Structural Analysis of Interagency Cooperation in Worksite Enforcement

Abstract for a potential grant proposal

Manabu Nakashima, Rey Koslowski and Karl Rethemeyer

Most unauthorized immigrants enter the United States in pursuit of employment. Blue ribbon commissions and successive administrations have argued that worksite enforcement is an essential element of immigration control, yet millions of people who are not authorized to work in the United States do so anyway. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is responsible for enforcing laws that prohibit employers from hiring illegal aliens or foreign nationals legally in the U.S. but not authorized to work (e.g. those on tourist visas). Cooperation with other public agencies could increase the effectiveness of worksite enforcement. For instance, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and state labor departments are responsible for administration and enforcement of the laws regulating health, safety, hours and wages. Labor departments could be essential partners working with ICE in the sense that labor department officials have access to worksites and resources for worksite inspections, and they could share information obtained during their operations. For example, unscrupulous employers who routinely violate minimum wage and workers safety laws may be more likely to knowingly hire illegal aliens and labor departments could provide leads on such employers to ICE. From a preliminary evaluation of publically available information, it is, however, not clear as to how ICE cooperates with other public agencies. The purpose of this research project is: (1) to clarify the level of the interagency cooperation in worksite enforcement toward unauthorized immigrants and their employers; and (2) to identify the factors that affect the interagency cooperation, especially focusing on the network surrounding each public agency. The reason to focus on the network is that the structure of relationships among actors has important behavioral and perceptual effects on the actors. This project will conduct case studies of the two local offices of ICE in the state of New York, and public agencies that cooperate with them to implement worksite enforcement toward unauthorized immigrants and their employers.

Attending the meeting proved helpful in developing the core part of the proposal, because one of the main topics in the meeting was on factors affecting interagency cooperation and we can develop and apply their framework for our proposal.

Expenditures:

- Airfare $314.56
- Voucher for hotel, meals, trains $445.70