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Editorial

## An immigration policy that fails everyone

The 32 workers arrested last week at an Arlington aircraft-manufacturing plant are just the latest of thousands arrested by federal agents on suspicion they are not legal residents.

The 32 workers arrested last week at an Arlington aircraft-manufacturing plant are just the latest of thousands arrested by federal agents on suspicion they are not legal residents.

And they are the latest evidence underscoring the urgency for comprehensive immigration reform. Lax U.S. policy has created an underground labor force to grow, underpinning major industries from agriculture to hospitality to construction.

Last month, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels joined the mayors of Oakland and Los Angeles in successfully persuading the U.S. Conference of Mayors to pass a resolution urging U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to change its focus. With a nod to how important these workers are to the economy, the resolution urges ICE to focus its enforcement on employers that are suspected of exploiting the workers.

Last year's momentum on federal immigration reform that promised to bring illegal workers out of the shadows all but disappeared as the presidential-campaign season heated up. Meanwhile last year, the agency arrested more than 4,000 workers in workplace raids for being in the country illegally. ICE officials say the Arlington raid was part of a program focusing on companies where they might encounter sensitive security information, which seems like a reasonable focus.

However, U.S. political leaders have permitted immigration policy to remain a horrible mess that is bad for individuals, employers and the economy.

These workplace-by-workplace raids only prove that point.

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