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We need the facts

Can mayor link violent crime to illegal residents?

Morristown Mayor Donald Cresitello now is saying he must crack down on illegal residents living in Morristown because they're committing violent acts of crime.

Here's his quote on the topic: "I am moving forward with my position. There's a serious violent crime problem, and this is the way to address it."

The mayor's comments were in response to a letter from a Latino advocacy group asking the federal Department of Homeland Security to reject Morristown's application to deputize up to 10 police officers to enforce federal immigration law. The letter suggested that the mayor came up with the idea to improve his "political capital with certain segments of the voting population."

There is certainly much truth to that statement. Elected officials do much of what they do with politics in mind. A week or so ago, the mayor was saying he thinks that up to 80 percent of Morris County residents agree with him.

Of more interest to us, however, is the mayor's comment about violent crime. Just what is that crime and where is it taking place?

Let's be precise here. The mayor was referring to "violent crime," not such transgressions as loitering and littering. If Cresitello wants to link illegal residents with violent crime, he should offer some data to back it up.

Just to throw that comment out there with no backup is divisive. The mayor should know better.
