

SACRAMENTO

AP FACT CHECK: Newsom wrong on illegal border crossings

While arrests along the Mexican border fell to 303,916 in the 2017 budget year, the lowest since 1971, they jumped 31 percent last year to 396,579



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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California Gov. Gavin Newsom devoted part of his [first State of the State address to attacking President Donald Trump's positions on illegal immigration](#), declaring, "This border emergency is nothing more than a manufactured crisis and California will not be part of this political theater."

His rhetoric in Tuesday's speech was similar to that of his Democratic predecessor, Gov. Jerry Brown. His nascent record suggests that he wants even greater distance from Trump on one of the president's signature issues.

In his first budget proposal, Newsom earmarked \$25 million to groups that address what he calls "a humanitarian crisis at the state's border with Mexico," including \$5 million to be made available this year. There has been a sharp increase in Central American asylum-seeking

families arriving in San Diego who are quickly released by immigration authorities with a notice to appear in court.

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On Monday, the Democratic leader ordered the withdrawal of most of the state's National Guard troops assigned to Trump's mission on the Mexican border.

Here's a look at the veracity of some of Newsom's claims in his State of the State speech:

NEWSOM: "We are currently experiencing the lowest number of (illegal) border crossings since 1971. In California, like our nation, our undocumented population is at the lowest level in more than a decade — some 550,000 fewer in our state alone."

THE FACTS: He's wrong about the current low in illegal crossings, based on Border Patrol arrests, the most widely used gauge. While arrests along the Mexican border fell to 303,916 in the 2017 budget year, the lowest since 1971, they jumped 31 percent last year to 396,579. This

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Arrests are up even more sharply on the Mexican border in the 2019 budget year, nearly doubling from October through January to 201,497 from 109,543 the same period a year earlier.

Border Patrol arrests in the San Diego sector, which covers California's western part of the Mexican border, fell to a 49-year low in 2017 but jumped 48 percent last year. Arrests during the first four months of the 2019 budget year soared 69 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Arrests in the El Centro sector, which covers the eastern part of the state's border, plunged to a 45-year low in 2015 but more than doubled over the next three years. Arrests during the first four months of the 2019 budget year are up 37 percent from the same period a year earlier.

The governor's statement about people living in the country illegally — both nationwide and in California — is correct, according to the Pew Research Center. The nationwide number fell to 10.7 million in 2016 from 12.2 million in 2007; California's dropped to 2.2 million from more than 2.7 million during the same time.

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