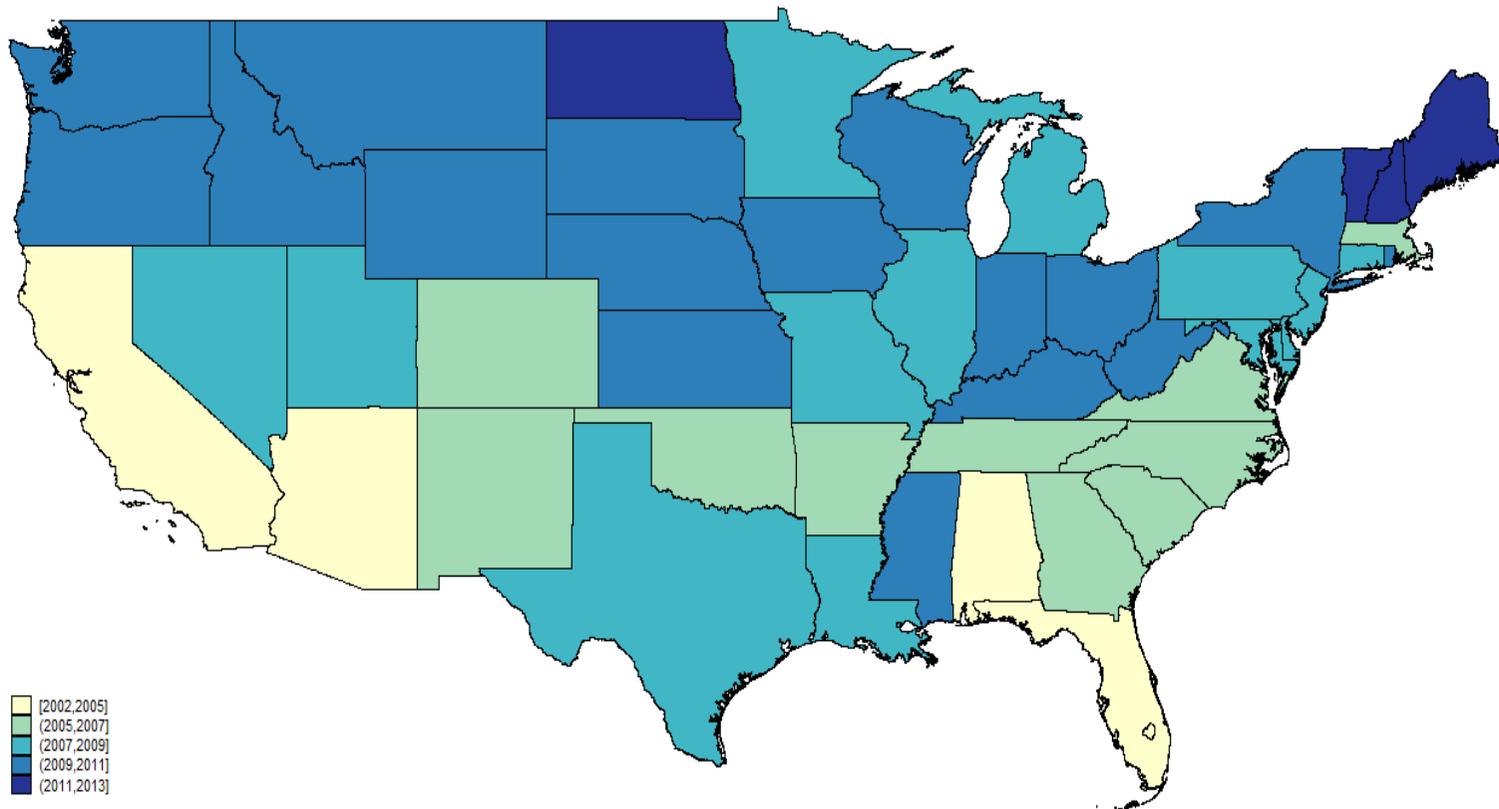


**Figure 1**  
**Share of Mixed-Citizenship Couples**



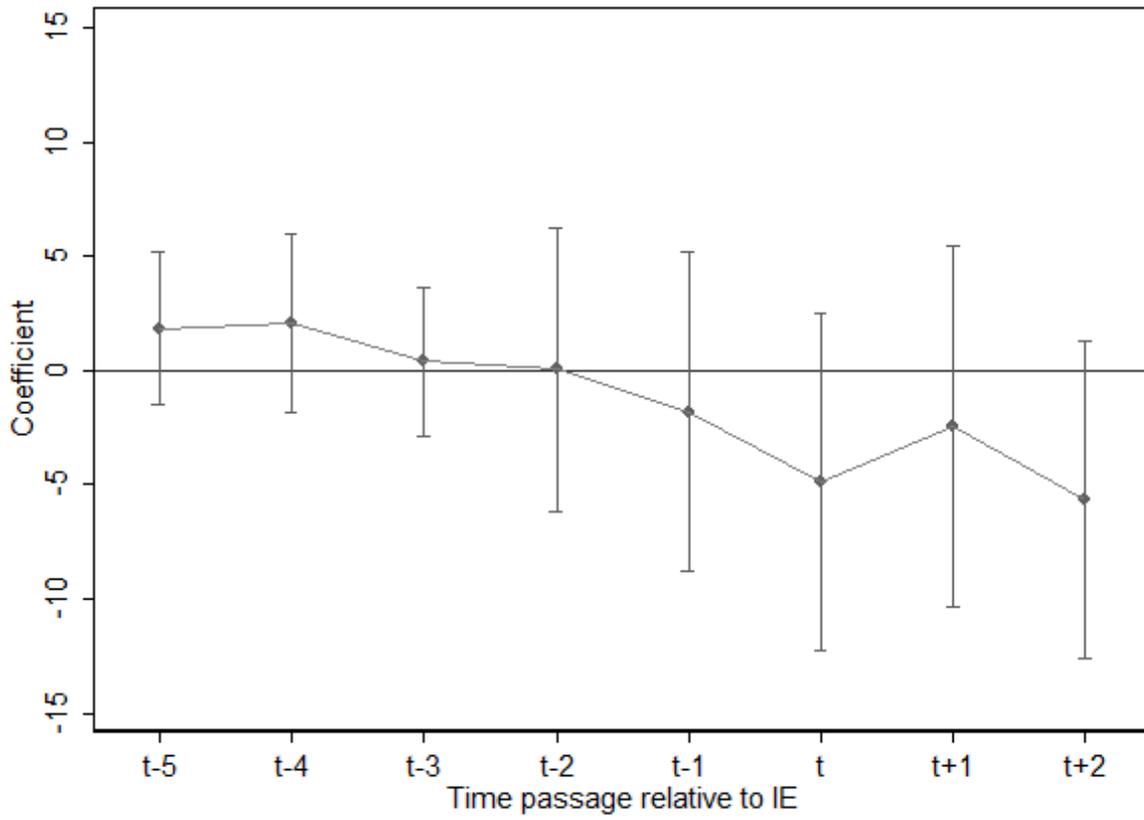
**Notes:** Share of married couples with at least one non-citizen member per married couples.  
**Source:** Authors' calculation using ACS data.

