

**DECLARATION OF NESTOR RODRIGUEZ**

I, Nestor Rodriguez, declare as follows:

I make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge and if called to testify I could and would do so competently as follows.

**I. Qualifications**

1. I am currently a Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin in Austin, TX. I have held this position since September 2008. I have a B.A. in Sociology and Political Science, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology. See Nestor Rodriguez faculty profile: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/sociology/faculty/npr62>

2. I have conducted research on Central American migration to the United States since the summer of 1985. I published the first-ever journal article on Central American immigration in the United States. The article, “Undocumented Central Americans in Houston: Diverse Populations,” appeared in the peer-reviewed journal *International Migration Review*, volume 21, in 1987. I have published 89 research papers since completing my doctoral studies, of which 52 concern migration research and 21 concern Central American migration. I have a recent coauthored book, *Guatemala-U.S. Migration: Transforming Regions*, which was published by the University of Texas Press in December 2014. I have given congressional testimony before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives. Hearings on Consequences of U.S. Deportations of Immigrants to Latin American Countries. 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, first session, July 24, 2007 - <http://archives.republicans.foreignaffairs.house.gov/110/36988.pdf>.

3. Previously, I provided a declaration, dated December 12, 2014, in which I presented my considered opinions on the causes of increased migration from Central America to the United

States, including that of large numbers of women and children, and the effect or lack thereof of detention upon migration flows. That declaration responded, in part, to two declarations submitted by Department of Homeland Security attorneys in bond proceedings for detained Central American women and children seeking asylum: one by Philip T. Miller and the other by Tracy A. Lembke.

4. My conclusion, based upon three decades of research into the causes of migration from Central America to the United States, was that changes in the detention policy of asylum seeking women and children from Central America will have no effect on migration patterns.

5. In this declaration, I reaffirm my previous conclusions.

## **II. Opinion**

6. I have reviewed the Declarations of Tae D. Johnson, Ronald Vitiello, and Thomas Homan. These declarations reiterate the theory that the expansion of family detention deters the migration of Central Americans. They offer two grounds for this claim. The first is interviews with migrant Central Americans. Johnson ¶ 7, Vitiello ¶¶ 9, 10, 11, Homan ¶ 6. The second ground is the presentation of recent statistics showing a short-term decrease in the number of families apprehended at the border. Vitiello ¶ 14.

7. The statements in the three declarations do not change my previous conclusions.

8. The declarations do not present sufficient information or analysis to allow for conclusions to be reached using valid social science methodology. The experience and interviews described might give an idea of some of the factors to explore or to consider in analyzing migration trends or the relation between detention and migration. However, the data presented are insufficient to reach conclusions.

9. For example, the Vitiello Declaration offers conclusory statements regarding the effect of

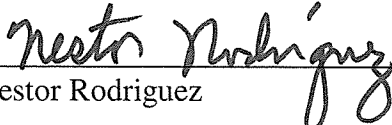
prior enforcement efforts, in 1989 and 2005, on migration. Vitiello ¶¶ 12, 13. Without any further information – for example, the length of detention, type of migrant detained, changes in conditions in the country of origin, or even simple demographic data showing the change in numbers over time – these conclusions are unreliable, since they are not supported by empirical data. The claim that a recent decrease in families apprehended along the border is the result of recent detention policies is similarly flawed, as it presents an untested hypothesis regarding an extremely complex phenomenon that does not begin to address alternate factors that may contribute to the change. For instance, recent media reports have shown how the Mexican government has stepped up immigration enforcement on its southern border with Guatemala and returned thousands of unauthorized migrants back to Central America (<http://www.ibtimes.com/mexico-steps-deportations-central-american-migrants-1870618>). This phenomenon may be an important factor in analyzing current numbers of arrivals of families at the U.S. southern border.

10. My previous conclusion was based on three decades of social science research concerning the causes of migration. The additional declarations do not change that conclusion: the detention of asylum seeking families from Central America does not have an effect on migration patterns.

### **III. Conclusion**

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States and the District of Columbia that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 13th day of April, 2015, at Austin, Texas.

  
Nestor Rodriguez