

# CLOSEOUT FILES



Resolved: United States policy on illegal immigration should focus on attrition through enforcement rather than amnesty.

# Introduction

Welcome back everyone for another year of Public Forum Debate. I hope all of you had a good summer but now it is time to get back to work on our favorite extracurricular. This month's topic has plenty of information on both sides and should serve as a good introduction to the upcoming year. While immigration policy is no longer at the forefront of the news, there is speculation that it might be the next issue for Obama to address after health care is resolved.

This topic provides a very clear picture of what the debate should consist; the pro argues that attrition through enforcement will be more beneficial than amnesty and the con argues the opposite. That said, don't try to do something clever and surprise your opponents or the judges. To successfully win a round you must not only show that your opponents are wrong but you must also prove your own side. This might seem obvious but there are some topics that you only need to disprove your opponents case to win a ballot. Considering this, you must choose your case arguments very carefully; I suggest that you focus your arguments on supporting your own side and maybe use one comparison argument. There will definitely be certain arguments that you will want to use that attack why the other side is incorrect but I suggest you save those to use as cards that you will read against every team you encounter. On most other topics I would advise against this, but this month has an abundance of evidence and information to support and discredit both sides; therefore in your second speech, you should spend an adequate amount of time specifically refuting your opponents case while also supplementing that information with general "Amnesty/Enforcement is negative because..." arguments.

The wording of the topic could cause some confusion as to what is the real intent of the resolution. The goal of the debate is not to prove which side will do a better job of attrition but whether attrition through enforcement will be better for the country than amnesty. If the purpose was just attrition, then enforcement would be the obvious answer because the intent of amnesty is not to remove individuals.

This year Closeout Files is offering a season subscription and if you haven't already purchased one you should head to our website and get it. We are offering at a highly discounted price, about 30% off full value, and you can cancel your subscription at any time.

Please ask us any questions you might have about the topic, how evidence should be used, run ideas for arguments or blocks by us. We look forward to being of assistance and please contact us via e-mail at [CloseoutFiles@yahoo.com](mailto:CloseoutFiles@yahoo.com). Good luck everyone!

# Background

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/07\\_immigration\\_laws\\_wheeler.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/07_immigration_laws_wheeler.aspx)

Policy Outlook for Immigration Reform

The Brookings Institution

July 21, 2009

An estimated 11 to 12 million residents in the United States are not authorized to be here. More slip into the country every year, although the number of illegal entrants has been coming down as of late. Last year, the Homeland Security Department's Immigration and Customs Enforcement removed (formerly "deported") about 350,000 illegal residents. Almost every person facing a final removal order, however, is entitled to contest it in the nation's immigration courts.

These courts are not part of the federal court system, whose principal judges are appointed by the president after Senate confirmation; their life tenure and generous resources promote effective and independent decision making. The immigration courts are a unit of the nation's chief law enforcement agency, the Department of Justice, which appoints their judges. They handled almost 300,000 matters last year, making them a key component in the nation's efforts to enforce its immigration laws fairly and effectively. Nevertheless, they have been largely overlooked in the debate over immigration reform, which has chiefly concerned border control and worksite enforcement. By almost all accounts, the immigration courts have too much work for the resources provided them, producing inconsistent decisions and major delays.

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/07\\_immigration\\_policy\\_galston.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2009/07_immigration_policy_galston.aspx)

Policy Outlook for Immigration Reform

The Brookings Institution

July 17, 2009

Although the United States has been a "nation of immigrants" from the start, the flow of immigrants has been anything but smooth and steady. Instead, we have experienced waves of immigration in response to economic and legal changes, and we are in the midst of one today. The current wave rivals an earlier period, which lasted from the 1880s through World War I. During the first decade of the 20th century, 8.2 million immigrants were legally admitted, a record that stood until the last decade of that century, when 9.8 million legally entered. The running total for the current decade (through 2008) has already reached 9.2 million. Similarly, at the World War I peak, about 15 percent of the U.S. population was foreign-born. More recently, the share has risen from a low of less than 5 percent in 1970 to nearly 13 percent today. If recent trends continue, the percentage of foreign-born residents of the United States is likely to hit a record before the end of the next decade.

One difference between past and current trends is the large number of immigrants who are living in the United States without legal status, including those who arrived with legal visas and

overstayed and those who entered surreptitiously. These estimated 12 million unauthorized immigrants have come to represent the failure of the U.S. immigration system either to achieve adequate levels of enforcement and security or to strike a sustainable balance the nation's economic needs with the core interests of its existing workforce. What to do about the unauthorized population is the most contentious issue of the current debate.

Given the current economic context—a period of exceptional economic growth followed by a severe recession of uncertain duration—the nation's admissions system and management of future immigration flows have come to dominate the debate. At the same time, border security, worksite enforcement, and to a lesser extent, immigrant integration, are also important elements of contestation.

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

#### Current Trends in Immigration

Over the last 40 years, immigration into the United States has surged. Our nation is now experiencing a second “great migration” similar to the great waves of immigrants that transformed America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In 2004, an estimated 35.7 million foreign-born persons lived in the U.S. While in 1970 one person in twenty was foreign born, by 2004 the number had risen to one in eight.

About one-third of all foreign-born persons in the U.S. are illegal aliens. There are between 10 and 12 million illegal aliens currently living in the U.S.[1] Illegal aliens now comprise 3 to 4 percent of the total U.S. population. Each year approximately 1.3 million new immigrants enter the U.S.[2] Some 700,000 of these entrants are illegal.[3]

One-third of all foreign-born persons in the U.S. are Mexican. Overall, the number of Mexicans in the U.S. has increased from 760,000 in 1970 to 10.6 million in 2004. Nine percent of all Mexicans now reside in the U.S.[4] Over half of all Mexicans in the U.S. are illegal immigrants, [5] and in the last decade 80 to 85 percent of the inflow of Mexicans into the U.S. has been illegal.[6]

The public generally perceives illegals to be unattached single men. This is, in fact, not the case. Some 44 percent of adult illegals are women. While illegal men work slightly more than native-born men, illegal women work less. Among female illegals, some 56 percent work, compared to 73 percent among native-born women of comparable age.[7] As well, Mexican women emigrating to the U.S. have a considerably higher fertility rate than women remaining in Mexico. [8]

### Immigrants and Education

On average, immigrants have low education levels relative to native-born U.S. citizens. One-quarter of legal adult immigrants lack a high school degree, compared to 9 percent among the native-born population. However, there is a well educated sub-group within the legal immigrant population. Some 32 percent of legal immigrant adults have a college degree, compared to 30 percent of native-born adults.[\[9\]](#)

The education levels of illegal aliens are lower than those of legal immigrants. Half of all adult illegal immigrants lack a high school degree.[\[10\]](#) Among Latin American and Mexican immigrants, 60 percent lack a high school degree and only 7 percent have a high school diploma. By contrast, among native-born workers in the U.S., only 6 percent have failed to complete high school degrees and nearly a third have a college degree.[\[11\]](#)

### Decline in Immigrant Wages

Over the last 40 years the education level of new immigrants has fallen relative to the native population. As the relative education levels of immigrants have declined, so has their earning capacity compared to the general U.S. population. Immigrants arriving in the U.S. around 1960 had wages, at the time of entry, that were just 13 percent less than natives'. In 1965, the nation's immigration law was dramatically changed, and from 1990 on, illegal immigration surged. The result was a decline in the relative skill levels of new immigrants. By 1998, new immigrants had an average entry wage that was 34 percent less than natives'.[\[12\]](#) Because of their lower education levels, illegal immigrants' wages would have been even lower.

The low-wage status of recent illegal immigrants can be illustrated by the wages of recent immigrants from Mexico, a majority of whom have entered the U.S. illegally. In 2000, the median weekly wage of a first-generation Mexican immigrant was \$323. This was 54 percent of the corresponding wage for non-Hispanic whites in the general population.[\[13\]](#)

Historically, the relative wages of recent immigrants have risen after entry as immigrants gained experience in the labor market. For example, immigrants who arrived in the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s saw their relative wages rise by 10 percentage points compared to natives' wages during their first 20 years in the country. But in recent years, this modest catch up effect has diminished. Immigrants who arrived in the late 1980s actually saw their relative wages shrink in the 1990s.[\[14\]](#)

# Definitions

## **Amnesty**

Britannica Concise Encyclopedia

In criminal law, a sovereign act of oblivion or forgetfulness (from Greek *amnestia*, "forgetfulness") granted by a government, especially to a group of persons who are guilty of (usually political) crimes in the past. It is often conditional upon the group's return to obedience and duty within a prescribed period. See also [pardon](#).

Columbia Encyclopedia

In law, exemption from prosecution for criminal action. It signifies forgiveness and the forgetting of past actions. Amnesties are usually extended to a group of persons during a period of prolonged disorder or insurrection. The criminals are offered a promise of immunity from prosecution if they will abandon their unlawful activities. After a revolution or civil war the victorious side will often extend amnesty to the losers; e.g., the United States granted a qualified amnesty to the Confederate forces after the Civil War. An amnesty is distinguished from a [pardon](#), which is an act of forgiveness after the criminal has already been convicted.

<http://www.usamnesty.org/>

The proposed immigration amnesty would benefit the 12 to 20 million undocumented aliens (illegal immigrants) currently living in the United States. An amnesty for illegal aliens forgives their acts of illegal immigration and implicitly forgives other related illegal acts such as driving and working with false documents. The result of an amnesty is that large numbers of foreigners who illegally gained entry into the United States are rewarded with legal status (Green Card) for breaking immigration laws.

## **Attrition**

Oxford English Dictionary

The action or process of rubbing away, wearing or grinding down, by friction.

# Pro Analysis

Since each side is defined, there is no room for certain arguments; consequently, you should not run or let the following argument be run against you. The U.S. should focus on the way it accepts legal immigrants by changing the process and number of low-skilled immigrants allowed into the country. While this argument is certainly legitimate in regards to how to best deal with immigration, it does not advocate either amnesty or enforcement. In effect, both sides could tack this condition on to their plans, which doesn't benefit the pro or the con. The central focus of your case should be either enforcement or amnesty.

Much of the pro amnesty evidence makes generalizations about immigration to prove their points. Do not let con teams get away with listing a bunch of statistics about how immigrants have helped the country or how good of citizens they are without making sure their evidence applies to illegal immigrants instead of legal immigrants. Also, check to see if their studies solely address illegal immigrants because there are quite a few seemingly strong pieces of con evidence that lump the benefits of legal immigrants with the negatives of illegal immigrants in their analysis. The Federation for American Immigration Reform outlines this practice by stating, "The arguments put forward by amnesty advocates —such as the Immigration Policy Center—offer no new research, but rather regurgitate research that lumps together legal and illegal immigrant workers in order to give the false impression that illegal immigration is a benefit to the country and would be even more so if they gained legal status through an amnesty."

There is a certain structure of argumentation that will be most beneficial to your side with any resolution, which means the order of your points does actually matter. You should start your pro argumentation by showing that illegal immigrants are harmful to the US to state why enforcement has a purpose. The largest cost of illegal immigration is the fact that aliens are able to use some public services without actually paying their share of taxes. Already strained services are being further drained by people who have no legitimate right to use them or even to be in the country. According to the Heritage Foundation, "The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) has performed a thorough study of the federal fiscal impacts of amnesty. The study found that, on average, illegal immigrant families received more in federal benefits than they paid in taxes. The study estimates that the net cost to the federal government of granting amnesty to some 3.8 million illegal alien households would be around \$5,000 per household, for a total federal fiscal cost of \$19 billion per year." This is one of the contentious issues that includes evidence on both sides. You should argue this point on the reasons that would cause a certain outcome in the study because both sides will have a different number that supports their case. Show that the reason why illegal immigrants come at such a cost to the country is because low-educated, low-skilled workers contribute very little in taxes, less in fact than they use in public services. Opponents will say that illegal immigrants use less public services than citizens but explain that their use will increase after amnesty. From here, it is critical to prove that aliens will be more of a deficit after amnesty; they will pay more in taxes but that is not enough to offset their increase use of public services. The United States cannot afford to continue supporting

individuals who do not contribute their share and have no right to reap the benefits a real citizen can receive.

It may be unwise to try to prove that illegal immigrants negatively affect the US economic system and I suggest you focus on other costs, but you should be prepared to make the arguments if you need to make them. On a purely logical basis, any unemployed American could have the job of an illegal immigrant. While it is true that illegal immigrants do take some jobs from low-skilled Americans, it will be difficult to win the argument that illegal immigrants take enough jobs for them to be a net-detriment economically. You can though show that there are Americans, at least some, to fill the jobs of illegal immigrants. The Center For Immigration Studies states that, “It is often suggested that the kinds of jobs immigrants do are so different from what natives do that the two groups seldom, if ever, compete. But Table 5 shows that, at least when looked at by occupation, this does not appear to be the case. Clearly there are jobs where immigrants make up a large share of workers, but there are still millions of natives employed in those same occupations.” This means there are definitely unemployed people in the same fields as immigrant workers and that US citizens must compete with illegal immigrants for jobs. According to Number USA, “[Competition from illegal immigrants] would decrease, not increase, jobs for most low-skilled Americans because the newly-legalized workforce would be willing to accept lower wages and poorer working conditions than most low-skilled American workers.” This puts downward pressure on wages which decreases the paychecks of native born US citizens because employers could hire illegal immigrants at a lower cost. The result is less household income for Americans and decreased purchasing power and quality of life.

Now that we have shown illegal immigrants to be a negative to society, we must also address why enforcement will be a more effective method of dealing with illegal immigration. You need to present that enforcement is not a difficult strategy to implement because we have already seen benefits from our current practices. The Center for Immigration Studies says, “The strategy of attrition through enforcement relies on tried and true immigration law enforcement techniques that discourage illegal settlement and increase the probability that illegal aliens will return of their own accord. Lawmakers must not be intimidated by the sheer size of the illegal population.” Enforcement is nothing new when it comes dealing with illegal immigration and its efforts have been undermined by a lack of funding. Just like any other effort, you must be willing to fully commit yourself to receive the maximum benefit. Enforcement can also be effective by influencing people to self-deport because they fear the harsh penalties of illegal immigration. This process is best highlighted through results provided by the Center for Immigration Studies when they state, “A new report from the Center for Immigration Studies estimates that the illegal-immigrant population has fallen from a peak of 12.5 million in August of last year down to 11.2 million this past May, a drop of 1.3 million or 11 percent. This decline is many times larger than the number people deported by the government during that period, meaning that most of the decline is due to illegal immigrants returning home on their own – deporting themselves, as it were. If this decline were to continue at the same rate, the illegal population would be cut in half in five years.” Enforcement can actually address and mitigate the negative effects of illegal immigration and it is a reasonable tactic to deal with the millions already in our country.

Enforcement is a very general term and an experienced team could frame their case to include the benefits of illegal immigrants. Attrition through enforcement doesn't mandate that all 12 million illegal immigrants must be deported, that wouldn't be feasible or even beneficial when analyzing their true economic output. If you lose the argument that illegal immigrants are a drag on society and that they actually produce real economic benefits then you can still win the round. If you present enforcement as added defense to help stem the flow of incoming illegal immigrants opposed to prioritizing catching illegals in the country, then you could incorporate the cheap labor of the 12 million illegal immigrants in the country (minus the ones that would be deported through increased enforcement) into the pro case. This is nearly crossing the line to an argument being considered abusive, but you can ease the judges mind by explaining to him that no one advocates deporting all illegal immigrants. Immigration policy must be feasible, deportation of 12 million clearly is not, and that the main purpose of enforcement is to act as a deterrent to people considering illegally entering the country. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, "Both academic research and recent experience demonstrate that migrants respond to incentives and deterrents, and that a subtle increase in the "heat" on illegal aliens can be enough to dramatically reduce the scale of the problem within just a few years." The effectiveness of enforcement is not limited to the number deported or stopped at the border; enforcement changes the social climate and makes the US less attractive to potential aliens. For the con team to rebut this argument, they will need to contend that the availability on new illegal immigrants is beneficial for the country. By making this argument, they are essentially advocating decreased boarder enforcement, a policy that very few on both sides of the issue support.