**Figure 2: Rollout of Interior Immigration Enforcement**

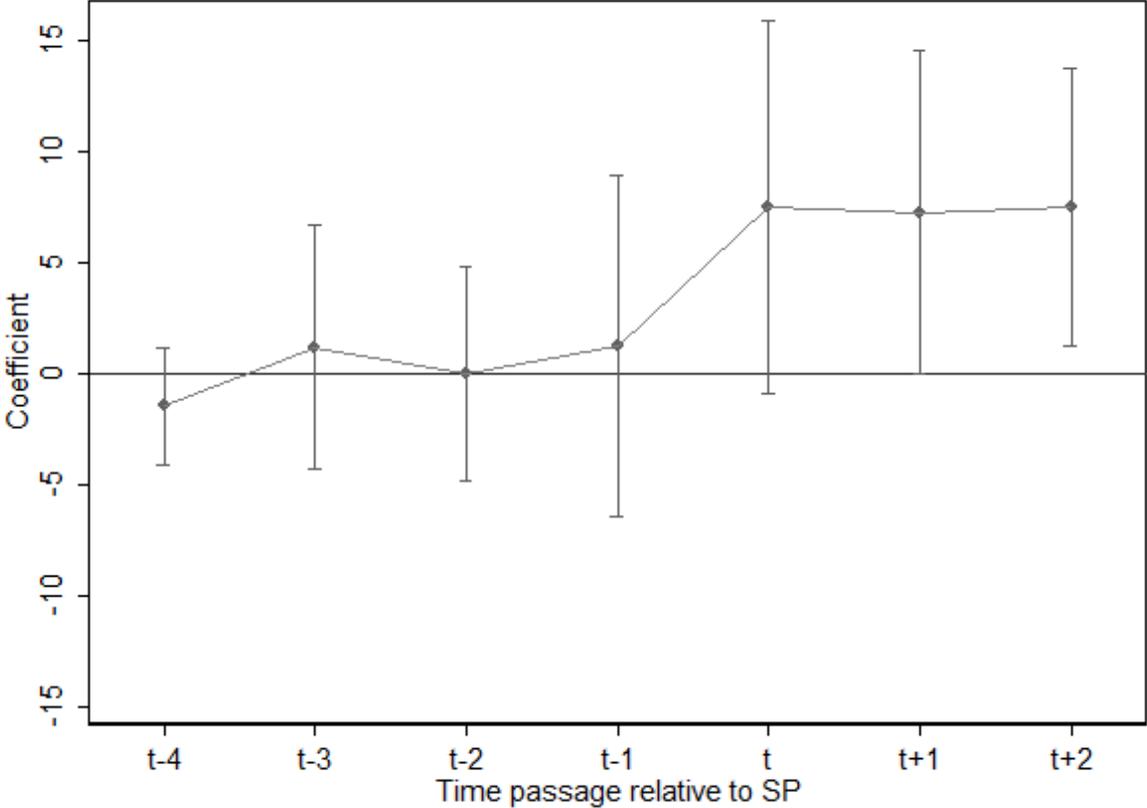




**Figure 4A**  
**Identification Check #1: Event Study Using the Timing of IE**



**Figure 4B**  
**Identification Check #1: Event Study Using the Timing of Sanctuary Policies**



**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>N</b>
<i>Dependent Variable</i>			
VAWA Self-petitions Rate	36.05	22.66	867
<i>Independent Variables</i>			
<i>Policy Measures:</i>			
Sanctuary Policies (SP)	0.01	0.11	867
Immigration Enforcement (IE)	1.20	0.46	867
<i>State-level Time-Varying Characteristics:</i>			
Share Hispanic	0.10	0.10	867
Share Black	0.11	0.11	867
Share Asian	0.01	0.03	867
Ln (Female Population)	0.30	0.02	867
Wage Ratio	1.03	0.18	867
Ln (Income Per Capita)	6.10	0.17	867
Unemployment Rate	0.06	0.02	867
Ln (Violent Crime)	9.48	1.26	867
Share Female Officers	0.10	0.03	867
<i>Alternative Policy Measures Used in Robustness Checks:</i>			
Deportations	6.30	10.68	867
Total Immigration Enforcement	1.58	0.76	867
Total Sanctuary Policies	0.053	0.22	867

