[NSDA] Public Forum Debate (Fall 2024) - T-Chart
Topic: US should substantially expand its "surveillance infrastructure" along its southern border.

Expanding US Surveillance Infrastructure

BACKGROUND:

US border security means protecting the borders of the United States to keep the country safe. This includes tools like cameras, drones, and sensors, as well as workers like border patrol agents who watch and guard the borders. *Surveillance infrastructure* means the <u>tools and technologies used to watch and check the borders, helping border patrol agents see and track activities along the border from a distance</u>.

Those in favor of increasing surveillance believe… it is necessary to improve safety and stop illegal activities, like smuggling drugs or people. They believe that with more cameras and drones, border patrol agents can spot illegal actions quickly. For example, if cameras and drones see someone trying to cross the border illegally, they can alert the border patrol agents right away. The agents can then go to the exact spot and arrest the person before they get too far. This helps make sure that only legal and safe entries happen, making the country safer.

Those who oppose increased surveillance believe… it might invade people's privacy and hurt communities. They worry that adding more surveillance might spy on people living near the border, recording their every move and making them feel watched all the time. For example, cameras and drones might capture videos of people in their yards or walking to school, even if they are not doing anything wrong. This could make daily activities, like going to school or work, feel uncomfortable and stressful. People might feel like they have no privacy and are always being watched, which could increase feelings of stress/fear.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (PRO): General Ideas

1. **Strengthening National Security:** Terrorists and dangerous people might try to enter the country to cause harm. Increased surveillance with cameras, drones, and sensors can spot these threats quickly. This helps border patrol agents catch and stop them before they enter, keeping millions of people safe.

2. **Enhancing Economic Stability:** Illegal immigrants sometimes take jobs that pay very little, which can hurt workers who are here legally and need those jobs to support their families. Better surveillance reduces illegal entries by stopping people who try to cross the border without permission. This helps protect jobs for legal workers and keeps wages fair.

3. **Protecting Public Services:** Illegal immigration can overcrowd schools, hospitals, and other services, making it hard for legal residents to get the help they need. Increased surveillance helps catch more illegal entries, ensuring that resources are available for people who are legally allowed to use them. This leads to better quality and availability of services for legal residents.

4. **Stopping Drug Smuggling:** Drug cartels try to bring illegal drugs into the country, leading to more crime and health problems. With advanced surveillance technology, border patrol can watch for and track suspicious activities, catching and stopping drug smugglers more effectively. This keeps communities safer and reduces crime related to drugs.

5. **Fighting Human Trafficking:** Human traffickers exploit and harm people by bringing them across the border illegally. Improved surveillance helps by watching for suspicious movements and alerting border patrol quickly. This enables them to catch traffickers and rescue victims, protecting vulnerable people and preventing exploitation.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (PRO): Specific Ideas

1. <u>Strengthening National Security</u>: Strengthening border surveillance with advanced technology like cameras, drones, and sensors allows for the quick identification and prevention of potential threats. By stopping terrorists and other dangerous individuals before they enter the country, millions of Americans are kept safe from harm.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (PRO): Specific Ideas (Continued…)

2. Preventing Drug-Related Crimes: By using advanced surveillance tools, border patrol can better detect and stop illegal drug shipments. This reduces the flow of dangerous drugs like fentanyl, lowering crime rates and protecting public health.

3. Supporting Law Enforcement Efficiency: Surveillance technology allows border patrol agents to watch vast, remote areas more effectively. This increases efficiency, ensuring that the entire border is secured without using too many people.

4. Preventing Human Trafficking: Using advanced surveillance tools helps find and stop human trafficking operations. By catching traffickers and rescuing victims, border surveillance protects vulnerable people and breaks up criminal networks.

5. Maintaining Economic Stability: Reducing illegal immigration through better surveillance protects jobs for legal workers and helps keep wages fair. This prevents strain on public services like schools and hospitals, ensuring resources are available for legal residents.

6. Improving Public Safety: Increased border surveillance can help prevent crimes that cross borders, such as kidnapping and violent acts, by catching criminals before they can enter the country. This helps create a safer environment for all citizens.

7. Protecting Public Services: Illegal immigration can put pressure on public services like schools and hospitals. By increasing surveillance, illegal crossings are reduced, ensuring that these services remain available and of high quality for legal residents.