One of the issues overlooked by amnesty supporters is the effect amnesty has on the flow of new illegal immigrants. On the pro, you have already shown that illegal immigrants are a detriment to society and all of the con's numbers address the current number of illegal immigrants; therefore, it is reasonable for you to bring up the increase of illegal aliens that will come from amnesty. The Center for Immigration states, "And the enforcement climate is determined not only by actions but also by words — especially the words of lawmakers debating immigration policy. It seems that the number of illegal immigrants actually spiked last summer as the Senate conducted a high-profile debate on the McCain-Kennedy amnesty bill." Even discussing amnesty has the effect of causing people to illegally immigrate to the US in hopes of being able to stay without repercussions. The costs of illegal immigrants will only become more exacerbated as the number of aliens increases. The result will be a detriment to American workers, higher costs to public services, and increased crime. The pro has the added benefit of being able to bring up the last amnesty for illegal immigrants that occurred during the Reagan Era. According to the Heritage Foundation, "The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 granted amnesty to 2.7 million ille-gal aliens. The primary purpose of the act was to decrease the number of illegal immigrants by limiting their inflow and by legalizing the status of illegal immigrants already here. In fact, the act did nothing to stem the tide of illegal entry. The number of illegal aliens entering the country increased fivefold from around 140,000 per year in the 1980s to 700,000 per year today. Illegal entries increased dramatically shortly after IRCA went into effect. It seems plausible that the prospect of future amnesty and citizenship served as a magnet to draw even more illegal immi-grants into the country. After all, if the nation granted

amnesty once why wouldn't it do so again?" Amnesty is an excuse for politicians not enforcing the law and not making the needed adjustments to the current immigration system. If we grant illegal immigrants amnesty a second time, we will only be setting ourselves up to be having the same debate again in the future.

## Con Analysis

Despite the clearly defined pro and con sides in this month's resolution, the terms should not be taken as absolutes. On the con, you do not need to advocate complete amnesty without any sort of enforcement; however, the pro team does need to argue enforcement without amnesty. This provides the con side with a little ground to move in which they can argue from a few difference perspectives. The main purpose of amnesty is to deal with the illegal immigrants already in the country whereas enforcement is meant more to prevent people from entering the country illegally. It would be possible on the con to frame the debate as a legalization of illegal immigrants versus deportation of illegal immigrants. You can do this because I believe it is completely acceptable to say that we need amnesty for illegal residents and boarder enforcement; it is not an either or situation. That said, you don't necessarily need to adopt boarder enforcement as part of your reasoning; you could just as well propose more of an open boarders system to keep competition for low-skilled jobs high. It all depends on what you argue and how you debate it, but we will get to more specifics about possible lines of argumentation later.

Be sure you understand what you mean by amnesty when you debate the con side. It doesn't have to (and shouldn't) mean granting illegal immigrants full United States citizenship. Many pro teams will try to apply the negative effects of low-skilled, low-educated US citizens to illegal immigrants after amnesty. Explain to your opponents that illegal immigrants in a post-amnesty US does not mean that they will be given the full or even most of the rights that US citizens have. On the con, you can basically decide of what amnesty consists for illegal immigrants, but it must contain a pardon for illegal boarder crossing and occupation of the US. I suggest that you propose a system that more closely resembles a working visa, which includes documentation of illegal immigrants, the deportation of illegal aliens who have committed crimes other than illegal entrance into the U.S., requirement to pay a visa tax and federal and state taxes, use of public services (most importantly public education) excluding the receipt of federal benefits such as social security and medicare/medicaid, and obviously a pardon for illegals in the US. This isn't a universally accepted method by which to deal with illegal immigration; it is merely my own opinion as to how to best define amnesty on the con. I don't suggest that you list your plan in the beginning of the your case, but your position should come out as you debate. No matter what though, you and your opponent should be clear on what you are advocating.

The basis for your case must be that illegal immigrants benefit society, if you can't win this argument then it is going to be fairly difficult for you to win rounds. I expect that every round will come back, in some way, to the merits of illegal immigrants in the country. You should be extremely well versed in this area and be prepared to spend a majority of some rounds debating it. You should begin by showing that the US has a need for immigrant labor and our economy wouldn't be as efficient without it. According to the Hoover Institute, "Illegal workers fill a void by taking on low-paying, often unpleasant, and physically demanding jobs, including many in the agricultural, construction and service industries that Americans are seemingly less willing to do." The fact of the matter is that illegal immigrants do the jobs that Americans are unwilling to do; they are not moving up the corporate ladder or competing for even most low-

level jobs. America is put in a very precarious position when we do not have illegal immigrants to support many blue-collar industries. The Hoover Institute says, “the 2004 crackdown on illegal workers in the western United States as an example of the negative effect of a decreased immigrant workforce. The regional sweep by authorities reportedly led to \$1 billion in losses when farmers couldn’t hire enough workers to pick lettuce crops, which were left to rot in the field.” Regardless of what some American “patriots” say about job loss due to illegal immigrants, America’s largest industry is only able to function with the help of the cheap labor that comes from illegal immigrants. The United States has already outsourced the majority of its manufacturing jobs to stay globally competitive; unfortunately, it’s not as easy to do that with agriculture. If the United States wants to continue its economic rebound, then we must ensure the stability of our agriculture sector.

It will be beneficial to show the real positive effects illegal immigrants have on the American people. The Immigration Policy Center states, “Economist Giovanni Peri at the University of California-Davis has found that immigrants differ from native-born Americans in their education, skill sets, and occupations. As a result, immigrants don’t compete with U.S. citizens for most jobs. Rather, they complement the native-born workforce—which increases the productivity and wages of all Americans. Moreover, immigrants help create jobs, as their addition to the labor force stimulates investment by entrepreneurs who organize new workers in productive ways that generate profit.” Many pro-enforcement only advocates only discuss the costs of illegal immigrants but they overlook the benefits derived from the increase in economic output. In reality, illegal immigrants decrease prices of goods for all Americans which in turn benefits everyone’s standard of living. Illegal immigrants are not competing with American workers for jobs, in fact, many of the businesses are created in the first place with the intent of having illegal workers. Americans will not be gaining these jobs once illegal immigrants are deported; the result would just be more collapsing businesses at the cost to the US economy. Since illegal immigrants and American workers compete for different jobs, the work performed by immigrants serves to create more jobs for American citizens. According to Newsweek, “Two highly respected Australian economists, Maureen Rimmer and Peter Dixon, studied the issue for the libertarian Cato Institute. ‘The net impact on U.S. households from tighter border enforcement is unambiguously negative,’ they found, because even low-skilled immigrants expand the economic pie and create jobs farther up the ladder.” The increase in economic efficiency has real benefits to the American people, and opponents should realize that the effects of illegal immigrants must be looked at from a comprehensive and macroeconomic level. The additional people in the United States is also beneficial because now there are even more consumers. The Immigration Policy Center reports, “Immigrant purchasing power is enormous—and growing: According to the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia, Latino buying power totaled \$862 billion in 2007 and is expected to increase to \$1.2 trillion by 2012.” Considering consumption fuels two-thirds of our gross domestic product the result of increased buying power has clear impacts. Illegal immigration should be judged through a cost-benefit analysis and, given all of the economic information, illegal immigrants are a net-positive for the American people.

Americans not having the jobs filled by illegal immigrants is actually a positive for the country. With the understanding that low-skilled jobs will be filled by illegal immigrants comes

an increased incentive to acquire higher education. As the competition increases for jobs requiring minimal education, American students will see even more of a need to receive higher education. The Center For Trade Policy Studies states, "Restricting the inflow of illegal immigrants biases the occupational mix of employment for U.S. workers toward low-paying, low-skilled jobs as those jobs become relatively more attractive and available compared with higher-paying occupations. This eventually reduces the overall productivity of U.S. workers and consequently their average real wage rate." A system without illegal workers actually hinders US progress and its ability to compete in a global market.

It is not enough just to prove that illegal immigrants are beneficial, they could continue to be valuable in an enforcement only situation but you need to show the necessity of amnesty. Every pro team will discuss the costs to public services, and it is true that illegal immigrants do impose a cost, but is enforcement really the best way to remedy this cost? It is unreasonable to expect that the US would be able to deport all 12 million illegal immigrants or even enough to offset the current costs to social services. The Center For Immigration Studies brings up the very obvious point that the costs will still exist as long as illegal immigrants are in the country. According to them, "The average illegal household is estimated to receive less than half as much in services from the federal government as do other households, even though their households are 17 percent larger on average. This, coupled with the fact that benefits are often received on behalf of their U.S.-born children who are awarded citizenship at birth under current law, means that it is very difficult to avoid many of the costs as long as the illegal aliens remain in the country." We can either willfully hope that enforcement can do something unfeasible, or we can address the problem and bring illegal immigrants into the system to increase tax revenue to offset the costs. The CATO Institute says that deportation would yield, "Modest savings in public expenditures would be more than offset by losses in economic output and job opportunities for more skilled American workers." Social costs to public services is not a reason to negate amnesty because the increased economic output is worth any of the potential costs and enforcement is not a legitimate method of reducing costs. The Hudson Institute states, "Undocumented workers would pay taxes to federal and state governments rather than to grey-market check cashing services. Payments for health care through insurance could be collected more easily, rather than burdening hospital emergency rooms with immigrants without health insurance." Amnesty has the benefit incorporating illegal immigrants into the US tax system while also assimilating them into US culture without the fear of deportation. Legalization can also serve as an economic boost according to the CATO Institute. They say, "(Legalization) would also allow immigrants to have higher productivity and create more openings for Americans in higher skilled occupations. The positive impact for U.S. households of legalization under an optimal visa tax would be 1.27 percent of GDP or \$180 billion." Not only are there economic benefits from illegal immigrants but amnesty would also have an additional positive impact on the economy. Hollow words and impossible enforcement are not the best options for the United States; we need to fix years of bad policy and recognize how beneficial a seemingly controversial plan can be.

# Pro Blocks

## **Legalization is the Only Viable Solution**

False. In reality, legalization fails to solve most of the problems associated with illegal immigration, and isn't economically viable. "Adoption of an amnesty program would perpetuate competition for low wage jobs, harm to the nation's most vulnerable workers, extend reliance on social welfare programs by poor Americans, and increase the number of persons eligible for social assistance. Moreover, granting amnesty to illegal aliens would send the message around the globe that the United States no longer believes in the rule of law and is not willing to punish those who violate it." How can you call amnesty a viable solution when we've already tried it and it failed? According to The Heritage Foundation, "The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 granted amnesty to 2.7 million illegal aliens. The primary purpose of the act was to decrease the number of illegal immigrants by limiting their inflow and by legalizing the status of illegal immigrants already here. In fact, the act did nothing to stem the tide of illegal entry. The number of illegal aliens entering the country increased fivefold from around 140,000 per year in the 1980s to 700,000 per year today." On the other hand analysis by Center for Immigration Studies "demonstrates that it is not only possible, but would be quite practical to undertake a strategy of attrition through enforcement in order to shrink the size of the illegal alien population and relieve the burden illegal immigration imposes on American communities. This strategy, when combined with conventional immigration law enforcement and tighter security at the borders, could reduce the number of illegal aliens by half over a period of five years. Contrary to some reports, and according to the government's own cost estimates, this strategy is a bargain, costing less than \$2 billion over five years. It is less expensive and less radical than either a massive amnesty/guestworker program, or a massive apprehension and removal operation. The strategy of attrition through enforcement relies on tried and true immigration law enforcement techniques that discourage illegal settlement and increase the probability that illegal aliens will return of their own accord." Overall, enforcement is a viable solution, and states that recently passed tough new laws targeting employers have already started to see the positive results.

## **America Needs Immigration to Fill Low Skilled Positions**

Empirically false if you look towards the Center for Immigration Studies study/table included in the evidence. "...the idea that there are no American workers available to fill these lower-skilled jobs is not supported by available data." Even if there was a surplus of low skilled positions that needed filled doesn't mean we should adopt such a harmful amnesty policy. These jobs could easily be accomplished through other means such as legal immigration and outsourcing. "An uncontrolled immigration system encourages the circumvention of immigration laws and is a clear invitation to those who wish to take advantage of our openness to cause this nation harm.."

## **Legalization will be Economic Stimulus**

"Despite the claims that legalization would be an economic stimulus, the reality is that such a decision would be very costly to the United States. While it is true that immigrants generally add to the economy, there has been a flood of low-skill, low-educated migrants, most of whom have come to the country illegally and many of whom bring with them similarly educated and skilled family members. These migrants use public services, health care facilities, and schools while paying few of the taxes that support these public sector activities--at a very high price tag. This cost would far exceed the economic benefits of legalization (Heritage Foundation)."

According to the Center for Immigration Studies, "If illegals were given green cards and began to pay taxes and use services like legal immigrants with the same education levels, the net annual fiscal deficit at the federal level would likely increase from \$2,736 to \$7,668 per household under the most likely scenario. Total costs could grow from \$10.4 billion a year to \$28.8 billion."

## **Immigrants Make More Jobs than They Take**

Illegal immigrants steal millions of jobs away from Americans every year and even the lucky Americans that keep their jobs suffer by receiving lower wages. Any study that makes the assertion that immigrants create more jobs than they take I near guarantee lumps together both legal and illegal immigrants which isn't topical. Try and call them on it.

## **Legalization of Illegal Immigrants will Raise Wages**

This goes against basic economics. Not only will Americans lose jobs to these immigrants, but amnesty would substantially increase the labor market which would in turn drive down wages (labor supply increase -> wages decrease). Some people might argue that some of the wages for currently undocumented wages might increase if they were granted amnesty, because they are currently getting paid off the books below minimum wage. While this may seem plausible in theory in practice we saw the exact opposite happen with the mass amnesty program in 1986. According to a Numbers USA report, "Advocates of amnesty constantly claim that a mass legalization of illegal aliens would improve the working conditions and wages of these illegal workers. Martin uses the 1986 IRCA mass amnesty as an example of how an amnesty could actually harm illegal workers: "Since 1986, many studies have examined IRCA's effects on economic outcomes among Mexican immigrants. Research generally suggests that IRCA led to deterioration in the wages and working conditions of undocumented migrants, but studies have not yet identified the reasons for this change. Possible explanations include intentional discrimination by employers on the basis of legal status; a shift in employer hiring practices in sectors that employ undocumented workers; increased competition from newly legalized workers; and a general decay of economic conditions after 1986." It is clear that IPC is wrong to assert that a mass amnesty would have a positive effect on the illegal workforce."

## **Enforcement without Legalization Cannot Stop Illegal Immigration**

The plans aren't completely mutually exclusive. All the pro is advocating is that the focus be on enforcement first and foremost, because a focus on amnesty will actually lead to an increase in illegal immigration unless a solid enforcement policy is in place first. No policy is ever going to bring an end to illegal immigration completely, but enforcement is probably the closest we're going to get. "We know attrition through enforcement works because, in states that have passed tough new laws to penalize employers of and deny public benefits to illegal aliens, the illegal aliens began to move out of those states, often before the new laws are even implemented. As it currently stands, almost 200,000 illegal aliens self-deport from the United States every year, but imagine how many more would leave if our government refused to award illegal aliens another amnesty, mandated all employers to verify a person's eligibility to work here, cracked down on identity fraud and enabled local police to easily transfer illegal aliens in their custody to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials (Numbers USA)."

