

Ms. Chang,

Your interview with Professor Erika Lee in Wednesday's segment titled "Immigration Crackdowns Are Not Unusual in Trying Times," was neither historical, nor even an attempt to be enlightening.

The interview somehow managed never to address the central question of whether it is rational or good public policy to maintain legal immigration levels of about 90,000 per month, when some 22 million Americans have been laid off from their jobs in the past month. While giving Prof. Lee a free pass on her broad assertion that curtailing immigration (something President Trump's Executive Order does only minimally) is a page out of the "xenophobic playbook," you never asked her to make an affirmative argument for why we should maintain high levels of immigration at the same time that we are experiencing unprecedented jobs losses.

If we can require American businesses to close (in some cases these closures will be permanent), if we can require hundreds of millions of Americans to remain home and radically alter their daily lives, why is it unreasonable to alter our immigration policies in response to a pandemic that is affecting every other aspect of life?

No one is suggesting that when government edicts forced your favorite restaurant or your hairdresser to shut down that the officials signing those orders were somehow blaming these proprietors for the coronavirus outbreak. And yet, both your questions and Prof. Lee's responses were all predicated on the notion that efforts to temporarily curtail immigration were based on animus toward immigrants rather than self-evident economic and health realities.

Nor, despite your and Prof. Lee's assertions, is anyone suggesting that immigrants uniquely "bring disease." It is very clear from this and other pandemics that viruses and other contagions are spread by human beings. That is why virtually every nation on earth has curtailed travel. It is why border security measures have been beefed up around the world, because there are public health risks associated with people crossing borders without inspection.

In the entire five-minute segment there was not a single piece of concrete evidence presented by you or Prof. Lee to substantiate the assertion that immigrants are being "scapegoated" for the outbreak of coronavirus or its economic fallout, or any justification for why immigration admissions should continue as usual, when absolutely nothing else is.

As one of America's preeminent news organizations, listeners deserve higher journalistic standards.

Sincerely, Dan Stein

President, Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)