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Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes, Esther Arenas-Arroyo, Almudena Sevilla



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Immigration Enforcement and Economic Resources of Children With Likely Unauthorized Parents¹

Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes²

Esther Arenas-Arroyo³

Almudena Sevilla⁴

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Abstract

Over the past two decades immigration enforcement has grown exponentially in the United States. Using data from the 2005 through 2011 American Community Survey, we exploit the geographical and temporal variation in a novel index of the intensity of immigration enforcement to show how the average yearly increase in interior immigration enforcement over that period raised the likelihood of living in poverty of households with U.S. born children by 4 percent. The effect is robust to a number of identification tests accounting for the potential endogeneity of enforcement policies and residential location of immigrants, and is primarily driven by police-based immigration enforcement measures adopted at the local level, such as 287(g) agreements.

JEL Codes: I38, J15, K37

Keywords: Immigration Enforcement, Poverty, U.S. Born Children, Unauthorized Parents

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² San Diego State University, 5500 Campanile Drive, San Diego, CA 92182, USA, email: camuedod@mail.sdsu.edu

³ Corresponding author. Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), University of Oxford, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6QS, Oxfordshire, UK. Email: esther.arenas-arroyo@compas.ox.ac.uk

⁴ Queen Mary University of London, Francis Bancroft Building, Room 4.13D, Mile End Road, London, E1 4NS, Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7882 5617, email: a.sevilla@qmul.ac.uk.

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