# Con Blocks

## **Enforcement is Effective**

It's hard to deny that even under the best case scenario any effective enforcement policy is going to cost a considerable amount of money. It isn't cheap rounding up millions of people or erecting a border wall that probably won't deter that many people anyways. Overall, there isn't any guarantee that this money is going to have any considerable effect, and even if it does, what is effective enforcement? If effective enforcement is successfully expelling the entire undocumented workforce, I would hardly call that beneficial. Swine flue is "effective," but just because something is "effective" doesn't mean it's a good thing. "Let's start with the devastating ripple effects that will reverberate throughout our economy if we were foolhardy enough to implement this scheme. At home, we would have massive work shortages in many sectors of our economy, ie: Agriculture - since some 30% by most counts of our farm labor is illegal, and we are still understaffed on most farms already, we would be faced with an extreme crisis in our food supply. We would see massive price increases due to the lower supply of available food products. We would see a major reduction in our exports, (which would hurt our already bleeding trade deficit - causing further weakening of the dollar, since agricultural products are our number one export category). A case in point would be Colorado, which bills itself as the most anti-illegal immigrant state in the country, and is represented in the House of Representatives by Presidential candidate Tom Tancredo, who has been an outspoken advocate for harsh laws aimed against undocumented laborers. Colorado has passed some of the toughest anti-illegal immigrant state legislation in the nation, and has suffered immeasurably for it. The agricultural workers, both legal and illegal, fled the state because of the ill-conceived anti immigrant laws, and as a result, Colorado's farmers have suffered. This spring their crops were left rotting in their fields, and the state's farmers have become so desperate that they have resorted to using prisoners to tend their fields. The state has also suffered labor shortages in construction, and other business's such as carwashes are struggling to stay open without a sufficient supply of available labor." Overall, a focus on amnesty will provide our delicate economy with a much needed economic stimulus whereas a focus on enforcement will remove a necessary functional component from our economy to devastating effects.

## **Enforcement Causes Self-Deportation**

See above. Even if enforcement caused self-deportation which is somewhat speculative doesn't mean it's a good thing.

## **Border Wall Would be Beneficial**

A border wall would not be effective due its exorbitant cost and it would be easily bypassed by tunnel networks that are already in place to sneak across the border. In addition, simply enforcing the border does nothing to address the millions of immigrants already here and would have little effect on curbing future immigration; considering, it completely neglects the fact that most illegal immigrants don't get here by crossing the border illegally instead they simply overstay their visas. A wall would do nothing to address that problem but would come at a significant cost.

## **Amnesty Harms US Economic System**

See the evidence for several cards for how amnesty would actually provide an economic stimulus. Overall, it would increase tax revenue, raise wages, create jobs, and decrease consumer prices by increasing business efficiency. Also it's worth noting that unlike the pro will advocate, public service costs will not increase dramatically with amnesty; considering, most immigrants are denied access to a lot of public services their first five years.

## **Wages for American Workers will Decrease**

According to The Immigration Policy Center, "immigration raises the wages of most American workers and creates new jobs. Economist Giovanni Peri at the University of California-Davis has found that immigrants differ from native-born Americans in their education, skill sets, and occupations. As a result, immigrants don't compete with U.S. citizens for most jobs. Rather, they complement the native-born workforce—which increases the productivity and wages of all Americans. Moreover, immigrants help create jobs, as their addition to the labor force stimulates investment by entrepreneurs who organize new workers in productive ways that generate profit... Immigration raises wages for most Americans: According to a 2006 study by Giovanni Peri, immigration has increased the average wages of all native-born workers. Peri found that between 1990 and 2004, the roughly 90% of native-born workers with at least a high-school diploma experienced wage gains because of immigration ranging from 0.7% to 3.4%, depending on their level of education." Intuitively it seems like an increase in the labor market should lead to a decrease in wages, but that simplification ignores the fact that immigration leads to a shift out in the demand curve (for both products and workers).

## **Available Americans to Fill the Jobs of Immigrants**

According to the Hoover Institute, “To be fair to economic populists, the oft-repeated saying that unskilled immigrants “do the jobs Americans won’t do” isn’t entirely accurate; if we deported 12 million people and closed the border, currently unemployed native-born Americans would probably take some of the janitorial, agricultural, and other menial jobs currently filled by low-wage immigrants. But many of these positions would remain unfilled, simply because the vast majority of able Americans, including those unemployed, are overqualified for this sort of work. And with the deportation of so many unskilled workers, the cost of filling these positions — picking crops, emptying wastepaper baskets, and the like — would dramatically rise, incurring a toll that would be transferred onto American consumers.” The Immigration Policy Center reiterates this saying “Even during a time of economic recession and high unemployment, most native born workers do not compete with most immigrants for the same jobs. This is apparent even when we compare unemployed natives with employed “recent” immigrants who came to the United States within the past decade. Unemployed natives and employed recent immigrants tend to have different levels of education, to live in different parts of the country, to have experience in different occupations, and to have different amounts of work experience. As a result, they could not simply be “swapped” for one another.”

## **Immigrants More Likely to Use Social Welfare**

There’s a lot of evidence in the files refuting this, but the important thing to consider is that an amnesty program would generate tax revenue to fund these programs so it would be a net benefit. Also, a lot of social services are denied for a period of time, so citizens granted amnesty would in effect help subsidize those services without drawing from them themselves.

## **Undermines Rule of Law**

Just because something is a law doesn’t make it inherently right. Take slavery for example. The rule of law has already been broken in the status quo. It’s unfortunate but pretty much any policy from here is going to undermine the rule of law unless we deport everyone. Turning a blind eye and allowing these immigrants to continue to live here classified as illegals does nothing to promote the rule of law. Furthermore for reasons already stated, it simply isn’t feasible and/or practical to deport everyone, so the best way to reestablish the rule of law is to quickly regain some control which is what an amnesty program would do. It would provide a clean slate from which we could work on enforcement, but the focus needs to be on amnesty first.

## Crossfire

On the pro, I would focus on getting con to concede that amnesty in the 1980s failed to accomplish its goal. I would start by having con agree that there is a problem with the status quo which isn't all that unreasonable of a claim. Next, I would link how the past amnesty failed to prevent and caused the current problem, so why should we try a failed policy again? If con comes back claiming that the problem is just as much a result of past failed enforcement, then highlight how enforcement has been shown to work successfully recently in states with new stricter policies. Also focus on the economic benefits in terms of jobs, wages, and decreased social service costs associated with getting illegals to deport.

On the con, I would try and get pro to concede that a perfect enforcement plan would remove all undocumented aliens from the United States as quickly as possible. If pro concedes that, then it shouldn't be that hard to prove that the pro's perfect situation isn't logistically or economically feasible. On the other hand, if they deny that's the ideal goal of enforcement, then the logic they'll use can probably easily be used against them, because they're indirectly conceding that their presence is necessary/beneficial. Also I would ask it as a yes no question and get pro to concede that tax revenue would go up with legalization. It would also be nice to have a list of social services denied to recent citizens on hand.

I watched a lot of rounds at nationals, and a lot of good teams don't use cross effectively. They're not patient enough and get too greedy with their questions so they get nowhere. They ask a lot of questions like doesn't immigration lead to a decrease in wages, and unless the opponents are completely unprepared they're going to respond no 99.9% of the time and probably read a couple lines of evidence from some guy at a think tank saying immigration won't lead to a decrease in wages. Then most the time, the first team will come back with some study of their own saying the opposite and it will effectively be a wash and nothing will have been accomplished. It's seldom advantageous to start your line of questioning by asking them to concede one of your entire points. A much better approach is to break your points down and try to get your opponents to concede the logic behind your point first. If I was going to use the wage example in round, I wouldn't start with won't immigration lead to a decrease in wages, but rather with disregarding immigration, wouldn't you agree it's basic economics that a larger labor market leads to a decrease in wages? It's hard to deny, so assuming they say yes follow it up with a well isn't it safe to say amnesty would increase the supply of laborers compared to enforcement. Once again that's hard to deny, so assuming they say yes by that logic how does amnesty not lead to a decrease in wages? Ask them to attack the logic specifically. If they unfortunately actually have a good response, then the point is probably going to be a wash, but by approaching the question this way simply reading counter evidence won't be as effective for them. It is far more difficult for people to respond to logic than it is to respond to a point they've prepared and if your opponents can't defend against your logic then you judge begins to think that they don't actually understand what they are debating.

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# Pro Evidence

## **Immigration Shouldn't be a Vulnerability**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg2034.cfm>

Edwin Meese, III and Matthew Spalding, Ph.D.

Every nation has the right, recognized by both international and domestic law, to secure its borders and ports of entry and thereby control the goods and persons coming into its territory. Americans have always been and remain a generous people, but that does not mitigate the duty imposed on the United States government to know who is entering, to set the terms and conditions of entry and exit, and to control that entry and exit through fair and just means. It is the responsibility of Congress and the President to ensure that immigration policy and immigration policy enforcement serve our national security. From a national security perspective, preventing illegal entry and reducing unlawful presence in the United States is an imperative. An uncontrolled immigration system encourages the circumvention of immigration laws and is a clear invitation to those who wish to take advantage of our openness to cause this nation harm. The rule of law requires the fair, firm, and consistent enforcement of the law, and immigration is no exception

## Increased Enforcement Needed

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/GovernmentReform/bg1807.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

October 19, 2004

The Principles of Immigration

Burden on State and Local Governments. Although immigration policy is primarily a federal responsibility, it is the state and local governments that mostly deal with the practical implications of that policy. On the one hand, as the federal government neglects its obligation to secure America's borders, the states pick up the tab for illegal immigrants who receive various local services and impose local costs. This is a financial and practical burden—and an unfunded mandate—placed on states by a federal government that is unwilling to enforce its own laws.

On the other hand, state and local law enforcement needs to play a larger role in investigating, detaining, and arresting illegal immigrants on civil and criminal grounds. The primacy of the law ultimately depends on officers of the law—at every level of government—being bound to its support and implementation. In considering various proposals to reform immigration policy, Congress must address these and other issues of cooperative federalism.

## Enforcement is Effective

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg2034.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

Edwin Meese, III and Matthew Spalding, Ph.D.

Congress and the President must take credible steps to reduce illegal immigration in both annual and absolute terms, and that requires enforcement. Indeed, recent efforts by the Bush Administration demonstrate how targeted enforcement could have a significant effect on illegal immigration into the United States. Federal, state, and local law enforcement must be allowed to enforce immigration law consistent with their legal authority. Federal and state governments must provide law enforcement with the necessary resources to enforce and prosecute these laws, and the federal government should expand programs to assist states and territories in their immigration law enforcement efforts.

<http://www.cis.org/Enforcement-IllegalPopulation>

Center for Immigration Studies

Attrition Through Enforcement: A Cost-Effective Strategy to Shrink the Illegal Population  
April 2006

This analysis demonstrates that it is not only possible, but would be quite practical to undertake a strategy of attrition through enforcement in order to shrink the size of the illegal alien population and relieve the burden illegal immigration imposes on American communities. This strategy, when combined with conventional immigration law enforcement and tighter security at the borders, could reduce the number of illegal aliens by half over a period of five years. Contrary to some reports, and according to the government's own cost estimates, this strategy is a bargain, costing less than \$2 billion over five years. It is less expensive and less radical than either a massive amnesty/guestworker program, or a massive apprehension and removal operation.

The strategy of attrition through enforcement relies on tried and true immigration law enforcement techniques that discourage illegal settlement and increase the probability that illegal aliens will return of their own accord. Lawmakers must not be intimidated by the sheer size of the illegal population. Both academic research and recent experience demonstrate that migrants respond to incentives and deterrents, and that a subtle increase in the "heat" on illegal aliens can be enough to dramatically reduce the scale of the problem within just a few years. The federal government already has within its grasp the ability and the tools to control the level of illegal immigration, and its success in doing so is a direct result of the effort it has made. A modest investment of resources to step up this effort will pay large dividends for the future.

## Enforcement is Effective Cont'd

<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1919621/posts>

Attrition through Enforcement [SAVE (Secure America through Verification and Enforcement) Numbers USA ^ | October 30, 2007 | Numbers USA

We know Attrition Through Enforcement works because, in states that have passed tough new laws to penalize employers of and deny public benefits to illegal aliens, the illegal aliens began to move out of those states, often before the new laws are even implemented. As it currently stands, almost 200,000 illegal aliens self-deport from the United States every year, but imagine how many more would leave if our government refused to award illegal aliens another amnesty, mandated all employers to verify a person's eligibility to work here, cracked down on identity fraud and enabled local police to easily transfer illegal aliens in their custody to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials.

[http://www.newsmax.com/putnam/attrition\\_not\\_amnesty/2007/09/27/36229html](http://www.newsmax.com/putnam/attrition_not_amnesty/2007/09/27/36229html)

One Reporter's Opinion – Attrition Can Replace Amnesty  
Thursday, September 27, 2007 3:03 PM

Arizona reports illegals are actually leaving the state in anticipation of Arizona's tough new immigration rules.

Something is happening in Massachusetts where Brazilian illegals are quietly packing up and leaving. Then there's that Pennsylvania town, Hazleton. They are in the forefront of the resistance to illegal immigration. When Hazleton created the nation's first ordinance aimed at driving away illegals, thousands apparently packed up and left too.

These developments are improving the economic bargaining power of our less skilled American workers. At Greeley, Colo., a whole line of applicants came forth to fill jobs vacated by illegal workers, after raids by federal agents on illegals at the Swift & Company meat processing plant. In Bedford, Mass., it was "out the door" for illegals after a raid by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents on a plant making leather goods. But as one newly employed worker says, "It is giving us a break after being out of work so many years."

When illegals were removed from a poultry plant in Georgia, The Wall Street Journal documented the benefits to local workers. The plant raised wages, also providing free rooms in the company-owned dormitory. And it gave a new break to African-Americans who had been displaced by the illegals.

All of this good news is coming our way. Attrition is the real alternative to amnesty. Why didn't we think of it sooner? It works.

## **Enforcement Cause Self-Deportation**

<http://www.cis.org/node/729>

Center for Immigration Studies  
On Immigration, Enforcement Works  
August 2008

There has been a significant amount of news coverage suggesting that this is happening, with stories from all over the country of illegal immigrants telling reporters that they're going back because of the increase in federal worksite raids and the proliferation of state and local enforcement measures. But these have been little more than anecdotes.

Now there is research showing that attrition through enforcement works. A new report from the Center for Immigration Studies estimates that the illegal-immigrant population has fallen from a peak of 12.5 million in August of last year down to 11.2 million this past May, a drop of 1.3 million or 11 percent. This decline is many times larger than the number people deported by the government during that period, meaning that most of the decline is due to illegal immigrants returning home on their own – deporting themselves, as it were. If this decline were to continue at the same rate, the illegal population would be cut in half in five years.

## **Enforcement More than Just Actions**

<http://www.cis.org/node/742>

Mark Krikorian

August 2008 - Op-eds and Magazine Articles

So far, so good. But did enforcement contribute to the decline or was it driven just by the weakening economy? Though the slowdown in construction and other industries no doubt contributed to the decline, there are several reasons to think that enforcement was a major factor in the decision of illegal immigrants to leave. First of all, the decline in the number of illegal immigrants started before their unemployment rate increased; in the past, much smaller dips had been seen in the illegal population, but only after their unemployment rate increased — which stands to reason, of course. What's more, only the illegal population declined; the number of legal immigrants continued to grow.

And the enforcement climate is determined not only by actions but also by words — especially the words of lawmakers debating immigration policy. It seems that the number of illegal immigrants actually spiked last summer as the Senate conducted a high-profile debate on the McCain-Kennedy amnesty bill. That debate was widely reported in the immigrant media, which presented amnesty as an inevitability, the culmination of several years of activism backed by all the major institutions of American society. When instead the legislation failed spectacularly in the Senate, as the result of an unprecedented public outcry, those amnesty expectations were dashed, casting the enforcement push in a whole new light. As a result, the illegal-immigrant population began to drop almost immediately.

## US Needs Border Enforcement

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/exhibit-12-million-our-broken-borders>

Victor X. Cerda

Former General Counsel of ICE

There are at least 12 million reasons why a fence should be built. It has been over 20 years since the U.S. Congress last implemented immigration reform to address our broken borders. Over the 20 years, and following implementation of a legalization program, we now find ourselves facing an illegal immigrant population estimated to be between 12-20 million. It is estimated that this population has grown by 500,000 individuals each year since 2001. It is estimated that approximately 66% of this illegal immigration population has entered the United States by illegally crossing the border, the other 33% having overstayed their temporary visas. Based on these numbers, there is a strong argument that the U.S. must do anything possible to deter future illegal immigration, to include a strong emphasis on controlling the border and preventing illegal border crossings. While technology will be a part of the solution, sometimes the simplest solution is the most effective. Building a fence is one of those simple solutions that will make a difference in border control and is a key ingredient to the United States' overall ability to put order and control at our borders. The simplicity is clear: putting a physical impediment in front of next 500,000 illegal immigrants will deter individuals from attempting this, and for those that wish to continue, will make it even more difficult to succeed in crossing. It is difficult to argue against this logic based on its simplicity, and it is even more difficult to argue that such a barricade is not needed because the border is under control.