**Table 2: Immigration Policy and VAWA Self-petitions – OLS Estimates**

<b>Model Specification</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b>Regressors</b>	<b>Coefficient (S.E.)</b>	<b>Coefficient (S.E.)</b>	<b>Coefficient (S.E.)</b>
Sanctuary Policies (SP)	5.9495* (3.234)	4.8767** (2.311)	5.7242*** (2.046)
Immigration Enforcement (IE)	-6.4222* (3.514)	-6.5547* (3.370)	-6.5727* (3.347)
Share Hispanic		-53.1727 (64.305)	-49.6547 (62.414)
Share Black		-80.8647 (63.815)	-72.4172 (57.611)
Share Asian		-0.0000 (0.000)	-0.0000 (0.000)
Wage Ratio		0.8344 (2.753)	0.6196 (2.605)
Ln(Income Per Capita)		4.6334 (36.196)	8.0811 (29.915)
Unemployment Rate		23.2594 (51.583)	30.3581 (55.633)
Ln(Female Population)		9.0286 (73.094)	8.8471 (70.139)
Ln(Violent Crime)			-2.7419 (18.777)
Share Female Officers			167.0174 (124.210)
Observations	867	867	867
R-squared	0.885	0.887	0.888
State FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Notes:** All regressions include a constant term. Robust standard errors are in parentheses and standard errors are clustered at the state level. \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.10.

**Table 3**  
**Identification Checks**

<b>Panel A: Identification Check #2: Endogenous Enactment of Immigration Polices</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>First Year IE&gt;0</b>	<b>First Year SP&gt;0</b>
VAWA Self-petitions	0.0250 (0.034)	-1.6619 (4.782)
State Level Characteristics	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,142	3,142
R-squared	0.272	0.192
<b>Panel B: Identification Check #3: Selective Location of Non-citizens</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Share Non-Citizen</b>	<b>Share Non-Citizen</b>
SP One Year Prior	-0.0005 (0.004)	- -
IE One Year Prior	0.0004 (0.002)	- -
SP Two Years Prior	- -	-0.0010 (0.004)
IE Two Years Prior	- -	-0.0016 (0.001)
State Level Characteristics	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes
State FE	Yes	Yes
State Trend	Yes	Yes
Observations	816	765
R-squared	0.977	0.979

**Notes:** All regressions include a constant. Robust standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the state level. \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.1.

**Table 4: Robustness Checks**

<b>Specification Check:</b>	<b>Alternative IE and SP Measures</b>		<b>Alternative D.V.</b>	<b>Divorce Rate</b>	<b>Widower Rate</b>
<b>Column:</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
Sanctuary Policies (SP)	-	5.0213*	3.6580***	-0.004**	0.001
	-	(2.604)	(1.043)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Alternative Sanctuary Policies (SP)	3.2540**	5.0213*	-	-	-
	(1.608)	(2.604)	-	-	-
Immigration Enforcement (IE)	-	-	-3.3855*	0.027***	-0.002
	-	-	(1.822)	(0.008)	(0.035)
Alternative IE Index	-4.7403*	-	-	-	-
	(2.404)	-	-	-	-
Deportations	-	-0.1507*	-	-	-
	-	(0.087)	-	-	-
Observations	867	867	867	510	510
R-squared	0.886	0.856	0.866	0.916	0.918
State-Level Characteristics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dependent Variable Mean				0.034	0.03

**Notes:** The model includes a constant term, as well as the controls in specification (2) of Table 2. Column 1 includes state and local policies. Column 2 uses deportations as measure of IE. Deportations refer to those due to immigration charges. They are measured per 1,000 non-citizens. The data are available from: [http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/charges/deport\\_filing\\_charge.php](http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/charges/deport_filing_charge.php). Column 3 defines the outcome as the share of VAWA self-petitions by 100,000 foreign born. Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

**Table 5**  
**Mechanisms #1: Impact by Type of Enforcement Policy**

<b>Regressors</b>	<b>Coefficient (S.E.)</b>
Police-based Immigration Enforcement	-4.7010* (2.666)
Employment-based Immigration Enforcement	-9.7852* (5.117)
SP	5.7100*** (2.051)
Observations	867
R-squared	0.888
State FE	Yes
Year FE	Yes
State-Trend	Yes

