

Agents arrest 115 immigrants

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Body

In a five-day operation that ended yesterday, federal **agents** in Pennsylvania and Delaware **arrested 115 immigrants** - all of whom face deportation.

Some had been made deportable by felony convictions. Most had overstayed visas or never had documents allowing them to live in the United States. Almost all had ignored deportation orders.

The **arrests**, announced yesterday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, were part of Operation Return to Sender. The nationwide effort was launched four months ago in the midst of a heated debate on immigration that has laid bare populist anger at the federal government for its perceived failure to crack down on illegal migrants.

Of the **115 arrests**, 55 were in Philadelphia and its suburbs, including Upper Darby, Millbourne, Devon and Bensalem.

ICE **agents**, working with local law enforcement, **arrested** at least four men with criminal convictions such as narcotics, weapons and sex offenses, including David Dominguez-Navarro, 35. A Salvadoran living in Bensalem, Dominguez-Navarro was convicted of burglary, larceny, narcotics and other charges. He reentered the country illegally after being deported.

"America is a welcoming land of opportunity to the millions of **immigrants** who arrive here legally and live by our laws," said Thomas Decker, director of ICE's Office of Detention and Removal in Philadelphia. "Those who come here illegally or violate our laws forfeit their access to opportunity and the privilege of staying in the United States."

In the last fiscal year, the Philadelphia office **arrested** 700 illegal **immigrants**, almost twice the number in fiscal 2005.

Since the immigration debate seized national headlines early this year, police and ordinary citizens have bombarded the Philadelphia office with tips, **agents** said.

Since May, when Return to Sender was launched, more than 12,000 illegal **immigrants** have been **arrested** and deported nationwide, said Marc Raimondi, a spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees ICE.

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