## **Border Wall Would be Beneficial**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/what-about-the-purple-people-eater-breeding-ground-the-cost>

Victor X. Cerda

Former General Counsel of ICE

Our history of failed immigration control and reform is not completely devoid of genuine efforts at border control and immigration enforcement. I personally witnessed many government officers and employees work tirelessly to achieve our laws mandate to enforce our immigration laws. Unfortunately, their efforts are often countered by hundreds of reasons why they are wrong in enforcing the law or why they are “misapplying” the law in an “inhumane” manner. The same is occurring with efforts to build the border fence, with a wide-range of objections being raised, including environmental and animal protection concerns and the need to balance our budget. I view these as efforts to once again derail efforts aimed at genuine enforcement of our immigration laws. The reality is that any action to enforce our immigration laws, like any other national law enforcement initiative, has costs and requires resources. The cost to apprehend someone once they have entered the United States illegally and deport them is significant. For example, in 2008, DHS deported approximately 250,000 individuals from the United States – a historical record. The DHS entity responsible for detention and deportation, Detention and Removal Operations, has a budget of over \$2 billion. The costs for tracking an individual in the interior is higher given that such a mission is the equivalent of the needle in the hay stack scenario. To be successful at this challenge requires resources. If you do the math, the cost to enforce immigration in the interior of the U.S. is significant. Building a fence is no different, but our broken borders and the security vulnerability they present warrant resources. Further, the urgency to reinforce our borders from both the immigration and national security perspectives warrants the authority granted to DHS to cut through environmental red-tape and the resources to take immediate action, to include constructing the border fence. If the United States is to get serious about immigration control, and it appears the public frustration level regarding illegal immigration has hit that red zone, it will require significant resources and an inconvenience to the purple people eater breeding ground near the border.

## **A Border Wall Can Make a Statement**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/a-border-wall-can-make-a-statement>

American Immigration Control Foundation

Restriction

In an age of globalism, a border wall can make a statement that countries do matter. Unfortunately, many of America's elites don't see things this way. The Council on Foreign Relations, and organization of this country's movers and shakers, posted a position paper on its website suggesting integration of the United States, Mexico and Canada. This agenda seems to be taking shape in the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) forged by the U.S., Mexican and Canadian governments. Many U.S. leaders, in their indifference to illegal immigration, certainly give the impression that the sovereignty of our country is not a big issue in their minds.

Nor is it much of an issue with Mexican leaders who encourage illegal immigration in various ways. Said former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, "I have proudly affirmed that the Mexican nation extends beyond the territory enclosed by its borders and that Mexican migrants are an important—a very important—part of it." Many of his countrymen also have a low regard for U.S. sovereignty. A Zogby International poll in 2002 found that 58 percent of Mexicans believe that our southwestern states properly belong to Mexico.

Given the forces that want to ignore the U.S. Mexican border, patriotic Americans have good reason to want a strong border wall and fencing. These barriers would make the statement in a very tangible way that most Americans want America to remain a distinct and sovereign country.

## **A Border Wall Would Not be a New “Berlin Wall”**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/a-border-wall-would-be-a-new-berlin-wall>

American Immigration Control Foundation  
Restriction

There is a world of difference between a wall to keep people in and a wall to keep people out. The purpose of the Berlin Wall was to hold people in so that their government could oppress and dominate them. The purpose of a secure American border is to prevent massive numbers of illegal aliens from oppressing and dominating us.

Another way of understanding this issue is an everyday example. No one condemns homeowners or business owners for building walls or fences around their property. They do this to live and do business as they wish. America is the property of American citizens. We have the right to keep trespassers away.

## **Legalization is Not an Economic Solution**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/wm2451.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

Amnesty as an Economic Stimulus: Not the Answer to the Illegal Immigration Problem

by [Jena Baker McNeill](#) May 18, 2009

Despite the claims that legalization would be an economic stimulus, the reality is that such a decision would be very costly to the United States. While it is true that immigrants generally add to the economy, there has been a flood of low-skill, low-educated migrants, most of whom have come to the country illegally and many of whom bring with them similarly educated and skilled family members. These migrants use public services, health care facilities, and schools while paying few of the taxes that support these public sector activities--at a very high price tag. This cost would far exceed the economic benefits of legalization.

## **Amnesty Harms US Economic System**

[http://www.fairus.org/site/DocServer/amnesty\\_economy.pdf?docID=2681](http://www.fairus.org/site/DocServer/amnesty_economy.pdf?docID=2681)

Federation for American immigration reform

Because of the emphasis on family reunification in U.S. immigration law, newly legalized aliens become able to sponsor immediate family members and later, if they become U.S. citizens, become eligible to sponsor extended family members. This system tends to replicate the human capital characteristics of the sponsors.

Thus, an amnesty for today's illegal alien population implies an addition to the flow of poorly educated and poorly skilled immigrants, particularly from Mexico and Central America, which is the source of an estimated 70 percent of the current illegal alien population. For this reason, putting illegal aliens on a "pathway to citizenship" as advocated by amnesty advocates would have the effect of increasing the flow of poorly skilled immigrants at the expense of the highly skilled immigrants who are, in fact, a benefit to the economy.

The arguments put forward by amnesty advocates —such as the Immigration Policy Center— offer no new research, but rather regurgitate research that lumps together legal and illegal immigrant workers in order to give the false impression that illegal immigration is a benefit to the country and would be even more so if they gained legal status through an amnesty. This ignores findings that demonstrate the very different characteristics of illegal alien workers compared to legal permanent residents. Experience with the 1986 amnesty demonstrates the falseness of the assertion that adoption of an amnesty would transform lowskilled, low-educational-attainment, illegal aliens into skilled, educated workers who would be making high wages and paying higher taxes.

Research in fact documents that the result would be the opposite. Adoption of an amnesty would perpetuate competition for low wage jobs, harm to the nation's most vulnerable workers, extend reliance on social welfare programs by poor Americans, and increase the number of persons eligible for social assistance. Moreover, granting amnesty to illegal aliens would send the message around the globe that the United States no longer believes in the rule of law and is not willing to punish those who violate it.

## **Wages for American Workers will Decrease**

<http://www.numbersusa.com/content/news/may-29-2009/new-report-debunks-pro-amnesty-arguments.html>

Numbers USA Report

Friday, May 29, 2009, 11:39 AM

### Better Wages for Most Americans?

Advocates of amnesty also claim that the legalization of illegal workers would not only improve the wages of illegal workers, it would also improve the wages of most American workers. The IPC paper even cites "numerous studies" which promote this argument. The problem with these studies is that they fail to distinguish between legal and illegal immigrants. Legal immigrants tend to be better educated than illegal immigrants and are less likely to compete with low-skilled, low-educated Americans, i.e., America's most vulnerable. This competition would decrease, not increase, jobs for most low-skilled Americans because the newly-legalized workforce would be willing to accept lower wages and poorer working conditions than most low-skilled American workers.

## Available Americans to Fill the Jobs of Immigrants

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back1104.html>

Center For Immigration Studies

October 2004

	Share of All Immigrants Who Work in Occupation	Share of Occupation Comprised of Immigrants	Number of Employed Natives	Number of Unemployed Natives <sup>1</sup>	Number of Recently Arrived Immigrants (2000-2004) Employed	Native Unemployment Rate
Farming, fishing, & forestry	2 %	36 %	540	73	63	11.9 %
Building cleaning & maintenance	8 %	35 %	3,054	375	318	10.9 %
Construction & extraction	10 %	24 %	5,999	874	462	12.7 %
Food preparation	8 %	23 %	5,090	525	380	9.3 %
Production manufacturing	11 %	22 %	7,249	566	272	7.2 %
Computer/mathematical	3 %	19 %	2,451	130	95	5.0 %
Life, physical, & soc. science	1 %	18 %	1,059	48	39	4.3 %
Healthcare support	2 %	17 %	2,342	166	59	6.6 %
Personal care & service	3 %	16 %	3,549	218	87	5.8 %
Transportation & moving	7 %	16 %	6,925	608	150	8.1 %
Architecture & engineering	2 %	15 %	2,203	77	45	3.4 %
Installation and repair	3 %	13 %	4,296	224	68	5.0 %
Healthcare practitioner	4 %	12 %	5,932	88	66	1.5 %
Sales	9 %	12 %	13,569	879	204	6.1 %
Arts, entertainment & media	1 %	11 %	2,313	145	37	5.9 %
Management	7 %	10 %	12,969	344	133	2.6 %
Office & admin. support	9 %	10 %	17,278	994	162	5.4 %
Business and financial	3 %	10 %	5,098	172	54	3.3 %
Community & social service	1 %	9 %	1,944	55	23	2.8 %
Protective service	1 %	8 %	2,538	134	29	5.0 %
Education, training	3 %	8 %	7,464	101	102	1.3 %
Legal occupations	1 %	7 %	1,454	40	10	2.7 %
Totals	100 %	15 %	115,316	6,936	2,857	5.6 %

Figures are for workers 18 years of age and older.  
<sup>1</sup> Not all unemployed persons report an occupation.  
 Source: Center for Immigration Studies analyses of March 2000 and 2004 Current Population Surveys.

Table 5 ranks occupations based on the percentage comprised of immigrants. It is often suggested that the kinds of jobs immigrants do are so different from what natives do that the two groups seldom, if ever, compete. But Table 5 shows that, at least when looked at by occupation, this does not appear to be the case. Clearly there are jobs where immigrants make up a large share of workers, but there are still millions of natives employed in those same occupations. In the first five occupations listed in the table, immigrants comprise 20 percent or more of all workers. But there are still 21.9 million adult natives employed in these occupational categories. In fact, the vast majority of workers in these heavily immigrant occupations are natives. In the six occupations where immigrants comprise 15 to 19 percent of all workers, we again see that there are 18.5 million adult natives employed in these occupations. If we focus just on the four occupations with the largest number of newly arrived immigrants (construction, food preparation, cleaning and maintenance, and production workers) we again find that there are 21.4 million natives employed in these occupations. In these four occupations there were 1.4 million newly arrived immigrants, and there were more than two million unemployed natives. This does not mean that immigrants caused the unemployment of natives, though that is a possibility. But it does mean that the idea that there are no American workers available to fill these lower-skilled jobs is not supported by available data.

It is possible that the occupational categories are so highly aggregated in Table 5 that they obscure large differences between immigrants and natives. But it must be remembered that there are 48 million natives in the labor force who have only a high school degree or less. Most of these workers do jobs that require only a modest level of training. Moreover, Table 5 makes clear that, although they are concentrated in more menial jobs, immigrants are employed throughout the labor market.

## **Natives Do Better in Areas of Low Immigration Growth**

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back1104.html>

Center for Immigration Studies

October 2004

### **Natives Did Better in Areas with Low Immigrant Growth**

Top Immigrant-Receiving States. So far in this Backgrounder we have considered immigration's impact at only the national level. Table 6 reports employment figures for states with the largest numbers of immigrant workers. The table shows that, for the most part in these top immigrant states, it was immigrants who took most of the new jobs where there was a net increase in employment. In Texas, New Jersey, Arizona, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia all or almost all of the net increase in jobs went to immigrants. And in California, half of the new jobs went to immigrants. In Illinois, natives lost a large number of jobs, while immigrants made very modest gains. Overall the figures for these states tend to support the idea that immigrant job gains come, at least to some extent, at the expense of natives.

## **Amnesty will Hurt People with Blue Cards**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/wm2513.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

June 30, 2009

Ag JOBS Amnesty: The Wrong Way to Help American Agriculture

The Ag JOBS bill would have the perverse effect of decreasing the incentives for employers to hire workers with a blue card--causing a tremendous disadvantage to those using blue cards legally. This is because the amendment protects workers with blue card status from being fired unless the employer has "just cause." This kind of protection is not even afforded to those American workers who work on an "at will" basis in many states, where they can be fired for any reason or no reason. This could mire employers in legal proceedings if a worker feels that he has been unjustly fired and would be a large disincentive for employers to hire workers with a blue card.

## **Amnesty will Not Improve Working Conditions**

<http://www.numbersusa.com/content/news/may-29-2009/new-report-debunks-pro-amnesty-arguments.html>

Numbers USA Report

May 29, 2009

### **Better Wages for Legalized Workers?**

Advocates of amnesty constantly claim that a mass legalization of illegal aliens would improve the working conditions and wages of these illegal workers. Martin uses the 1986 IRCA mass amnesty as an example of how an amnesty could actually harm illegal workers: "Since 1986, many studies have examined IRCA's effects on economic outcomes among Mexican immigrants. Research generally suggests that IRCA led to deterioration in the wages and working conditions of undocumented migrants, but studies have not yet identified the reasons for this change. Possible explanations include intentional discrimination by employers on the basis of legal status; a shift in employer hiring practices in sectors that employ undocumented workers; increased competition from newly legalized workers; and a general decay of economic conditions after 1986." It is clear that IPC is wrong to assert that a mass amnesty would have a positive effect on the illegal workforce.

## **Amnesty Encourages Illegals To Cross the Boarder**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/wm2451.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 18, 2009

Amnesty as an Economic Stimulus: Not the Answer to the Illegal Immigration Problem

by [Jena Baker McNeill](#)

It Threatens Immigrant Safety. Amnesty would encourage more people to cross the border illegally in hopes of staying in the United States without repercussion. Crossing the southern border, however, is highly dangerous--there are many hazards, including border smugglers who often rape and murder those they pretend to help. The U.S. should not provide an incentive for more people to take this dangerous journey.

## **Amnesty Increases Illegal Immigration**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 granted amnesty to 2.7 million illegal aliens. The primary purpose of the act was to decrease the number of illegal immigrants by limiting their inflow and by legalizing the status of illegal immigrants already here.<sup>[63]</sup> In fact, the act did nothing to stem the tide of illegal entry. The number of illegal aliens entering the country increased fivefold from around 140,000 per year in the 1980s to 700,000 per year today.

Illegal entries increased dramatically shortly after IRCA went into effect. It seems plausible that the prospect of future amnesty and citizenship served as a magnet to draw even more illegal immigrants into the country. After all, if the nation granted amnesty once why wouldn't it do so again?

## Immigrants More Likely to Use Social Welfare

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

Welfare may be defined as means-tested aid programs: these programs provide cash, non-cash, and social service assistance that is limited to low-income households. The major means-tested programs include Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, public housing, the earned income credit, and Medicaid. Historically, recent immigrants were less likely to receive welfare than native-born Americans. But over the last thirty years, this historic pattern has reversed. As the relative education levels of immigrants fell, their tendency to receive welfare benefits increased. By the late 1990s immigrant households were fifty percent more likely to receive means-tested aid than native-born households.<sup>[15]</sup> Moreover, immigrants appear to assimilate into welfare use. The longer immigrants live in the U.S., the more likely they are to use welfare.<sup>[16]</sup>

Some 80 percent of illegal immigrants come from Mexico and Latin America.<sup>[19]</sup> (See Chart 1) Historically, Hispanics in America have had very high levels of welfare use. Chart 2 shows receipt of aid from major welfare programs by different ethnic groups in 1999; the programs covered are Medicaid, Food Stamps, public housing, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, General Assistance, and Supplemental Security Income.<sup>[20]</sup> As the chart shows, Hispanics were almost three times more likely to receive welfare than non-Hispanic whites. In addition, among families that received aid, the cost of the aid received was 40 percent higher for Hispanics than for non-Hispanic whites.<sup>[21]</sup> Putting together the greater probability of receiving welfare with the greater cost of welfare per family means that, on average, Hispanic families received four times more welfare per family than white non-Hispanics.

