



Press Release

Closing the Southern Border: Historical Precedents and Anticipated Impacts

ANDREW EVANS | APRIL 3, 2019

President Trump recently announced that he will close the southern border due to the volume of asylum seekers. AAF's Director of Immigration and Trade Policy Jacqueline Varas explores what this policy could mean by examining the current state of immigration and trade at the U.S.-Mexico border as well as past closures.

She finds:

- The increased number of people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border and seeking asylum – while not outside of historical norms – has strained U.S. immigration officers and spurred President Trump to announce that he will “close” the border;
- While the details of the president’s plan are unclear, closing the border will cause massive disruptions: Each day on average, 529,000 people legally cross the border, as do \$1.7 million in goods, 17,000 trucks, and 3,000 trains; and
- A far better approach to address the uptick in asylum seekers would be to allocate more resources to immigration officers and judges tasked with processing both legitimate and illegitimate claims of asylum.

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