

insufficiency of the evidence. Consider an affirmative case dealing with illegal immigration. The harm argument alleges that illegal immigration is a major cause of crime, and the plan calls for additional funding to build an impenetrable border fence. The affirmative solvency evidence must now prove that building an impenetrable border fence will reduce crime. It isn't enough to just assert that a border fence will reduce crime.

Most affirmative teams know they must read evidence in support of their solvency contention. Often, however, a careful reading of the evidence discloses glaring weaknesses. Suppose the affirmative offers the following solvency evidence:

States News Service, June 28, 2007. Online. Nexis. Accessed August 13, 2007. "Now is the time the American people must help us force the Administration to enforce current law and build a border fence," [Iowa Congressman Steve] King added.

This evidence doesn't say a border fence would stop crime; it simply says it should be built. The following evidence certainly comes closer to providing support for the affirmative solvency claim:

Tyche Hendricks (Staff Writer), San Francisco Chronicle, October 27, 2006, p. A1. U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Alpine (San Diego County), a longtime fence supporter, applauded the signing, saying the fence will make border communities more secure. "Since border fence construction began in 1996, crime rates in San Diego County have been reduced by more than half, vehicle drive-throughs have been eliminated, and apprehensions have significantly decreased as the result of fewer crossing attempts," he said in a statement.

This evidence says that a border fence in San Diego has reduced crime in that city. Yet opponents of the border fence argue that the partial fences now in use simply shift illegal immigration to other locations—to places where there is no fence. What would happen if the fence existed along the entire border (as proposed in the affirmative plan)? The affirmative evidence doesn't provide an answer. The negative team could present its own evidence showing that a border fence will never stop illegal immigration so long as the underlying causes of illegal immigration remain unaddressed:

Eunice Moscoso (Staff Writer), Atlanta Journal and Constitution, September 20, 2006, p. 1A. Some Senate Democrats said a border fence would cost up to \$9 billion and not solve the nation's immigration problem because more than half of illegal immigrants arrive in the United States legally and overstay their visas. Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), who sponsored a broader immigration bill, said that fences will not keep criminals and terrorists out and that the hijackers who perpetrated the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks did not cross the Mexican border but came to the United