Welfare use can also be measured by immigration status. In general, immigrant households are about fifty percent more likely to use welfare than native-born households.<sup>[23]</sup> Immigrants with less education are more likely to use welfare.

With amnesty, current illegal immigrants' welfare use would likely rise to the level of lawful immigrants with similar education levels.

## Illegal Immigrants are Net Fiscal Deficit

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) has performed a thorough study of the federal fiscal impacts of amnesty.<sup>[59]</sup> This study found that illegal immigrant households have low education levels and low wages and currently pay little in taxes. Illegal immigrant households also receive lower levels of federal government benefits. Nonetheless, the study also found that, on average, illegal immigrant families received more in federal benefits than they paid in taxes. <sup>[60]</sup>

Granting amnesty would render illegal immigrants eligible for federal benefit programs. The CIS study estimated the additional taxes that would be paid and the additional government costs that would occur as a result of amnesty. It assumed that welfare utilization and tax payments among current illegal immigrants would rise to equal the levels among legally-admitted immigrants of similar national, educational, and demographic backgrounds. If all illegal immigrants were granted amnesty, federal tax payments would increase by some \$3,000 per household, but federal benefits and social services would increase by \$8,000 per household. Total federal welfare benefits would reach around \$9,500 per household, or \$35 billion per year total. The study estimates that the net cost to the federal government of granting amnesty to some 3.8 million illegal alien households would be around \$5,000 per household, for a total federal fiscal cost of \$19 billion per year. <sup>[61]</sup>

## **Amnesty will Increase Costs for American Taxpayers**

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html>

Center for Immigration Studies

August 2004

Amnesty Would Dramatically Increase Costs. One of the key findings of this report is that legalization would dramatically increase the costs of illegal immigration. If illegals were given green cards and began to pay taxes and use services like legal immigrants with the same education levels, the net annual fiscal deficit at the federal level would likely increase from \$2,736 to \$7,668 per household under the most likely scenario. Total costs could grow from \$10.4 billion a year to \$28.8 billion. The costs increase dramatically because unskilled immigrants with legal status, which is what most illegal aliens would become, can access government programs but still tend to make very modest tax payments. This is because the modern American economy offers very limited opportunities to those with little education, regardless of legal status. Though we estimate that household income might rise by 15 percent with legalization and average tax payments would increase by 77 percent as more illegals would be paid off the books, their average household incomes would still remain one-third below that of other households. At the same time, service use would rise dramatically because legal immigrants are eligible for most programs, and they typically have much less fear about using them than illegal aliens. This does not mean that low-income legal immigrants use more in services than low-income native-born Americans. The fiscal deficit is created by the fact that so many illegal aliens are unskilled and thus have low income.

## **Amnesty will be Very Expensive for American Tax Payers**

<http://www.numbersusa.com/content/news/may-29-2009/new-report-debunks-pro-amnesty-arguments.html>

Numbers USA Report

May 29, 2009

The IPC study claims that "[t]he 2007 immigration reform bill, which included a legalization program, would have more than paid for itself through increased tax revenue...." However, Martin is quick to expose this argument as a total sham. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimated that the 2007 amnesty legislation would have generated \$48 billion in new revenue during 2008-2017, primarily through Social Security payroll taxes. However, this revenue would not have offset the additional costs associated with the mass amnesty over the same time period. \$23 billion would have been spent in "new direct spending" (tax credits and Medicaid) and \$43 billion would have been spent on "new discretionary spending" (immigration enforcement) during 2008-2017. Obviously, the IPC was wrong to say that the 2007 Bush Kennedy McCain amnesty bill would have paid for itself when it actually would have cost taxpayers \$18 billion over nine years. Perhaps the IPC does not regard \$18 billion as a lot of money, but most Americans do. Furthermore, the CBO estimated that "[t]he legislation would increase the unified federal budget deficit by only several billion dollars a year by 2027." Even by the year 2027, the 2007 amnesty bill would have cost taxpayers billions of dollars each year.

## **Amnesty will Drain IRS Resources**

<http://www.numbersusa.com/content/news/may-29-2009/new-report-debunks-pro-amnesty-arguments.html>

Numbers USA Report

May 29, 2009

Would an Amnesty Really Increase Tax Revenues?

The IPC study also asserts that a "legalization would increase tax revenue" by bringing workers out of the shadows and making them legal employees, subject to federal withholding. What the IPC fails to note is that most of these illegal workers are low skilled and poorly paid. It is very unlikely that these, suddenly "legal", employees would find better, well-paying jobs. Instead, it is far more likely that these workers would remain in their low-paying jobs and would pay very little, if any, income taxes and would, therefore, become a net deficit to the IRS.

Martin succinctly refutes the IPC argument by saying, "[t]he implications of the tax system and low-wage workers are two-fold: either increased immigration enforcement would drive more of today's illegal workers off the books-and that would make them ineligible to apply for refunds because they would have no wages withheld-thereby decreasing the EITC drain on tax revenues, or the adoption of an amnesty would increase the number of those low-wage workers subject to tax withholding, thereby increasing the number of workers potentially able to claim ... tax refunds." Simply put, the IRS (and the national debt), would suffer as a result of any amnesty).

## **Immigrant Households Cost More than the Taxes They Pay**

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/viewpoints/articles/1023camarota23.html>

Use enforcement to ease situation

Oct. 23, 2005

Moreover, illegal aliens create significant costs for taxpayers mainly because they are unskilled, not because they are illegal. At least 60 percent lack a high school diploma. Such people pay relatively little in taxes regardless of legal status because they earn so little in the modern American economy. My research indicates that the net fiscal drain (taxes minus costs) would triple if we legalized illegals. Unskilled illegal aliens are costly, but unskilled legal immigrants cost even more because they can more easily access social programs.

## **US Citizens must Pay for Illegals Tax Drain**

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html>

Center for Immigration Studies

August 2004

Low Levels of Education Create Deficit. The findings of this study show that the primary reason illegal households create a fiscal deficit at the federal level is that their much lower levels of education result in low incomes and tax payments that are only 28 percent that of other households. Thus, even though the costs they impose are estimated to be only 46 percent those of other households on average, there remains a significant net deficit. Whether one considers their use of services low is a matter of perspective. Because illegals are not even supposed to be in the country, many Americans are angered by the fact that they receive any services at all. This is especially true of transfers to households like food stamps or cash payments from the Child Tax Credit. Although many Americans are upset about their use of public services, there is little evidence that illegals come to America to take advantage of public benefits. Most illegal aliens come for jobs, and the vast majority are in fact employed. But low levels of education mean they unavoidably create large costs for taxpayers.

## Illegal Immigrants Hurt Public Services

[http://vdare.com/nachman/080729\\_immigration.html](http://vdare.com/nachman/080729_immigration.html)

July 29, 2008

A Patriotic Immigration Reformer's Thoughts On The New Case Against Immigration

By [Paul Nachman](#)

"[E]ven [highly educated immigrants](#) make much heavier use of [public services](#) than comparable natives (...) [I]mmigrants [with college degrees] are still more than twice as likely as the native born to use welfare (13 percent versus 6 percent) and to be [uninsured](#) (17 percent versus 7 percent)."

Quoting [Robert Rector](#): "It takes the entire net tax payments (taxes paid minus benefits received) of one college-educated family to pay for the net benefits received by one low skill immigrant family."

"[W]hen hospitals can no longer shift enough of the costs of uncompensated care to others; they simply [close their emergency rooms](#). This doesn't create a direct monetary cost for consumers, but it does hold the potential to levy the ultimate tax—death—on Americans in need of emergency care... In Los Angeles, more than 60 hospitals have closed their emergency rooms over the past decade."

"An effective strategy of immigration law enforcement requires no land mines, no tanks, no tattooed arms—none of the cartoonish images invoked in the objections raised routinely by supporters of loose borders. The consistent application of ordinary law-enforcement tools is all that's needed."

## NAS Study Flawed

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

There are five important caveats about the NAS longitudinal study and its conclusion that in the long term the fiscal impact of immigration is positive. First, the study applies to all recent immigration, not just illegal immigration. Second, the finding that the long-term fiscal impact of immigration is positive applies to the population of immigrants as a whole, not to low-skill immigrants alone. Third, the \$83,000 figure is based on the predicted earnings, tax payments, and benefits of an immigrant's descendants over the next 300 years.<sup>[51]</sup> Fourth, the study does not take into account the growth in out-of-wedlock childbearing among the foreign-born population, which will increase future welfare costs and limit the upward mobility of future generations. Fifth, the assumed educational attainment of the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of immigrants who are high school dropouts or high school graduates seems unreasonably high given the actual attainment of the offspring of recent Mexican and Hispanic immigrants.<sup>[52]</sup>

The NAS study's 300-year time horizon is highly problematic. Three hundred years ago, the United States did not even exist and British colonists had barely reached the Appalachian Mountains. We cannot reasonably estimate what taxes and benefits will be even 30 years from now, let alone 300.

The NAS study assumes that most people's descendants will eventually regress to the social and economic mean, and thus may make a positive fiscal contribution, if the time horizon is long enough. With similar methods, it seems likely that out-of-wedlock childbearing could be found to have a net positive fiscal value as long as assumed future earnings are projected out 500 or 600 years.

Critically, the estimated net fiscal impact of the whole immigrant population has little bearing on the fiscal impact of illegal immigrants, who are primarily low-skilled. As noted, at least 50 percent of illegal immigrants do not have a high school degree. As the NAS report states, "[S]ome groups of immigrants bring net fiscal benefits to natives and others impose net fiscal costs... [I]mmigrants with certain characteristics, such as the elderly and those with little education, may be quite costly."<sup>[55]</sup>

## **Citizenship for Lawbreakers Subverts Citizenship**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/citizenship-for-lawbreakers-subverts-citizenship>

American Immigration Control Foundation

American citizenship is a precious thing. It confers membership in a society offering the advantages of rule of law, most significantly personal freedoms and economic prosperity. Citizenship essentially expresses who and what we are.

Granting citizenship to foreigners who break our laws undercuts our rule of law—and all the benefits that follow from it. Furthermore, we as a people show a profound lack of self-respect if we permit foreigners not only to trespass on our land, but, even worse, reward their contempt for our law with the jewel of citizenship. This debases the worth of citizenship for everyone, including, most ironically, the lawbreakers who receive it. And our lack of self-respect doesn't end here. It sends a signal abroad inviting the world's contempt and more people to take advantage of us.

America as a free nation, governed by the people and for the people, depends on citizens respecting their role and status as citizens. Ancient Rome fell because uncontrolled migrations diluted citizenship and left a mass of demoralized subjects. If we don't learn from that fate, we most likely will repeat it.

## **Amnesty and Citizenship Invite More Lawbreaking**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/amnesty-and-citizenship-invite-more-lawbreaking>

American Immigration Control Foundation

In 1986 Congress passed the first amnesty for illegal aliens. It gave them legal status and the pathway to citizenship. Its supporters said that it would be “inhumane” to require illegals to go home. They promised, however, there would never be another amnesty, and that strict enforcement would follow in the future.

Said Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX): “In fact, a compromise was agreed to back in 1986. There was a solemn vow that we would bring up amnesty one time, once, and only once, and there would be no more amnesty.” Congressional Record, H 8632, 10/2/90.

The 1986 amnesty legalized three million illegal aliens, but contrary to the promises, more amnesties followed with little effective enforcement. By rewarding lawbreaking, we encouraged more lawbreaking. By 2006, according to the Department of Homeland Security, a total of 12 million illegal aliens were living in the U.S. In response to this situation, prominent members of Congress that year and the following year proposed another mass amnesty—along with promises to control the border. Remembering the betrayals following 1986, outraged citizens stopped the proposed amnesties.

Even if enforcement did follow amnesty, we would still be sending a mixed message: America will make it harder for you to get in, but if you do you can stay and be a citizen. Once again, to reward a behavior is to encourage it.

## **Amnesty Undermines Heritage of Legal Immigration**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/amnesty-undermines-heritage-of-legal-immigration>

American Immigration Control Foundation

America has a tradition and heritage of legal immigration. Through our elected representatives, we set standards and qualifications for foreigners deemed eligible and worthy to come here and eventually join us citizens. Illegal immigration is quite different. It involves foreigners selecting themselves for admission, irrespective of what American citizens want.

When we grant legal status and citizenship to illegal aliens, we are letting them control our future. By putting them in line ahead of legal immigrants, we are telling those immigrants that they were foolish to respect our laws. That affront weakens their incentive to assimilate to our laws and culture. Legal status and citizenship for illegal aliens profoundly undermine our heritage of immigration.

## **Amnesty Undermines the Rule of Law**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg2034.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

Edwin Meese, III and Matthew Spalding, Ph.D.

Forgiving or condoning such violations by granting amnesty increases the likelihood of further illegal conduct. Failure to enforce immigration laws is deeply unfair to the millions who obey the law and abide by the administrative requirements to enter the country legally. Disregarding the intentional violation of the law in one context because it serves policy objectives in another undermines the rule of law. The just and reasonable requirement for correcting illegal immigration, in addition to other appropriate penalties, is repatriation, after which individuals may apply for legal entry to the United States without partiality or prejudice

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/GovernmentReform/bg1807.cfm>

The Heratige Foundation

October 19, 2004

The Principles of Immigration

The Rule of Law. Immigration is no exception to the principle that the rule of law requires the fair, firm, and equitable enforcement of the law. Failure to enforce immigration laws is unfair to those who obey the law and go through the regula-tory and administrative requirements to enter the country legally.

Those who enter and remain in the country illegally are violating the law, and condoning or encouraging such violations causes a general disre-spect for the law and encourages further illegal conduct. Forgiving the intentional violation of the law in one context because it serves policy objec-tives in another undermines the rule of law. Amnesty is appropriate only when the law uninten-tionally causes great injustice or when particular cases serve the larger purposes of the law. Those who break immigration laws should not be rewarded with legal status or other benefits, and they should be penalized in any road to citizenship.

## **Amnesty Deteriorates the Law and Order Situation**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/wm2451.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

Amnesty as an Economic Stimulus: Not the Answer to the Illegal Immigration Problem

by [Jena Baker McNeill](#) May 18, 2009

It Erodes Rule of Law. Rewarding those who came into the U.S. illegally would encourage others to engage in same behavior.

It Threatens Immigrant Safety. Amnesty would encourage more people to cross the border illegally in hopes of staying in the United States without repercussion. Crossing the southern border, however, is highly dangerous--there are many hazards, including border smugglers who often rape and murder those they pretend to help. The U.S. should not provide an incentive for more people to take this dangerous journey.

## **Immigration Growth Threatens U.S. Way of Life.**

[http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2006/10/post\\_19.html](http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2006/10/post_19.html)

Dan Stein

Overcrowded schools, congested highways, environmental stresses: We are a nation paving over its wildernesses while depending on our enemies for vital resources.

Why?

Because Americans have been blindsided by a government-mandated mass immigration program that's fueling this nation's runaway population growth. This growth was neither planned nor expected, but we feel the consequences every day.

The population of the USA will reach 300 million this week on a relentless march to half a billion before 2050. That's because about 80% of the current population growth in the USA is due to immigration policies — immigrants legally admitted, illegal immigrants, and births to immigrants after entering. Only a dramatic rollback in overall immigration can reverse these trends. The time to act is now

Thirty years ago, the [Rockefeller Commission](#) could find no benefit from further increases in the size of the U.S. population. In 2006, it is hard to see how the massive government-mandated population growth of the past 30 years has improved life for most Americans. The addition of a staggering 100 million people since the late 1960s has accelerated virtually every environmental problem, exacerbated resource depletion, contributed to sprawl and congestion, and strained nearly all public services.

Many of our nation's opinion elite now seem intent on further acceleration. The Senate recently approved an illegal alien amnesty and immigration increase that would have resulted in at least 66 million new immigrants arriving in the USA in the next 20 years — and we'd hit a billion people before 2100. This is insane, and only a massive public outcry and strong opposition in the House prevented this from occurring.

Our population future is entirely within our power to determine. Just as the government has mandated soaring overcrowding and congestion in the past several decades, it has the power to slow population growth by curtailing immigration and enforcing laws against illegal immigration.