**Table 6**  
**Mechanisms #2: Changes in Reporting or Changes in the Incidence of Domestic Violence?**

<b>Column:</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(5)</b>
<b>Subsample:</b>	<b>Domestic Homicides</b>	<b>Domestic Homicides</b>	<b>Other Homicides</b>	<b>Partner Homicides</b>	<b>Family Homicides</b>
SP	0.0214 (0.025)	0.0281 (0.026)	0.2773 (0.487)	0.0167 (0.023)	0.0047 (0.011)
IE	0.0085 (0.013)	0.0024 (0.015)	0.0661 (0.063)	0.0044 (0.011)	0.0041 (0.008)
Observations	834	834	834	834	834
R-squared	0.750	0.734	0.930	0.740	0.455
State FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-Trend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dependent Variable Mean	0.321	0.301	2.74	0.23	0.09

**Notes:** Domestic homicides committed by a partner (wife, husband, ex-wife, ex-husband) or family member (parent, son or daughter) are our dependent variable in column (1). Column (2) excludes those committed by an ex-wife or ex-husband since domestic abuse by the latter might not qualify for a VAWA self-petition if the victim was separated for longer than 2 years. Results prove robust to that exclusion. Column (3) refers to non-domestic homicides. Finally, column (4) regresses domestic homicides committed exclusively by a partner (wife, husband, ex-wife or ex-husband), whereas column (5) focuses on domestic homicides by a family member (parent, son or daughter). All homicides are measured per 100,000 people. All regressions include a constant term, as well as the controls in Table 2. Robust standard errors are in parentheses and standards errors are clustered at the state level. \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.10.

## **APPENDIX A: What is Domestic Violence?**

- Domestic violence occurs when an intimate partner or spouse threatens or abuses the other partner. Abuse may include physical harm, forced sexual relations, emotional manipulation (including isolation or intimidation), economic and/or immigration related threats.
- Domestic violence may include sexual assault, child abuse, and other violent crimes. Sexual assault is any type of non-consensual sexual activity, even by a spouse.
- Child abuse includes physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services: <https://www.uscis.gov/news/fact-sheets/information-legal-rights-available-immigrant-victims-domestic-violence-united-states-and-facts-about-immigrating-marriage-based-visa-fact-sheet>

APPENDIX B

Table A: Immigration Enforcement Programs

Nature of the Law	Law	Years	Where?	Objective	Who implements it?	Scope	Signed by	What it Consists of:
Police-Based Measures	287(g)	2002-2012	Street/Jail	Make communities safer by the identification and removal of serious criminals	State and local law enforcement entities	State and Local (County, City or Town)	State and local enforcement entities signed a contract (Memorandum of Agreement - MOA) with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)	There are various functions: <b>Task Force:</b> allows local and state officers interrogate and arrest noncitizens during their regular duties on law enforcement operations. <b>Jail enforcement</b> permits local officers to question immigrants arrested on state and local charges about their immigration status. <b>Hybrid model:</b> which allow participate in both types of programs.
	SC	2009-2014 2017-	Nation's jail and prisons	Identify noncitizens who have committed serious crime using biometric information	Police	Local (County)	Jurisdictions	The program allows for the submission of biometric information on detainees checked against records in FBI and DHS databases.
	OILs	2010-	Street/Jail	Identification noncitizen	State and local law enforcement entities	State	State governor	Comprehensive laws that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A "show me your papers" clause, enabling the police to request proper identification documentation during a lawful stop.</li> <li>Require that schools report students' legal status.</li> </ul>

