

# Labor Market Shocks and Immigration Enforcement

Sergio Barrera   Brianna Felegi   Sarina Heron

November 21st, 2024

# Introduction

Immigration ranks as one of top political issues

- ▶ Ranked most important issue by Gallup in February 2024
- ▶ 55% Americans believe illegal immigration critical threat

Large economic literatures on impacts of immigration

- ▶ Labor Market Effects of Enforcement - Abramitzky and Boustan (2017); Lee, Peri, and Yasenov (2022); East, Hines, et al (2023); Garcia and Gutierrez-Li (2023)

Less work understanding forces determining enforcement

# Paper Overview

- **Research Question:** Do negative labor market shocks influence adoption of immigration policy?

# Paper Overview

- ▶ **Research Question:** Do negative labor market shocks influence adoption of immigration policy?
- ▶ **Context:** Adoption of 287(g) Programs
  - Existed since early 2000's
  - Local law enforcement partnerships with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
  - Primarily County Sheriff's departments

# Paper Overview

- ▶ **Research Question:** Do negative labor market shocks influence adoption of immigration policy?
- ▶ **Context:** Adoption of 287(g) Programs
  - Existed since early 2000's
  - Local law enforcement partnerships with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
  - Primarily County Sheriff's departments
- ▶ **Empirical Strategy:** Standard Difference-in-Differences
  - Leverage variation in intensity of Great Recession
  - Compare likelihood of adoption over time

# Preview of Results

- ▶ Commuting Zones facing high-exposure to the Great Recession ↑ likelihood of adopting 287(g)

# Preview of Results

- ▶ Commuting Zones facing high-exposure to the Great Recession ↑ likelihood of adopting 287(g)
  - Results driven by commuting zones with above median share:
    - ▶ Non-White Population
    - ▶ Foreign Born Population
    - ▶ Population working in the Construction Industry
    - ▶ **But not** population incarcerated

# Preview of Results

- ▶ Commuting Zones facing high-exposure to the Great Recession ↑ likelihood of adopting 287(g)
  - Results driven by commuting zones with above median share:
    - ▶ Non-White Population
    - ▶ Foreign Born Population
    - ▶ Population working in the Construction Industry
    - ▶ **But not** population incarcerated
- ▶ Also examine changes in other local policies including early adoption Secure Communities and E-Verify



# Prior Literature

## Forces Driving Natives' Reaction to Immigrants:

- ▶ **Skills and Native Sentiments** - (Scheve and Slaughter 2001) (Mayda 2006) (Hanson, Scheve, and Slaughter 2007) (Facchini and Mayda 2009)
- ▶ **Exposure and Anti Immigrant Party** - (Halla, Wagner, and Zweimuller 2017) (Alsan, Eriksson, and Niemesh 2020) (Steinmayr 2020) (Tabellini 2020)
- ▶ **Culture and Native Sentiments** - (Dustmann and Preston 2007) (Card, Dustmann, and Preston 2012) (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014) (Tabellini 2020)
- ▶ **Misinformation** (Hopkins, Sides, and Citrin 2019) (Alesina, Miano, and Stantcheva 2022) (Alesina and Tabellini 2024)

# Contribution to the Literature

This paper builds on prior literature on several fronts:

- ▶ We study adoption of current policies still in use
  - Prior work relies on historical immigration
  - Prior work examines vote shares for political parties

# Contribution to the Literature

This paper builds on prior literature on several fronts:

- ▶ We study adoption of current policies still in use
  - Prior work relies on historical immigration
  - Prior work examines vote shares for political parties
- ▶ Prior work studying economic forces on immigration sentiment relies on immigrant shares/skills.

# Contribution to the Literature

This paper builds on prior literature on several fronts:

- ▶ We study adoption of current policies still in use
  - Prior work relies on historical immigration
  - Prior work examines vote shares for political parties
- ▶ Prior work studying economic forces on immigration sentiment relies on immigrant shares/skills.
  - We show non-immigration economic shocks contribute to anti-immigration policy
  - Periods of greater economic anxiety important factor

# Overview of 287(g) Agreements

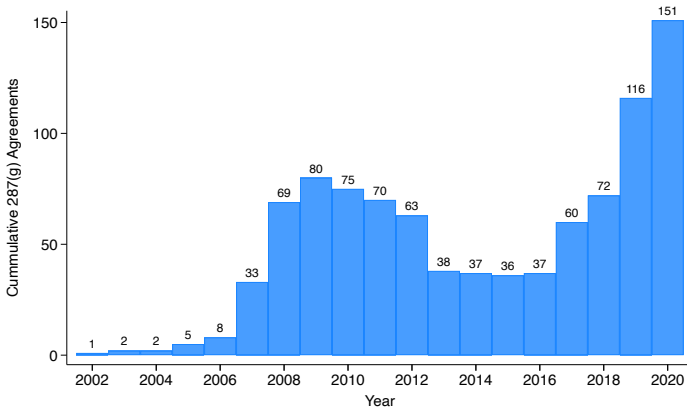
287(g) allows law enforcement agencies to deputize select officers to perform functions of federal immigration agents including:

- ▶ Interview individuals to ascertain immigration status
- ▶ Issue immigration detainers until ICE takes custody
- ▶ Issue Notice to Appear (NTA), charge beginning removal
- ▶ Make recommendations for voluntary departure
- ▶ Make recommendation for detention and immigration bond
- ▶ Transfer non-citizens to ICE custody

Program criticized for racial profiling of Hispanic residents (ACLU 2022, Rubalcaba, Ortega, and Dantzler 2024)

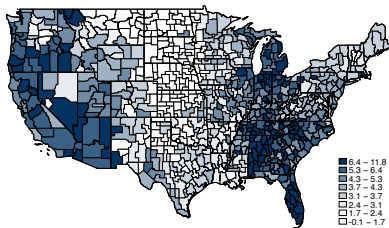
# Overview of 287(g) Agreements

Figure 1: Signed 287(g) Agreements Nationwide

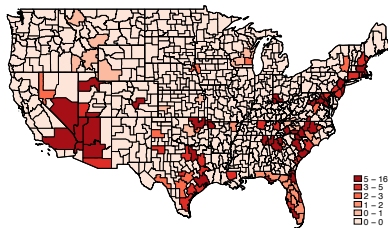


# Geographic Variation

(a) Severity of Great Recession



(b) Adoption of 287(g)



# Data

- ▶ Universe Signed 287(g) Agreements from 2002-2020 from ICE
- ▶ Agencies expressed interest but not implement from 2006-2011 from Pedroza (2018)
- ▶ Decennial Census (2000) CZ level demographics, employment, incarceration
- ▶ Autor, Dorn, and Hansen (2015; 2021) measures of:
  - Import Competition
  - Routine-task Intensity
- ▶ Pierce and Schott (2020) additional economic shocks
- ▶ David Yagan (2019) Great Recession Shock

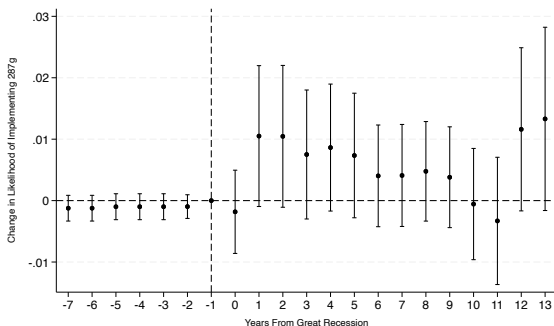


# The Effects of the Great Recession on 287(g) Adoption

$$Has287g_{zt} = \beta_1 Post_t \cdot Shock_z + \sum_{t=2000}^{2020} \Psi_t(\mathbb{1}\{year = t\} * X_z^{2000}) + \alpha_z + \gamma_t + \epsilon_{zt}$$

- ▶  $Has287g_{zt}$  is an indicator for having a 287(g) program
- ▶  $Post_t = 1$  in years after the year 2007
- ▶  $Shock_z$  is the  $\Delta$  in the unemployment rate from 2007-2009
- ▶  $X_z^{2000}$  initial commuting zone-level characteristics and other adverse labor market shocks

# The Effects of the Great Recession on 287(g) Adoption



# The Effects of the Great Recession on 287(g) Adoption

Table 1: DiD Results of Great Recession

VARIABLES	(1) Has 287g	(2) Applied or Has 287g	(3) Has 287g	(4) Applied or Has 287g
$Post_t \cdot Shock_z$	0.013*** (0.003)	0.017*** (0.004)	0.009** (0.004)	0.014*** (0.004)
Constant	-0.003 (0.006)	0.000 (0.006)	0.128 (0.164)	0.138 (0.167)
Post-Period Mean	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029
Observations	15,162	15,162	15,162	15,162
Commuting Zone FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Baseline Covariates	No	No	Yes	Yes

# The Effects of the Great Recession on 287(g) Adoption

Table 2: Heterogenous Results of Great Recession

VARIABLES	(1) Baseline	(2) % Non-White	(3) % Foreign Born	(4) % Construction	(5) Incarcerated
$Post_t \cdot Shock_z$	0.01** (0.004)	0.002 (0.003)	0.000 (0.003)	0.000 (0.003)	0.008* (0.005)
Interaction with Above Median 2000 Characteristic	-	0.065** (0.028)	0.094*** (0.033)	0.099*** (0.029)	(0.012) (0.029)
Post-Period Mean	0.052	0.012	0.004	0.014	0.062
Observations	15,162	15,162	15,162	15,162	15,162

# Other Local Immigration Policies

Table 3: The Impacts of the Great Recession on Other Immigration Policies

VARIABLES	(1) Early SC Adopter	(2) Adopts E-Verify Public Sector	(3) Adopts E-Verify All Sectors
$Post_t \cdot Shock_z$	0.01*** (0.003)	0.02*** (0.008)	0.03*** (0.006)
Post-Period Mean	0.436	0.330	0.115
Observations	8,664	11,552	11,552

# Conclusion

## Summary:

- ▶ We show Great Recession increased anxiety over competition from immigrants.
- ▶ Results stronger in CZs with higher shares non-White, foreign born or employment in construction, **but not incarcerated**

## Policy Implications:

- ▶ Better understand how local economic downturns affect adoption of immigration policy
- ▶ Especially relevant given post COVID-19 inflation and importance of immigration in national politics

**Thank you!**

sbarrera@vt.edu

bfelegi@vt.edu