## **Amnesty Deteriorates the American Dream**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/GovernmentReform/bg1807.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

October 19, 2004

The Principles of Immigration

The Welfare State. The United States has a generous welfare, education, and health system, with generous eligibility. Low-skill and elderly immigrants may impose costs on government that exceed taxes paid. The costs of providing welfare assistance to immigrants and education for the children of immigrants are potential concerns.

Unlike previous generations, the perverse incentives of the modern social welfare system—through policies that discourage self-reliance, family cohesiveness, and financial independence—invite poor and low-skill immigrants to enter the ranks of the underclass rather than encourage them to seek the opportunities heretofore associated with achieving the American Dream. Although these troubling incentives in the welfare system are likely to remain for the foreseeable future, policymakers must ensure that the interaction of welfare and immigration policy does not expand the welfare-dependent population, thereby hindering rather than helping immigrants and potentially imposing large costs on American society.

## **Enforcement Needed for National Security**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/GovernmentReform/bg1807.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

October 19, 2004

The Principles of Immigration

National and Homeland Security. Now more than ever, Congress must take steps to ensure that immigration policy—or the lack of immigration policy enforcement—does not undermine national security. Among other things, the new Department of Homeland Security was established to consolidate the previously fragmented functions of immigration and border security and to document non-citizens entering, exiting, and residing in the United States.

A critical element of any reform proposal must be to secure our national borders—addressing the issue from the point of origin, in transit, at the border, and within the United States—and to support ongoing efforts to strengthen the activities, assets, and programs necessary to enhance homeland security. America's immigration system must be a national strength and not a strategic vulnerability.

## **Amnesty is a Threat to National Security**

[http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2007/feb/11/20070211-102906-4055r/?feat=article\\_related\\_stories](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2007/feb/11/20070211-102906-4055r/?feat=article_related_stories)

The Washington Times

February 12, 2007

Amnesty will not, as advertised, increase national security; it will imperil us all. Some argue that if we grant amnesty we will at least know "who is in our country." They are fundamentally mistaken. We will not learn who the illegal immigrants are, but who they want us to believe they are. Aliens who want to create false identities will provide counterfeit or fraudulent documents from their "home country" and we will catch only those unlucky few whose can't afford quality fakes or who have fingerprints in the FBI system. There was a massive number of fraudulent applications filed for the 1986 amnesty. An estimated two-thirds of the applications for amnesty for agricultural workers were fraudulent and most of those fraudulent applications were approved.

As retired INS investigator Mike Cutler has testified before the Immigration, Border Security and Claims Subcommittee, "it will be a simple matter for illegal aliens, including terrorists or criminals, to walk into an immigration office, along with millions of other illegal aliens, and produce a false name and then get an official identity document from our government bureaucrats. These documents would then enable them to circumvent the various no-fly and terror watch lists. They would be able to use these documents as breeder documents -- all the while staying under the radar and obscuring and concealing their true identity."

## **Amnesty Would Lead to Increased Crime Rates**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

On the other hand, the crime rate among Hispanics in the U.S. is high. Age-specific incarceration rates (prisoners per 100,000 residents in the same age group in the general population) among Hispanics in federal and state prisons are two to two-and-a-half times higher than among non-Hispanic whites.<sup>[41]</sup> Relatively little of this difference appears to be due to immigration violations.<sup>[42]</sup>

Illegal immigrants are overwhelmingly Hispanic. It is possible that, over time, Hispanic immigrants and their children may assimilate the higher crime rates that characterize the low-income Hispanic population in the U.S. as a whole.<sup>[43]</sup> If this were to occur, then policies that would give illegal immigrants permanent residence through amnesty, as well as policies which would permit a continuing influx of hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants each year, would increase crime in the long term.

## **Enforcement would Force Change in Mexico**

<http://www.hoover.org/research/focusonissues/focus/15317661.html>

The Hoover Institute

Illegal Immigration and the American Workforce

February 6, 2008

Conversely, [Victor Davis Hanson](#), the Hoover Institution's Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow, argues, "by closing the borders, the U.S. would stop subsidizing Mexican failure." Hanson states Mexico must rid itself of the corruption, elitism, and cronyism that has continued to stagnate its economy and forces its citizens to cross the border in search of opportunity. The solution to ending illegal immigration, Hanson believes, lies in the hope that someday, "Tijuana might become as prosperous as San Diego." The goal of the United States, Hanson explains, should be to help Mexico by providing the "tough love" it needs. According to Hanson, closing borders, but also offering favorable trade incentives, will spur Mexican citizens to seek employment at home and demand more from their own government.

## **Illegal Immigration Is Bad for the Environment**

<http://www.usnews.com/blogs/erbe/2009/06/25/illegal-immigration-is-bad-for-the-environment.html>

Bonnie Erbe, Thomas Jefferson Street blog.  
June 25, 2009

I come to my opposition to mass illegal immigration from an environmental perspective. This country's ballooning population is polluting our water, our air, turning beautiful open space into tacky suburbs and malls and generally degrading the quality of life here.

Individual immigrants, whether legal or illegal, are generally good people. They want what native-born Americans want—to make a good living and provide for their families. That's completely understandable. Unfortunately, at this point in our history, there is no way they can do so here without degrading the environment. It's tough to say that, as looking at new immigrants, my heart goes out to them. But does my heart hurt to the point where I want to see the American countryside destroyed, rural life pushed aside, and our air and water polluted to the breaking point? No.

## **Amnesty has Already been Tried**

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/viewpoints/articles/1023camarota23.html>

Use enforcement to ease situation

Oct. 23, 2005

Mass roundups of millions are neither politically likely nor practical. Legalization mocks legal immigrants and will spur more illegal immigration. Besides, we've already tried it. In the 1980s, 2.7 million illegal aliens were legalized. Legal immigration has doubled since the 1980s, but we have three times as many illegals.

Legalization also does not solve most of the problems associated with illegal immigration. The poorest and least educated American workers would still face job competition from millions of legalized illegal aliens. Letting illegals stay only makes sense if you think the poor are overpaid.

## 1980's Amnesty Failed

<http://www.cis.org/node/151>

Center for Immigration Studies

Measuring the Fallout: The Cost of the IRCA Amnesty After 10 Years

By [David Simcox](#)

May 1997

Summary Table of Costs		
<b>DIRECT COSTS of legalized population</b>		
Population: 1987: 2.67 million		
1996: 2.03 million		
Total 10-year costs of 20 assistance programs:	\$102.1 billion	
<b>Revenues from the legalized population</b>		
Total 10-year tax contributions:	\$78 billion	
<b>Total 10-year revenue deficit on direct costs:</b>		<b>\$24.1 billion</b>
<b>INDIRECT COSTS</b>		
1. Aid to displaced resident workers	\$9.9 billion	
2. Citizen children 18 and under		
Population: 1987: 679,200		
1996: 1.16 million		
Total 10-year costs of four programs	\$36.1 billion	
3. Illegal alien dependents 18 and under		
Population: 1987: 177,100		
1996: 401,000		
Total 10-year education costs	\$8.6 billion	
<b>Total indirect costs:</b>		<b>\$54.6 billion</b>
<b>TOTAL 10-year deficit on all costs:</b>		<b>\$78.7 billion</b>

# Con Evidence

## **America Cannot Afford Not to Grant Amnesty**

<http://www.tindallfoster.com/immigrationresources/policypapers/TheCruelAndIntolerantMythOfAttrition.pdf>

The Cruel And Intolerant Myth of Attrition: Why The Huckabee-Krikorian Scheme To Starve 20,000,000 Undocumented Economic Refugees Out Of The Country Is Inhumane, Fiscally Irresponsible, And Undermines American Values  
by Robert Gittelson

Because he flatly rejects any compromise solution that would allow our current workforce to remain intact and functional, he proves that he simply doesn't understand the fundamental principals governing our domestic economy, and our tenuous grasp on global fiscal policy as it relates to our ability to compete in the World marketplace. Let's start with the devastating ripple effects that will reverberate throughout our economy if we were foolhardy enough to implement this scheme. At home, we would have massive work shortages in many sectors of our economy, ie: Agriculture - since some 30% by most counts of our farm labor is illegal, and we are still understaffed on most farms already, we would be faced with an extreme crisis in our food supply. We would see massive price increases due to the lower supply of available food products. We would see a major reduction in our exports, (which would hurt our already bleeding trade deficit - causing further weakening of the dollar, since agricultural products are our number one export category). A case in point would be Colorado, which bills itself as the most anti-illegal immigrant state in the country, and is represented in the House of Representatives by Presidential candidate Tom Tancredo, who has been an outspoken advocate for harsh laws aimed against undocumented laborers. Colorado has passed some of the toughest anti-illegal immigrant state legislation in the nation, and has suffered immeasurably for it. The agricultural workers, both legal and illegal, fled the state because of the ill-conceived anti immigrant laws, and as a result, Colorado's farmers have suffered. This spring their crops were left rotting in their fields, and the state's farmers have become so desperate that they have resorted to using prisoners to tend their fields. The state has also suffered labor shortages in construction, and other business's such as carwashes are struggling to stay open without a sufficient supply of available labor.

## America Cannot Afford Not to Grant Amnesty Cont'd

<http://www.tindallfoster.com/immigrationresources/policypapers/TheCruelAndIntolerantMythOfAttrition.pdf>

The Cruel And Intolerant Myth of Attrition: Why The Huckabee-Krikorian Scheme To Starve 20,000,000 Undocumented Economic Refugees Out Of The Country Is Inhumane, Fiscally Irresponsible, And Undermines American Values  
by Robert Gittelson

2. We would see a crippling labor shortage in our domestic manufacturing, as many factories are dependent on long time undocumented employees, who are fundamental to our domestic manufacturer's ability to be competitive with imports on pricing, as well as in production capacity. This would be especially troubling to our overall economy, because manufacturing jobs, which have already been drastically reduced through outsourcing to countries that do have an available supply of low cost labor, are vital to the health of our overall economy due to the "multiplicative" effect of manufacturing jobs on our economy. Without going into a lengthy explanation of what that means, in simple terms, a new manufacturing job leads to the creation of 3-5 additional jobs in our economy. This is because when you manufacture a product, you need to buy the components needed to assemble that product, the electricity needed to produce the product, the packaging of the product, the shipping, accounting, managerial support, etc., etc.. Service sector jobs, in contrast to manufacturing jobs, usually only lead to the creation of at most 1 additional job, so you can see the value of manufacturing jobs on an economy. If we were to lose manufacturing jobs due to attrition or deportation, it would lead to the loss of many additional jobs throughout other sectors of the economy. The loss of several million manufacturing jobs would lead to a major slowdown in the economy. Again this hurts us as inflationary at home, and weakens our currency abroad.

3. The Travel & Leisure segment of our economy, one of our leading revenue sources, would be severely crippled in terms of our food service and hospitality. Restaurants and hotels would be extremely understaffed, causing less availability and higher costs when service was available. In many cases, the unavailability of labor would force many food service businesses to close, which would contribute to the downward spiral of the overall economy. Less tourists and business travelers would be able to be accommodated, hurting many additional sectors of our economy.

## **Legalization is the Only Viable Solution**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

April 28, 2009

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“Rounding up and deporting the millions of immigrants who are presently in the United States without legal authorization may make for a good sound bite, but it is not a viable solution. And if these immigrants are not given adequate incentive to ‘come out of the shadows’ to regularize their status, we will continue to have a large pool of unauthorized workers whom employers can exploit in order to drive down wages and other standards to the detriment of all workers. The large unauthorized workforce likewise has produced an underground economy, without basic protections afforded to U.S. workers, where employers often misclassify workers as independent contractors, thus avoiding payroll taxes and depriving federal, state, and local governments of additional revenue. An inclusive, practical, and swift adjustment-of-status program will raise labor standards for all workers.”

~Ray Marshall, former Secretary of Labor

## **Illegal Immigrants in the System is Beneficial**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/get-them-in-the-system>

National Immigration Forum

The goal of most Americans is not to deport most or all of the 12 million people illegally living and working here, rather it is to have a system that is under control and where everyone is playing by the same rules that are evenly enforced. The way we get there from here is to:

- 1) Expand legal avenues so that people can come with a visa rather than a smuggler using their real names, with rights, but also with reasonable limits based on the growth (or lack thereof) of our economy (much like the money is regulated by the Federal Reserve).
- 2) Clear out the backlogs which have some people waiting more than two decades for legal immigration. These first two actions would do a great deal to replace the illegal flow with a legal and orderly flow; and
- 3) Within a five year period, force all those here illegally to come forward, pass a criminal background check, get in full compliance with tax laws, and get on a path to citizenship with all of the responsibilities that implies.

Those who don't pass or who don't come forward will now stick out rather than blend in, making enforcement at the border and in the workplace much easier and if efficient. This is how we build a new, legal, and enforceable immigration system to replace the crumbling one we have now.

## **Clear and Simple Immigration Laws Needed**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/clear-and-simple-immigration-laws-needed>

Libertarian National Committee

The terms and conditions of entry into the United States must be simple and clearly spelled out. Documenting the entry of individuals must be restricted to screening for criminal background and threats to public health and national security. It is the obligation of the prospective immigrant to demonstrate compliance with these requirements. Once effective immigration policies are in place, general amnesties will no longer be necessary. Immigrants entering into the United States must prove they will not be a threat to the American public. The legitimate function and obligation of government to protect the lives, rights and property of its citizens, requires awareness of and control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a threat to security, health or property.

## **Political and Economic Freedoms Demand Reasonable Immigration Laws**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/political-and-economic-freedoms-demand-reasonable-immigration-laws>

Libertarian National Committee

Political freedom and escape from tyranny demands that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. Economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national borders; however, the Libertarian Party does not support "open borders."

## **America was Built on Immigration**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

April 28, 2009

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“Dear America, please remember how you got to be the wealthiest country in history. It wasn’t through protectionism, or state-owned banks or fearing free trade. No, the formula was very simple: build this really flexible, really open economy, tolerate creative destruction so dead capital is quickly redeployed to better ideas and companies, pour into it the most diverse, smart and energetic immigrants from every corner of the world and then stir and repeat, stir and repeat, stir and repeat, stir and repeat.”

~Thomas Friedman, NY Times Columnist

## America Needs Immigrants to Fill Low Skilled Positions

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

The U.S. economy continues to generate a high demand for workers to fill less skilled jobs, especially in service-sector occupations, as fewer and fewer native-born workers are willing and able to take these kinds of jobs. Most of the openings for less-skilled jobs over the coming decade will result not from job growth, but from the need to replace workers who retire from the labor force or move on to different occupations.

- The number of less-skilled jobs is increasing: According to occupational projections by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), less-skilled occupations that require little or no postsecondary training will continue to account for about half of all jobs by 2016. Less-skilled occupations such as retail salespersons, food preparation workers, and personal and home care aides are all expected to add numerous jobs over the coming decade. The number of openings falling into this category is 27.6 million, or 54.5% of all job openings during the 2006-2016 period.
- The number of less-skilled Americans is decreasing: Data from the National Center for Education Statistics indicate that the share of the U.S. population age 25 and older with at least a high-school diploma increased from 13.5% in 1910 to 41.1% in 1960 to 85.7% in 2007. The share with a bachelor's degree or more education rose from 2.7% in 1910 to 7.7% in 1960 to 28.7% in 2007. According to the 2006 American Community Survey, 87% of native-born Americans have at least a high-school diploma—meaning that they are unlikely to be in the market for less-skilled jobs that don't require a high-school education. It would be a waste of human capital to persuade educated native-born workers to become underemployed by taking less-skilled jobs.
- American workers are growing older: According to BLS labor-force projections, the share of the U.S. labor force consisting of "prime-aged" workers between the ages of 25 and 54 "has been on a declining trend since 1996." Prime-aged workers are projected to decrease from 68.4% of the labor force in 2006 to 64.6% in 2016. Industries that depend upon many lessskilled workers will be especially hard hit by the aging, and eventual retirement, of so many native-born workers. Not only are less-skilled jobs unlikely to appeal to more-educated workers, but physically strenuous less-skilled jobs are unlikely to appeal to older workers

## US Needs Immigrant Labor

<http://www.hoover.org/research/focusonissues/focus/15317661.html>

Illegal Immigration and the American Workforce

February 6, 2008

Immigration proponents argue that illegal workers are a necessary and beneficial component of the American economy. According to these supporters, illegal workers fill a void by taking on low-paying, often unpleasant, and physically demanding jobs, including many in the agricultural, construction and service industries that Americans are seemingly less willing to do. Some economists predict that, without the illegal-immigrant workforce, the American labor force would shrink by as much as 3 or 4 percent and that the overall economic growth rate would likewise suffer. Benjamin Powell, an economist at the Independent Institute, cites the 2004 crackdown on illegal workers in the western United States as an example of the negative effect of a decreased immigrant workforce. The regional sweep by authorities reportedly led to \$1 billion in losses when farmers couldn't hire enough workers to pick lettuce crops, which were left to rot in the field.

