

NEWS

Wisconsin Tragedy Is a Warning About Illegal Alien Crime

MALIA LOOCK • September 14, 2026

[Wisconsin](#) is the latest state to fall victim to rampant [illegal alien crimes](#) that have resulted in hundreds of preventable accidents, assaults, and deaths, according to a new documentary released Monday.

[Steve Cortes](#), a Daily Signal contributor who hosts the “[Danger in the Heartland](#)” documentary, explores the policies that lead to this tragic trend, interviews families of victims, and presents a case for stricter immigration enforcement.

“It’s the very same story we’ve seen in Lewiston, Maine, Minneapolis, Minnesota, and in far too many other places in America,” Cortes said, “where ruling class power brokers and political elites decided that borders don’t really matter and that American citizens—they come last.”

Sanctuary Jurisdictions

Democrats in Wisconsin’s most populous counties, Milwaukee and Dane, actively advocate belligerence against immigration officers and promote their counties as “sanctuary cities,” Cortes said.

“The [radical Democrats](#) who largely run Wisconsin, they have decided that illegals should be prioritized above the citizens of the United States,” Cortes said. “They encourage the mass invasion of the United States, and they then prevent state and local police from cooperating with federal law enforcement to do the needed work of enforcement and deportations.”

“Those policies down in Milwaukee really do have an impact on us,” Dodge County Sheriff Dale Schmidt said, “because crimes don’t know lines on a map.”

In his smaller county, Schmidt said he sees illegal alien crime every day.

“If you believe you are in a county in the state of Wisconsin that does not have a cartel

member living there, you are mistaken,” Schmidt said. “It is really incredible to see how much violence there is surrounding illegal aliens.”

According to Schmidt, many of these illegal aliens have been arrested and released multiple times.

The Victims

High school sweethearts Brady Heiling and Hallie Helgeson were both killed by an illegal immigrant while driving home from a concert in Madison.

Noelia Saray Martinez-Avila had multiple prior arrests and no driver’s license, yet that night, she drove drunk on the wrong side of the highway, colliding with the young couple head-on.

Helgeson’s mother, Allison, said this tragedy could have been prevented by strict immigration enforcement.

“[Martinez-Avila] shouldn’t have been here,” Allison Helgeson said, “and if she wasn’t here, she wouldn’t have been driving drunk on the wrong side of the interstate—and our kids would be here.”

Gubernatorial Race

Wisconsin will hold [gubernatorial elections](#) on Nov. 3.

With such a contentious issue, both candidates are making their views clear.

Democrat [David Crowley](#), the Milwaukee County executive, sees himself as a representative for both the legal and illegal immigrant population of Wisconsin. He supports granting illegal aliens driver’s license and taxpayer-funded school tuition.

His opponent is U.S. Rep. [Tom Tiffany](#), a Republican, who said he wants to abolish sanctuary cities, strengthen cooperation with federal law enforcement, and ensure prosecuted criminals end up behind bars or deported.

“Wisconsin can choose safety, sovereignty, and the rule of law, or it can follow the path. that has turned once peaceful towns into terrible cautionary tales,” Cortes said. “The choice, this choice now falls to the patriotic citizens of Wisconsin.”

Malia Loock | Intern

Malia Loock is a Daily Signal intern.