**Table B: Variable Definitions and Sources**

<b>Variable Name</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Source</b>
VAWA Self-petitions Rate	Share of VAWA self-petitions per 100,000 non-citizens by state and year.	U.S. CIS by FOIA request
Share Hispanic	Share Hispanic by state and year	
Share Black	Share black by state and year	
Share Asian	Share Asian by state and year	
Share Female	Share female between 15 and 44 years old	
Wage Ratio	Ratio of female to male wages constructed as in Aizer (2010)	American Community Survey (2000 to 2016)
Income Per Capita	Per capita income by state and year	
Unemployment Rate	Unemployment rate by state and year	
Violent Crime	Violent crime by state and year	Uniform Crime Reporting Statistics (UCR)
Share Female Officers	Share Female Officers by state and year	Law Enforcement Officers Killed or Assaulted (LEOKA)

**Table C: Details on the VAWA Self-Petition Process**

<b>Processing times</b>	150 days to 10 months - processing times can be tracked on the USCIS website.
<b>Benefits</b>	Receipt of certain public benefits when eligible (this might occur upon receipt of <i>prima facie</i> note acknowledging the petition and the possibility it might be granted) and, if granted, the ability to file for permanent residency for oneself and immediate relatives.
<b>Cost</b>	Form I-360, Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant: \$0
<b>Documents</b> <sup>48</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the abuser’s U.S. citizenship or lawful permanent resident status.</li> <li>• Marriage and divorce decrees, birth certificates, or other evidence of your legal relationship to the abuser.</li> <li>• One or more documents showing that the victim and the abuser resided together, such as employment records, utility receipts, school records, hospital or medical records, birth certificates of children, mortgages, rental records, insurance policies, or affidavits.</li> <li>• Evidence of the abuse, such as reports and affidavits from police, judges, court officials, medical personnel, school officials, clergy, social workers, and other social service agency personnel.</li> <li>• For individuals 14 years of age or older: affidavit of good moral character accompanied by a local police clearance, state-issued criminal background check, or similar report from each locality or state in the United States or abroad where the migrant has resided for six or more months during the three-year period immediately before filing the self-petition.</li> <li>• For spouses: evidence showing they entered the marriage in good faith, such as proof that one spouse has been listed as the other’s spouse on insurance policies, property leases, properly filed tax forms, or bank statements. One may also submit one’s affidavit or affidavits of others who have knowledge of the courtship, wedding ceremony, shared residence, and other life experiences, if available.</li> </ul>

<sup>48</sup> Source: <https://www.uscis.gov/i-360Checklist>

**Table D: Net Effect of Immigration Enforcement and Sanctuary Policies**

<b>Regressor</b>	<b>Coefficient (S.E.)</b>
IE*SP	5.7242*** (2.046)
IE	-8.2344*** (2.762)
SP	4.2058*** (1.481)
Observations	867
R-squared	0.888
State-Level Characteristics	Yes
State FE	Yes
Year FE	Yes
State-Trend	Yes

**Notes:** The regression includes a constant term. Robust standard errors are in parentheses and standards errors are clustered at the state level. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.10$ .

## Appendix B: Alternative measures of Immigration Policies

### 1. Immigration Enforcement

Since these immigration policies have been enacted at different geographic levels and points in time, we construct an index that serves as a proxy for the intensification of immigration enforcement and provides several advantages over inclusion of multiple policy indicators. *First*, the index not only addresses the distinct geographic coverage of the various measures (some at the county level, others at the state level) through the construction of a population weighted measure of immigration enforcement but, in addition, it accounts for the number of months each measure was in place in that particular year. In that manner, it helps capturing the depth and intensity of immigration enforcement in a given MSA, as opposed to just whether enforcement existed or not. *Second*, immigration enforcement is an interconnected system administered by various federal, state, and local authorities and agencies with similar missions and measures enacted as a continuum of prior existing measures, as in the case of the 287(g) program and its successor –the Secure Communities program. Not only are the various immigration enforcement initiatives correlated but, in addition, the effectiveness of any given measure is often linked to its combination with other initiatives. The index allows us to capture this interconnectedness better by combining them into one measure. *Third*, the index provides a more manageable and comprehensive way of measuring and assessing the overall impact of intensified interior immigration.<sup>49</sup> We proceed by calculating the following population-weighted index for each enforcement initiative  $k$ :