## **Immigrants Deserve to be Legal**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/encourage-legal-immigration>

Libertarian National Committee

The Libertarian Party believes that it is neither prudent nor economically feasible to deport all people in this country who are here illegally. Instead, we should work to eliminate the financial incentives that encourage illegal immigration, such as ending federal requirements that mandate benefits and services be provided to those in the country illegally. Removing the financial incentive to immigrate illegally into the United States by eliminating the welfare state will stop U.S. taxpayers from subsidizing illegal immigration. Recognizing the economic benefit to all Americans that migrant labor produces, undocumented workers that can prove that they pose no threat to public health or national security should be given the opportunity to go through the immigration process and legally participate in society. Those here illegally that are a proven threat to the interests of the United States should be expelled from this country.

## **Legalization will be Economic Stimulus**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“Legalization of the nation’s undocumented workers will provide a strong economic stimulus, and must be integrated as a necessary component of President Obama’s economic recovery strategy.... Moving workers out of a vulnerable underground status produces both short term and long term economic gains by strengthening the ability of working families to become more productive with higher levels of income, job generating consumption and increase their net contributions to tax revenues. Legalization also creates higher household investments in family wide education, boosting college-going rates among children, as well as creating very high rates of home ownership and small business investments that have historically been economic engines of job creation and community revitalization.”

~Raúl Hinojosa-Ojeda, Executive Director, UCLA North American Integration and Development Center

## Immigration Can Speed Economic Recovery

<http://www.opposingviews.com/articles/opinion-immigration-can-speed-economic-recovery>

Diana Furchtgott-Roth , Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute –

April 10, 2009

Congress needs to overhaul immigration law and create an expanded temporary worker program with a path to citizenship, along with more verification to prevent workers from working illegally, and monitoring of tourists and students so that they do not overstay their visas.

A rational immigration policy would have numerous advantages.

- Undocumented workers would pay taxes to federal and state governments rather than to grey-market check cashing services.
- Payments for [health care](#) through insurance could be collected more easily, rather than burdening hospital emergency rooms with immigrants without [health insurance](#).
- Foreigners who want to work here could pay the government for visas rather than pay smugglers for unsafe, illicit transportation.
- Improvements in security. Legal visas and bank accounts would make it far easier to identify and track potential [terrorists](#), dubious financial transactions, and those who simply overstay visas.

A rational immigration policy would solve several real problems the United States faces with regard to immigration. The international [economy](#) is tremendously dynamic; our immigration system is not. Temporary workers must spend months applying for admission, and due to the pile-up in April of every year, may not even get a visa.

Few low-skilled workers have a legal and reliable method to enter this country and work legally, and few Americans want to do the jobs, such as fruit picking and cleaning, that these workers want to pursue. And even high-skilled workers trained at U.S. colleges and universities, often at taxpayer expense, might have to wait years and spend thousands of dollars to become permanent residents of the nation.

## Immigration Benefits US Economy

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

April 28, 2009

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“Our review of economic research finds immigrants not only help fuel the nation’s economic growth, but also have an overall positive effect on the income of native-born workers.”

~Edward P. Lazear, Former Chairman, White House Council of Economic Advisers

“Economic recovery will happen more quickly if both high- and low-skill immigrants are permitted to enter the United States and work legally. A rational immigration policy would have numerous advantages: undocumented workers would pay taxes to federal and state governments rather than to grey-market check cashing services; payments for health care through insurance could be collected more easily, rather than burdening hospital emergency rooms with immigrants without health insurance; foreigners who want to work here could pay the government for visas rather than pay smugglers for unsafe, illicit transportation; and improvements in security. Legal visas and bank accounts would make it far easier to identify and track potential terrorists, dubious financial transactions, and those who simply overstay visas.”

~Diana Furchtgott-Roth, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, and former Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor

“Throughout our history as an immigrant nation, those who were already here have worried about the impact of newcomers. Yet, over time, immigrants have become part of a richer America, richer both economically and culturally... Overall, immigration has been a net gain for American citizens, though a modest one in proportion to the size of our 13 trillion-dollar economy... While a small percentage of native-born Americans may be harmed by immigration, vastly more Americans benefit from the contributions that immigrants make to our economy, including lower consumer prices. As with trade in goods and services, the gains from immigration outweigh the losses. The effect of all immigration on low-skilled workers is very likely positive as many immigrants bring skills, capital, and entrepreneurship to the American economy... We must not forget that the gains to immigrants coming to the United States are immense. Immigration is the greatest anti-poverty program ever devised.”

~Open letter on immigration to President George Bush and Congress signed by over 450 American academics

## **Illegal Immigration Reform would Benefit US Economy**

<http://www.hoover.org/research/focusonissues/focus/15317661.html>

Illegal Immigration and the American Workforce

February 6, 2008

[Timothy Charles Brown](#), a Hoover research fellow who believes illegal workers can positively benefit American business, calls for regulation of illegal workers. “We need a holistic approach that looks at illegal immigration not as a political problem but as a business opportunity,” Brown explains. “By transforming illegal immigration from a large-scale, off-the-books, black-market operation into a revenue-producing program that manages the movement of workers in and out of the U.S. economy, we could maximize its benefits to all four major stakeholders—the workers, their employers, the countries the workers come from, and the American taxpayers.”

## Immigrants Help US Business

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1914738,00.html>

Time Magazine

Kurt Andersen

Thursday, Aug. 06, 2009

No other nation on earth assimilates immigrants as successfully as the United States. There are those who argue that we can no longer afford to open our doors so wide, but in fact precisely the opposite is true. Beyond giving sentimental, self-flattering lip service to our history as "a nation of immigrants," the sooner we can agree on a coherent and correctly self-serving national immigration policy — that is, to encourage and enable as many as possible of the world's smartest and most ambitious and open-minded people to become Americans — the better our chances of forestalling national decline.

I recently asked a friend of mine who operates a large farming business in California how many of his hundreds of employees are undocumented Mexican immigrants. Ninety percent, he told me. I literally gasped. And such numbers are not unique to agriculture or to California. Just as we are now dependent on cheap credit and cheap manufactured goods from China, we really can't afford to say no to cheap laborers from Mexico and Central America, and we need to admit that truth and make the system for absorbing them rational. At the upper end of the scale, it's crazily self-defeating for us to set arbitrary and entirely politicized limits on the visas we grant to skilled foreign workers, such as software engineers and nurses. Wouldn't it make more sense to establish a politically independent federal apparatus, like the Federal Reserve System, that would adjust immigration quotas according to the actual and projected ebbs and flows of our economy? The waves of exotic foreigners who poured in during the 1800s and early 1900s were unsettling to Americans at the time — culturally, economically, and politically. But our forebears got over it, fortunately, since the newcomers were instrumental in forging the American Century.

## **Immigrants Make More Jobs Than They Take**

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/212147>

Newsweek

Suzanne Smalley

Aug 15, 2009

Immigrants are good for our economy. The most skilled create jobs in technology and engineering, says Duke professor Vivek Wadhwa, who estimates that in 2005 immigrant-founded engineering and tech companies employed 450,000 people and generated \$52 billion in sales. But even the least skilled more than repay their costs in schools and health care. Two highly respected Australian economists, Maureen Rimmer and Peter Dixon, studied the issue for the libertarian Cato Institute. "The net impact on U.S. households from tighter border enforcement is unambiguously negative," they found, because even low-skilled immigrants expand the economic pie and create jobs farther up the ladder. Cato's Dan Griswold says the study shows a \$250 billion difference between the most and least restrictive immigration policies.

## **Legalization of Illegal Immigrants will Raise Wages**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

April 28, 2009

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“The presence of such a large pool of illegal workers imposes an unnecessary drag on our economy. Many of those illegal workers are unable to bargain effectively with employers for a full market wage, relegating them to secondary markets where they are more likely to be paid in cash or hired through subcontractors. The result is submarket wages and submarket working conditions for undocumented workers and for legal immigrants and native-born workers who compete with them in the labor market... Comprehensive reform should also legalize the millions of workers currently in the United States without legal documentation. Many of these workers have lived and worked in the United States for several years. They have become valuable participants in their workplaces and their communities. They should be allowed and encouraged to come forward to be legalized and properly documented.”

~Daniel Griswold, Director, CATO Institute Center for Trade Policy Studies

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## Immigration Raises the Wages of American Workers

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

Some Americans worry that immigrants drag down wages and take jobs from “natives.” In fact, immigration raises the wages of most American workers and creates new jobs. Economist Giovanni Peri at the University of California-Davis has found that immigrants differ from native-born Americans in their education, skill sets, and occupations. As a result, immigrants don’t compete with U.S. citizens for most jobs. Rather, they complement the native-born workforce—which increases the productivity and wages of all Americans. Moreover, immigrants help create jobs, as their addition to the labor force stimulates investment by entrepreneurs who organize new workers in productive ways that generate profit.

- Immigration expands the U.S. economy: A 2007 report from the White House Council of Economic Advisers concluded that immigration increases the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by roughly \$37 billion each year because immigrants increase the size of the total labor force, complement the native-born workforce in terms of skills and education, and stimulate capital investment by adding workers to the labor pool.
- Immigration raises wages for most Americans: According to a 2006 study by Giovanni Peri, immigration has increased the average wages of all native-born workers. Peri found that between 1990 and 2004, the roughly 90% of native-born workers with at least a high-school diploma experienced wage gains because of immigration ranging from 0.7% to 3.4%, depending on their level of education.
- Immigrant purchasing power is enormous—and growing: According to the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia, Latino buying power totaled \$862 billion in 2007 and is expected to increase to \$1.2 trillion by 2012, while Asian buying power totaled \$459 billion in 2007 and is expected to increase to \$670 billion by 2012.
- Immigrant businesses employ millions of workers: The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2002, 1.6 million Hispanic-owned firms provided jobs to 1.5 million employees, had receipts of \$222 billion, and generated payroll of \$36.7 billion. The same year, 1.1 million Asian-owned firms provided jobs to 2.2 million employees, had receipts of \$326.4 billion, and generated payroll of \$56 billion.

## **Legalization will Increase Household Income**

<http://www.freetrade.org/pubs/pas/tpa-040es.html>

CATO Institute

Restriction or Legalization? Measuring the Economic Benefits of Immigration Reform

Peter B. Dixon and Maureen T. Rimmer (August 13, 2009)

This study finds that increased enforcement and reduced low-skilled immigration have a significant negative impact on the income of U.S. households. Modest savings in public expenditures would be more than offset by losses in economic output and job opportunities for more skilled American workers. A policy that reduces the number of low-skilled immigrant workers by 28.6 percent compared to projected levels would reduce U.S. household welfare by about 0.5 percent, or \$80 billion.

In contrast, legalization of low-skilled immigrant workers would yield significant income gains for American workers and households. Legalization would eliminate smugglers' fees and other costs faced by illegal immigrants. It would also allow immigrants to have higher productivity and create more openings for Americans in higher skilled occupations. The positive impact for U.S. households of legalization under an optimal visa tax would be 1.27 percent of GDP or \$180 billion.

Peter Dixon is the Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor and Maureen Rimmer is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University in Australia. Their USAGE model of the U.S. economy has been used by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, and Homeland Security, and the U.S. International Trade Commission.

## **Average Household Income Statistics Skewed**

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/29962024.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford University

October and November 2008

Those immigrants again. Another depressant on household income statistics (but not actual incomes) is that continuing influx of immigrants. As noted earlier, these immigrants overwhelmingly enter at the lowest rungs of the income ladder. Although there is an ongoing and intense debate about whether these immigrants take jobs away from American workers, the statistical impact is unambiguous: measured median and average household incomes decline as immigrants enter the country. The same kind of thing happens when Clinton or Obama enters a working-class tavern: The average income of bar patrons goes up even though no one's income actually increases. Now imagine what happens to the average income of the bar patrons when an immigrant farm worker walks in. With over 1 million immigrants coming in to the economy each year, this statistical distortion is significant.

## **Enforcement Without Legalization Cannot Stop Illegal Immigration**

<http://www.freetrade.org/node/32>

Douglas S. Massey

Trade Policy Analysis no. 29

Increased border enforcement has only succeeded in pushing immigration flows into more remote regions. That has resulted in a tripling of the death rate at the border and, at the same time, a dramatic fall in the rate of apprehension. As a result, the cost to U.S. taxpayers of making one arrest along the border increased from \$300 in 1992 to \$1,700 in 2002, an increase of 467 percent in just a decade.

Enforcement has driven up the cost of crossing the border illegally, but that has had the unintended consequence of encouraging illegal immigrants to stay longer in the United States to recoup the cost of entry. The result is that illegal immigrants are less likely to return to their home country, causing an increase in the number of illegal immigrants remaining in the United States. Whatever one thinks about the goal of reducing migration from Mexico, U.S. policies toward that end have clearly failed, and at great cost to U.S. taxpayers.

A border policy that relies solely on enforcement is bound to fail. Congress should build on President Bush's immigration initiative to enact a temporary visa program that would allow workers from Canada, Mexico, and other countries to work in the United States without restriction for a certain limited time. Undocumented workers already in the United States who do not have a criminal record should be given temporary legal status

## Enforcement Without Legalization Cannot Stop Illegal Immigration Cont'd

Restriction or Legalization? Measuring the Economic Benefits of Immigration Reform

<http://www.freetrade.org/files/pubs/pas/tpa-040.pdf>

Peter B. Dixon and Maureen T. Rimmer

The report constructs seven statistical models to simulate various immigration-policy options that run the gamut from enforcement-only strategies along the border and at the workplace, to the legalization of currently unauthorized immigrants and creation of legal channels for future immigrant workers that accommodate actual U.S. labor demand. The report concludes that “compared to either border or interior enforcement, a policy of legalization would, over time, raise the income of U.S. workers and their families.”

- A program to grant legal status to unauthorized workers already in the United States, combined with new channels for the arrival of immigrant workers in the future, would *increase* the productivity of immigrant workers and create *more* job openings for American workers in *higher*-skilled occupations. The net result would be economic gains of roughly \$180 billion over ten years.
- An enforcement-only approach would shrink the overall economy, reducing opportunities for higher-skilled American workers. The net result would be economic losses of roughly \$80 billion over ten years.

As Congress begins drafting comprehensive immigration reform proposals, the latest Cato report makes the point that bringing illegal workers into our tax system and on the right side of the law will help our economy. But the continuation of enforcement-only policies will do nothing to fix the broken system. The report shows that enforcement-only policies actually cost U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars. The Cato report recognizes the value immigrants bring to America as workers, taxpayers, and consumers.



## **Deportation Only Isn't Working**

<http://www.opposingviews.com/arguments/deportation-only-isnt-working>

National Immigration Forum

Legalization

Despite the record number of deportations and the massive raids and round-ups, we are not making a dent in the population of undocumented immigrants. If anything, it is driving them further underground and off the books, neither of which are desirable. Even if we wanted to get rid of 12 million people in the country illegally – an estimated 1 in 20 U.S. workers – it isn't going to happen. Those who say we can make America so undesirable that people leave or don't come in the first place are saying they are willing to tolerate years, perhaps decades, of a substantial population of undocumented immigrants. I'm not. I want people in the system so that we know who is here, they have rights, and are playing by the same set of rules as citizens.

