

Immigration Wars: How to Waste Money and Treat People Cruelly

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Highlight: Sometimes one person's story captures a big, national issue.

Body

We have written a lot on our editorial page about **immigration** policy - or rather the lack of a coherent, comprehensive **immigration** policy. Sometimes big national issues can boil down to one person's story.

Lawrence Downes, who covers **immigration** issues for the editorial page, pointed out [an article today by Nina Bernstein](#) about a Mexican immigrant in Brooklyn, a waiter named Angel, whose kidneys are failing. Dialysis keeps him alive. His brother is willing to donate a kidney, but Angel can't get a transplant because he is here illegally.

Hospitals won't agree to the transplant because they are not sure they'll get reimbursed. So they want to be paid up front, with **money** Angel doesn't have. He can't buy private insurance because of his pre-existing condition. And he can't go home to Mexico without risking both his livelihood and his family. His children are American citizens.

Instead Angel gets outpatient dialysis, which costs taxpayers \$75,000 a year because it is emergency treatment under Medicaid in New York. A transplant would cost \$100,000, end the dialysis and double Angel's life expectancy.

Ms. Bernstein talked with Dana Rohrabacher, a Republican Congressman from California who is one of the most unreasonable anti-immigrant voices in the House, which is really saying something.

He had a simple formula for illegal immigrants: "If they're dead, I don't have an objection to their organs being used. If they're alive, they shouldn't be here no matter what."

And that highlights one of the many reasons we have no **immigration** policy: Plain old cold-hearted xenophobia.

- [Opinion Report: Donald Berwick Speaks Out](#)
- [Yes, Racial Profiling Is Illegal](#)
- [Opinion Report: Public Sector Cuts](#)
- [The Immigrant Fitness Test](#)
- [Opinion Report: Alabama's **Immigration** Law](#)

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