8. Enhancing Environmental Protection: Advanced surveillance technology helps to watch and prevent illegal activities that could harm the environment, such as unauthorized cutting down of trees or pollution. This protects natural resources along the border.

9. Promoting Legal Immigration: By reducing illegal crossings, better border surveillance encourages people to follow legal immigration processes. This helps maintain order and fairness in the immigration system.

10. Reducing Weapons Smuggling: Surveillance tools can detect and prevent the illegal smuggling of weapons across the border. This reduces the risk of violent crimes and ensures that weapons do not fall into the wrong hands.

11. Securing Trade Routes: Better border surveillance helps protect legal trade routes by preventing illegal activities that could disrupt business. This supports economic growth and stability by ensuring that goods move safely and efficiently across the border.

12. Encouraging Safe Crossing Points: By increasing surveillance in remote areas, more people will be directed to legal crossing points. This reduces the risks associated with dangerous and illegal border crossings, ensuring safer travel for everyone involved.

13. Protecting National Sovereignty: Better border surveillance strengthens the country's ability to control its borders, ensuring that only those with proper permission can enter. This protects national sovereignty and the rule of law.

14. Reducing the Spread of Diseases: Increased surveillance at the border helps watch and control the movement of people, reducing the risk of spreading contagious diseases. This is crucial for maintaining public health and safety.

15. Promoting Regional Stability: By preventing illegal crossings and related criminal activities, increased border surveillance contributes to regional stability. This helps create a safer and more secure environment for neighboring countries as well.

16. Providing Early Warning Systems: Surveillance technology can serve as an early warning system for potential threats, allowing border patrol agents to respond quickly and effectively. This proactive approach helps prevent problems before they get bigger.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (PRO): Specific Ideas (Continued…)

17. <u>Enhancing Crisis Management</u>: In the event of a natural disaster or emergency, increased surveillance can help watch and manage the movement of people. This ensures that resources are used effectively and that public safety is maintained.

18. <u>Increasing Employment Opportunities</u>: The implementation of advanced border surveillance technology creates new jobs in various sectors. This includes positions for technology experts to develop and maintain surveillance systems, as well as increased hiring of border patrol agents to operate these systems. Additionally, it stimulates growth in related industries such as manufacturing and software development, contributing to overall economic growth.

19. <u>Improving International Cooperation</u>: Better border surveillance can help the U.S. and neighboring countries work together better to fight cross-border crime. This promotes mutual security and strengthens friendly relations between countries.

20. <u>Ensuring Resource Allocation</u>: By reducing illegal immigration and related activities, increased surveillance helps ensure that resources are given to those who need them most. This supports the fair and efficient use of public funds.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (CON): General Ideas

1. **Lacking Overall Effectiveness:** Surveillance tools like cameras and drones don't always work well. People trying to cross the border illegally can find ways to avoid being seen. They might use special clothes to hide from cameras or break sensors. This means that even with lots of expensive technology, many people still get across without being caught. The surveillance doesn't stop as many illegal crossings as hoped, making it a waste of money and effort.

2. **Wasting Financial Resources:** Setting up and running all this surveillance equipment is very expensive. The government would need to spend billions of dollars on cameras, drones, and computers. When we spend so much on border surveillance, we have less money available for other important things like schools, hospitals, or security.

3. **Violating Privacy Rights:** Powerful cameras and listening devices can see and hear a lot. They might record innocent people who live near the border, not just those trying to cross illegally. This feels like the government is always watching, even when people aren't doing anything wrong. It's not fair to treat everyone like they might be a criminal. This goes against the principle of protecting people's rights.

4. **Endangering Migrant Lives:** When it's harder to cross at usual places because of surveillance, people try more dangerous routes. They might walk through very hot deserts or climb over high mountains. These journeys are very risky, and more people could get hurt or die trying to enter the country. Even if we don't agree with illegal crossing, we shouldn't make things so hard that people lose their lives.

5. **Perpetuating Unjust Barriers:** Borders are made-up lines that stop people from moving freely. Many people want to move for better jobs, safety, or to be with family. Increased surveillance makes this harder. This isn't fair or kind. People should be free to move around the world like they can within their own country. Surveillance keeps an unfair system in place, making life harder for those already struggling. It goes against the moral belief that all people should be treated equally with dignity and respect.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (CON): Specific Ideas

1. <u>Ignoring Community Concerns</u>: Border patrol often ignores the requests and needs of local communities living near the border. Instead of investing in expensive surveillance technology, the government should focus on directly helping these communities.

INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (CON): Specific Ideas (Continued…)

2. Risking False Arrests: Using surveillance technology like cameras and biometric data can sometimes lead to mistakes, causing innocent people to be wrongly arrested. This can create serious problems for those who have done nothing wrong.

3. Wasting Financial Resources: Investing in surveillance systems such as cameras, drones, and sensors is very expensive. These funds could be better used on essential services like education and healthcare that benefit more people.

4. Failing to Stop Illegal Crossings: Despite heavy spending, surveillance tools like drones and cameras are not always effective. People often find ways to avoid detection, meaning the technology does not prevent illegal crossings as much as intended.

5. Invading People's Privacy: Surveillance cameras and tools can record the activities of innocent people living near the border, making them feel like they are constantly being watched. This invasion of privacy can cause stress and discomfort in daily life.

6. Increasing Migrant Danger: When border surveillance is increased, migrants may attempt to cross in more dangerous areas, such as deserts or mountains. This can lead to more injuries and deaths among those seeking a better life.

7. Wasting Public Resources: The government spends significant amounts of money on border surveillance technology that often fails to work as intended. This money could be more effectively spent on other public needs.

8. Causing Biometric Data Errors: Using biometric data like fingerprints and facial recognition can sometimes result in errors. These mistakes can lead to innocent people being wrongly identified and facing legal troubles.

9. Expanding the Border Security Industry: The growth of the border security industry is driven by companies that profit from selling more technology, even when it's not needed. This benefits the companies financially but does not always improve border security.

10. Preventing Family Reunification: Increased border surveillance makes it harder for families to reunite if they are separated by the border. This can cause long-term emotional pain and stress for those affected.

11. Violating Human Rights: More border surveillance can lead to unfair treatment of people based on their appearance or nationality. This violates the principle of treating everyone with dignity and respect.

12. Making Life Harder for Refugees: Increased surveillance makes it more difficult for refugees fleeing dangerous situations to find safety. This can prevent them from starting new, safer lives.

13. Creating a False Sense of Security: Relying too much on surveillance technology may give a false sense of security, leading people to believe that all problems at the border are solved. In reality, other solutions, like improving legal immigration processes, may be more effective.

14. Neglecting Community Needs: Focusing heavily on border surveillance can cause the government to overlook the actual needs of border communities, such as better schools, healthcare, and infrastructure.

15. Risking Technology Failures: Machines and technology can malfunction or break down, leaving the border unprotected when the surveillance system fails. This risk can create gaps in border security.

16. Creating an Unwelcoming Environment: Increased surveillance can make even those entering legally feel unwelcome, fostering an environment of fear and distrust in border communities.

17. Harming the Environment: Implementing surveillance infrastructure, such as access roads and monitoring towers, can disrupt local ecosystems and wildlife habitats. This environmental damage can have long-lasting effects on border region biodiversity and natural resources.

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INCREASING BORDER SURVEILLANCE (CON): Specific Ideas (Continued…)

18. <u>Violating Human Rights (Freedom of Movement)</u>: Enhanced border surveillance can restrict people's ability to travel freely, even for those who are crossing legally to visit family or conduct business. This violates Article 13 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to freedom of movement within borders and the right to leave any country and return to their own.

19. <u>Encouraging Racial Discrimination</u>: Surveillance tools might target certain groups more than others, leading to discrimination based on race or nationality. This undermines fairness and equality.

20. <u>Distracting from Real Solutions</u>: Focusing too much on surveillance might take attention away from finding real, long-term solutions to border issues, like improving living conditions in the countries from which people are migrating.

21. <u>Increasing Cybersecurity Risks</u>: Extensive digital surveillance systems can become targets for hackers, potentially compromising sensitive personal data of both citizens and non-citizens. This poses significant risks to individual privacy and national security, and could lead to misuse of personal information.

22. <u>Causing Psychological Harm</u>: Living under constant surveillance can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues for border communities. This persistent monitoring can create a pervasive sense of unease, erode trust in authorities, and negatively impact the overall quality of life for residents in these areas.

23. <u>Impacting Indigenous Communities</u>: Heightened border surveillance can disrupt the traditional lands and practices of Native American tribes whose territories span international borders. This can infringe on their rights, cultural practices, and sovereignty, potentially violating treaties and causing cultural erosion.