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Arizona traffic stops lead to deportations

Officials say patrols aim to stop child trafficking, despite lack of related arrests

Richard Ruelas
Arizona Republic | USA TODAY NETWORK

On a heavily patrolled stretch of Interstate 10 south of Phoenix, people pulled over for having a cracked windshield or an object dangling from their rear view mirror have ended up in deportation proceedings. The stated goal of the traffic stops is to prevent human trafficking through Arizona's Pinal County, a largely rural area between Phoenix and Tucson, according to Pinal County Sheriff Ross Teeple. The sheriff said he mainly was concerned with child trafficking, a crime he called "horrific."

The aim is not freeway safety, which is the purview of the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Instead, the stops are a pretext for further investigation, Teeple said.

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"If it's a violation of the Arizona Revised Statutes, it's a legitimate reason to pull someone over."

Ross Teeple
Pinal County sheriff



ABOVE: Interstate 10 in Arizona has been the site of traffic stops that have led to deportation proceedings. Federal court filings detailed the reasons for some stops: following too closely, having a temporary paper license plate that was flapping in the wind, going 3 mph over the speed limit. GETTY IMAGES

AT TOP: Pinal County Sheriff Ross Teeple poses for a portrait in his office Oct. 16 in Florence, Arizona. Teeple said the traffic stops aim to prevent human trafficking through the county, a largely rural area between Phoenix and Tucson. MEGAN MENDOZA/ARIZONA REPUBLIC

'Made in USA' gets a boost

Manufacturers hope 'Buy American' revival grows

Daniel de Visé and Veronica Bravo
USA TODAY

Forty-one years ago, when Sara Irvani's grandfather launched a footwear company in Buford, Georgia, half the nation's shoes were made in America. Today, the figure is down to 1%. "From the late 1890s through the 1970s or so, there had actually been shoe manufacturing in Buford," Irvani said. Now, the Oka Brands factory stands alone. President Donald Trump's controversial tariff campaign has stirred conversation, debate, hope and despair about the state of American manufacturing. Trump says he is raising import taxes partly in the hope of sparking a manufacturing revival and inspiring consumers to buy American. Buy American is a concept as old as the nation. Right now, though, the Buy American movement faces stiff headwinds. Inflation has raised prices dramatically over the past five years, making cheap imports look all the more appealing. Most Americans say they prefer American-made products, when they can find them, according to an October survey by Morning Consult for the Alliance for American Manufacturing. But they may not be looking very hard: Gallup polling suggests only about 40% of Americans consistently know where their toasters and T-shirts are made. American manufacturers want attitudes to change. "Made in America means communities and jobs and supporting neighbors," said Amity Messett, sales and marketing director at Liberty Tabletop, a company that bills itself as the last American manufacturer of stainless-steel flatware. USA TODAY spoke to some of the last manufacturers of household goods in America to learn why they kept their businesses stateside, what they offer that their overseas competitors don't, and how Trump's tariffs impact what they do.

Manufacturing jobs plunge

The number of U.S. manufacturing workers has plummeted from a peak of 19.6 million in 1979 to 12.7 million in September 2025. As a share of all non-farm jobs, manufacturing has slid from 29% in 1960 to 8% today. It hasn't all been downhill. A modest revival has boosted the manufacturing workforce from a low of about 11.4 million in 2010 to current levels, buoyed by a resurgent Buy American spirit. "There is a very passionate but small consumer base that will buy American," said Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing. "And the reason that it's passionate and small is that it's hard to do." The decline of American manufacturing has played out over decades. No one president, political party or foreign power bears all of the blame. America embraced imports with the North American Free Trade Agreement, a 1994 treaty that lowered trade

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Mint marking 250 with special coins

Feature designs showing historical milestones

Mike Snider
USA TODAY

The U.S. Mint is issuing special circulating coins to celebrate the 250th anniversary of America's adoption of the

Declaration of Independence. Quarters, dimes and nickels minted during 2026 will bear special designs or markings reflecting milestones related to the nation's founding in 1776. The U.S. Mint revealed the coin designs Dec. 11; each of the coins will have history-related imagery and the dates "1776-2026." Five different semiquincentennial quarter designs will bear the likenesses

of Founding Fathers including George Washington and James Madison. The dime will have inscriptions including "Liberty Over Tyranny." The nickel keeps the image of Thomas Jefferson but adds the "1776-2026" designation. The U.S. Mint will also issue a collectible Enduring Liberty half dollar

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