$$(1) \quad IE_{st}^k = \frac{1}{N_{2000}} \sum_{c \in s} \frac{1}{12} \sum_{m=1}^{12} \mathbf{1}(E_{m,c}) P_{c,2000}$$

where  $\mathbf{1}(E_{m,c})$  is an indicator function that informs about the implementation of a particular policy in county  $c$  during month  $m$  in year  $t$ . The index  $IE_{st}^k$  takes into account: (1) the number of months during which policy  $k$  was in place in year  $t$ ,<sup>50</sup> as well as (2) the size of the state's population affected by its implementation.<sup>51</sup> The overall enforcement to which women living in state  $s$  and year  $t$  are exposed to is then computed as the sum of the indices for each enforcement initiative at the (state, year) level:<sup>52</sup>

$$(2) \quad IE_{s,t} = \sum_{k \in K} IE_{s,t}^k$$

### 2. Sanctuary Policies

We also gather data on the enactment of Trust Acts and on the adoption of sanctuary practices at the county level. A non-negligible number of cities, counties, and states have either adopted formal laws limiting the cooperation of their law enforcement with ICE through the

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<sup>49</sup> We recognize the index is just a proxy of the intensity of immigration enforcement to which respondents might be exposed. In robustness checks, we also experiment with an alternative measure of enforcement intensity - namely, the volume of deportations. Our main findings prove robust to the use of the various measures.

<sup>50</sup> Specifically, the summation over the 12 months in the year captures the share of months during which the measure was in place in any given year.

<sup>51</sup> To weigh it population-wise, we use the term:  $P_{c,2000}$  –namely, the population of county  $c$  according to the 2000 Census (prior to the rolling of any of the enforcement initiatives being considered), and  $N$  –the total population in state  $s$ .

<sup>52</sup> Where  $k$  refers to each policy, *i.e.*: 287(g) local agreements, 287(g) state agreements, Secure Communities, Omnibus Immigration Laws.

enactment of Trust Acts<sup>53</sup> or, alternatively, through ordinances, resolutions, regulations or simply the practice of refusing to observe ICE detainers. These practices, most of which flourished after the implementation of the Secure Communities Program, were aimed at increasing community trust and cooperation with the police, particularly in immigrant communities. Their adoption rendered these localities the label of “sanctuary cities.”<sup>54</sup>

As with immigration enforcement, we opt for combining all the various actions on the part of local and state-level law enforcement departments into a separate index in order to gauge their impact. Specifically, using information on the adoption geographic scope and timing of such practices, we construct a population-weighted index indicative of the adoption of sanctuary policies at the state-year level that we refer to as  $SCP_{s,t}$ .<sup>55</sup>

$$(3) \text{ Sanctuary Practices}_{s,t} = SP_{s,t} = \sum_{k \in K} \left[ \frac{1}{N_{2000}} \sum_{c \in S} \frac{1}{12} \sum_{m=1}^{12} \mathbf{1}(SCP_{m,c}) P_{c,2000} \right]_{s,t}^k$$

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<sup>53</sup> For instance, California Senate Bill 54 effectively makes California a “sanctuary state” by legalizing and standardizing state-wide non-cooperation policies between California law enforcement agencies and federal immigration authorities. See: <https://www.fairus.org/legislation/state-local-legislation/california-sanctuary-state-bill-sb-54-summary-and-history>

<sup>54</sup> See: <https://cis.org/Map-Sanctuary-Cities-Counties-and-States>

<sup>55</sup> Where  $k$  refers to whether the adoption of the local or statewide Trust Acts, ordinances, regulations, resolutions, policies or, simply, practices.