## **Border Enforcement Leads to a Poorer US**

<http://www.hoover.org/research/focusonissues/focus/15317661.html>

Illegal Immigration and the American Workforce

February 6, 2008

Hoover senior fellow [Russell Roberts](#) argues that, despite the number and type of jobs immigrants perform, the United States would, if necessary, survive without illegal workers. “If we closed our borders, all the things that immigrants do now would either be done by ‘native’ Americans (presumably at higher wages with resulting higher prices) or be done by machines or would not be done at all,” Roberts states. “The country would not collapse. We’d just be poorer, on average. And so would the people who come here in search of work.”

## **Tighter Boarder Enforcement Harms U.S. Workers**

Center For Trade Policy Studies

Restriction or Legalization?

August 13, 2009

A major finding of the study is that the program of tighter border enforcement, Simulation 1, strongly reduces the welfare of U.S. households. A principal effect is that it raises the wage rate of the illegal immigrants who remain in the United States, in effect transferring income from legal residents of the United States to illegal immigrants. Even more importantly, restricting the inflow of illegal immigrants biases the occupational mix of employment for U.S. workers toward low-paying, low-skilled jobs as those jobs become relatively more attractive and available compared with higher-paying occupations. This eventually reduces the overall productivity of U.S. workers and consequently their average real wage rate.

## **Enforcement would Harm Mexico and the US**

<http://www.hoover.org/research/focusonissues/focus/15317661.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford Univeristy  
Illegal Immigration and the American Workforce  
February 6, 2008

[Stephen Haber](#), the Peter and Helen Bing Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and the A. A. and Jeanne Welch Milligan Professor in the School of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford, likewise views illegal immigration as more than a U.S. domestic issue. Haber explains that the influx of illegal immigrants from Mexico increased dramatically during the 1980s and 1990s, coinciding with Mexico's economic collapse. According to Haber, if the United States were to pull the plug on illegal immigrants, Mexico could face widespread political and social instability, resulting, over time, in serious consequences for its closest neighbor, the United States. And, Haber warns, "there is no scenario in which a politically and socially unstable Mexico is in the interest of the U.S." —Michelle Bussenius, Editor

## **Immigrants are Not a Threat to American Workers**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=p090428>

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

April 28, 2009

Economists and Other Experts Agree on the National Economic Benefits of Immigration  
Immigration Reform Cited as an Economic Necessity and a Net Gain

“Immigrants and natives tend to differ in their educational attainment, skill sets, and occupations, and they perform jobs that often are interdependent. As a result, immigrants do not compete with the majority of natives for the same jobs. Rather, they ‘complement’ the native-born workforce—which increases the productivity, and therefore the wages, of natives... During the 1990-2004 period, the 90 percent of native-born workers with at least a high-school diploma experienced wage gains from immigration that ranged from 0.7 percent to 3.4 percent depending on education.”

~Giovanni Peri, Associate Professor of Economics, University of California, Davis

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford Univeristy

August and September 2008

He does this in part by demolishing the argument trotted out most frequently by immigration opponents, that immigrants are “taking American jobs.” The claim is belied by the most obvious piece of economic data: the unemployment rate. For well over the past decade, the unemployment rate has rarely risen above 5.5 percent, one of the lowest in the developed world. How could illegal immigrants from Mexico — who pour into the country at a rate of some half a million a year, and whose numbers doubled between 1995 and 2004 — be taking American jobs when so many Americans are working? To be fair to economic populists, the oft-repeated saying that unskilled immigrants “do the jobs Americans won’t do” isn’t entirely accurate; if we deported 12 million people and closed the border, currently unemployed native-born Americans would probably take some of the janitorial, agricultural, and other menial jobs currently filled by low-wage immigrants. But many of these positions would remain unfilled, simply because the vast majority of able Americans, including those unemployed, are overqualified for this sort of work. And with the deportation of so many unskilled workers, the cost of filling these positions — picking crops, emptying wastepaper baskets, and the like — would dramatically rise, incurring a toll that would be transferred onto American consumers.

## **Immigrants Do Not Pose a Threat to American Jobs or Wages**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081709>

Immigration policy center special report

By Rob Paral & Associates August 2009

### The Disparity between Immigrant Workers and Unemployed Natives

Even during a time of economic recession and high unemployment, most native-born workers do not compete with most immigrants for the same jobs. This is apparent even when we compare unemployed natives with employed “recent” immigrants who came to the United States within the past decade. Unemployed natives and employed recent immigrants tend to have different levels of education, to live in different parts of the country, to have experience in different occupations, and to have different amounts of work experience. As a result, they could not simply be “swapped” for one another.

More importantly in the long run, the recession-inspired sense of economic desperation that might motivate laid-off, experienced native-born workers to take low-level food-service jobs will not last forever. As soon as the economy begins to grow again, these native workers will likely return to their former occupations, or move into higher-paying ones. As our economy recovers, employers in many industries will find themselves in the same quandary as the 1990s: with more jobs to fill than there are well-suited native-born workers available to fill them. The U.S. economy will not be lifted out of recession by removing immigrant workers from the labor force. Rather, the key to recovery is creating jobs. Encouraging unemployed machinists on the East Coast to become food servers on the West Coast is not a recipe for long-term economic growth.

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## **Immigrants Do Not Pose a Threat to African American Jobs**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr090519>

Immigration policy center special report

By Rob Paral & Associates august 2009

This report was prepared for the Immigration Policy Center of the American Immigration Law Foundation by Rob Paral and Associates, with writing by Rob Paral and Madura Wijewardena, and data programming by Michael Norkewicz.

One of the most contentious issues in the debate over immigration reform is whether or not the presence of immigrants in the U.S. labor force—especially undocumented immigrants—has a major adverse impact on the employment prospects of African Americans. The African American community has long been plagued by high unemployment rates, and a relatively large share of African Americans lack a college education. As a result, some commentators argue that undocumented immigrants, who tend to have low levels of formal education and to work in less-skilled occupations, are “taking” large numbers of jobs that might otherwise be filled by African American workers.

If this is indeed the case, one would expect to find high unemployment rates among African Americans in locales with large numbers of immigrants in the labor force—especially immigrants who are relatively recent arrivals to the United States and willing to work for lower wages than most African Americans. However, data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal that this is not the case. In fact, there is little apparent relationship between recent immigration and unemployment rates among African Americans, or any other native-born racial/ethnic group, at the state or metropolitan level.

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford Univeristy

August and September 2008

Riley admires the work ethic of Hispanic immigrants. Hispanic males have the highest labor-participation rate in the country, he reports, a figure that must astound the likes of Patrick Buchanan and Lou Dobbs. Riley, who is black, contrasts this positive feature with the high unemployment and welfare roll rates for native-born African Americans. All this matters because an unlikely ally of the anti-immigration crowd has been poor blacks, attracted by the argument that newly arrived Mexicans willing to work for very little are taking their jobs. Riley argues, however, that 1960s Great Society programs have ingrained a welfare culture among many black males, and while the economy grew dramatically in the 1980s and 1990s, work force participation among less-educated black men actually fell. African-Americans have to look deeper, Riley argues, to find the causes of persistent black unemployment rather than blame hardworking fellow ethnic minorities, as some African-American political leaders have done.

## **Immigrants Do Not Pose a Threat to Wages**

<http://www.frbatlanta.org/invoke.cfm?objectid=9764373C-AEB0-4729-84835E4F18444C77&method=display>

Federal reserve bank of atlanta

Does Immigration Affect Wages? A Look at Occupation-Level Evidence

Revised August 2003

Previous research has reached mixed conclusions about whether higher levels of immigration reduce the wages of natives. This paper reexamines this question using data from the Current Population Survey and the Immigration and Naturalization Service and focuses on differential effects by skill level. Using occupation as a proxy for skill, we find that an increase in the fraction of workers in an occupation group who are foreign born tends to lower the wages of natives in blue collar occupations—particularly after controlling for endogeneity—but does not have a negative effect among natives in skilled occupations. The results also indicate that immigrants adjusting their immigration status within the United States, but not newly arriving immigrants, negatively impact the wages of low-skilled natives. This suggests that immigrants become substitutes for natives only as they spend more time in the United States.

## Legalization will Improve Job Quality

[http://www.alternet.org/immigration/141401/why\\_now\\_for\\_immigration\\_reform\\_it%27s\\_the\\_economy%2C\\_stupid%21/](http://www.alternet.org/immigration/141401/why_now_for_immigration_reform_it%27s_the_economy%2C_stupid%21/)

**Ali Noorani**

July 17, 2009

A more relevant issue is that our economic recovery is hampered by an immigration system that forces five percent of our workforce into the shadows.

Undocumented immigrants, who out of fear of discovery are less likely to stand up for their rights on the job, are easy prey for unscrupulous employers. These employers set the terms of pay and conditions without regard to our labor laws, thereby creating an **economic trap door** that serves as the entrance to an underground economy that ultimately drives down wages for all workers, that cheats the taxpayer, and that makes survival more tenuous for the employer trying to play by the rules.

It is increasingly clear that reforming our immigration system is a key component of fixing our economy. It is an insult to the American worker to think he or she should have to compete for the \$7/hour job when their training, experience and ingenuity has brought wages of \$27/hour. By bringing undocumented immigrants out of the shadows, we close the trap door and protect American workers. Our economic future must be one of good jobs, not cheap labor.

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## Illegal Immigrants Net Positive Benefit to Social Services

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford University

August and September 2008

Another claim made by the anti-immigration lobby, one more salient for middle and upper-middle class voters not “threatened” by unskilled immigrant laborers, is that immigrants are freeloaders who come to the United States to suck off the teat of Uncle Sam. Never mind the absurdity of alleging that people who make death-defying trips across hundreds of miles of barren desert do so to live off a nonexistent welfare state, there is little factual basis for such a claim. Riley introduces a fascinating statistic: 60 percent of native-born Americans “collect more in government services than they pay in taxes.” Illegal immigrants, meanwhile, cannot receive federal welfare benefits. The only way in which they “take” from the government is indirectly, via their use of services provided to the general population like police and fire departments. While anti-immigration demagogues complain that illegal immigrants receive free health care — in 1994, California voters approved Proposition 187, which would have denied public schooling, health care and social services to illegal immigrants; the measure was overturned by a federal court — they are only able to take advantage of this benefit by visiting emergency rooms, something many illegal immigrants are hesitant to do in fear of being reported to immigration officials (Congress has made repeated attempts to require nurses and doctors working in hospitals that receive federal money to report suspected illegal immigrants to immigration authorities). Moreover, illegal immigrants make up for whatever benefits they might extract from the government via their contribution to the Social Security system (foreign workers, Riley claims, pay \$5 trillion more in payroll taxes than they receive in Social Security). The claim that low-skill immigrants are lazy wards of the state is also undermined by the fact that they have a higher labor-force participation rate and a lower unemployment rate than native-born Americans. Moreover, welfare rolls have declined precipitously since the introduction of welfare reform in 1994, a decrease that has been concomitant with the rise in legal (and illegal) immigration. Immigration restrictionists have thus far been unable to explain away this salient trend.

## **Illegal Immigrants Contribute More in Taxes**

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Immigration/bg1936.cfm>

The Heritage Foundation

May 12, 2006

Amnesty and Continued Low Skill Immigration Will Substantially Raise Welfare Costs and Poverty

The 1997 New Americans study by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) examined the fiscal impact of immigration.<sup>[47]</sup> It found that, within in a single year, the fiscal impact of foreign-born house-holds was negative in the two states studied, New Jersey and California.<sup>[48]</sup> Measured over the course of a lifetime, the fiscal impact of first-generation immigrants nationwide was also slightly negative.<sup>[49]</sup> However, when the future earnings and taxes paid by the offspring of the immigrant were counted, the long-term fiscal impact was positive. One commonly cited figure from the report is that the net present value (NPV) of the fiscal impact of the average recent immigrant and his descendents is \$83,000.<sup>[50]</sup>

## Immigrants Pay More in Taxes than Received Benefits

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

Many Americans fear that immigrants disproportionately use welfare or public benefits. Some believe that immigrants are eligible for special benefits that Americans cannot receive. The fact is that undocumented immigrants are not eligible for most public benefits and do not use them surreptitiously. Legal immigrants are also restricted from receiving many benefits. All immigrants pay taxes to fund welfare programs, but are not eligible to reap the benefits of many of them.

- Undocumented immigrants are not eligible for federal public benefits: This includes income supplements—e.g., Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)), health care (Medicaid and Medicare), and food stamps.
- Legal immigrants face tough restrictions in accessing public benefits: Federal law also imposes harsh restrictions on legal immigrants' eligibility for public benefits. Most documented immigrants cannot receive federal Medicaid, TANF, food stamps, or SSI during their first five years or longer in the U.S., regardless of how much they have worked or paid in taxes.
- Immigrants use less health care on average than U.S. citizens: Low-income immigrants are less likely to receive public benefits than are U.S. citizens. Immigrants do not come to the U.S. to receive public benefits, and once they are here, they do not disproportionately use public benefits. According to a study in the American Journal of Public Health, immigrants do not impose a disproportionate financial burden on the U.S. health care system – per capita total health care expenditures of immigrants were 55% lower than those of U.S.-born persons. Further restricting immigrants' access to benefits is not a solution to our immigration problems.
- Ensuring that immigrants have the same access to essential services will improve public health and the wellbeing of all people living in the U.S., not just immigrants: It is important that all people receive basic health care because immigrants are in our neighborhoods, our schools, and our churches. It is in the interest of public health that everyone receive basic immunizations and other basic care.

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## Immigrants Pay More in Taxes than Received Benefits Cont'd

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

- Immigrants pay taxes into the system that funds public services: The majority of undocumented immigrants pay federal and state income taxes, Social Security taxes, and Medicare taxes. And all undocumented immigrants pay sales taxes and property taxes. Many studies have found that undocumented immigrants pay more in taxes than they receive in benefits. The National Research Council estimated in 1997 that “the average immigrant pays nearly \$1,800 more in taxes than he or she costs in benefits.” Recent state-level studies have found that immigrants contribute more to the economy than they take out.

As the debate over illegal immigration continues to rage, some pundits and policymakers are claiming that unauthorized immigrants do not pay taxes and rely heavily on government benefits. Neither of these claims is supported by the facts. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, undocumented men have workforce participation rates that are higher than other workers, and all undocumented immigrants are ineligible for most government services, but pay taxes as workers, consumers, and residents.

- Like the rest of us, undocumented immigrants pay taxes: Between one-half to three-quarters of undocumented immigrants pay federal and state income taxes, Social Security taxes, and Medicare taxes. All undocumented immigrants pay sales taxes (when they buy anything at a store, for instance) and property taxes (even if they rent housing).

- Undocumented immigrants pay into Social Security, but do not collect: The Social Security Administration (SSA) has concluded that undocumented immigrants “account for a major portion” of the billions of dollars paid into the Social Security system under names or Social Security numbers that don’t match SSA records; payments from which immigrants cannot benefit while undocumented. As of October 2005, the reported earnings on which these payments are based—which are tracked through the SSA’s Earnings Suspense File (ESF)—totaled \$520 billion.

State Studies Analyze Undocumented Tax Contributions

## **Immigrants Pay More in Taxes than Received Benefits Cont'd**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

- **TEXAS:** A 2006 study by the Texas State Comptroller found that “the absence of the estimated 1.4 million undocumented immigrants in Texas in fiscal 2005 would have been a loss to our gross state product of \$17.7 billion. Undocumented immigrants produced \$1.58 billion in state revenues, which exceeded the \$1.16 billion in state services they received.”
- **OREGON:** A 2007 study by the Oregon Center for Public Policy estimated that undocumented immigrants in Oregon pay state income, excise, and property taxes, as well as federal Social Security and Medicare taxes, which “total about \$134 million to \$187 million annually.” In addition, “taxes paid by Oregon employers on behalf of undocumented workers total about \$97 million to \$136 million annually.” As the report goes on to note, undocumented workers are ineligible for the Oregon Health Plan, food stamps, and temporary cash assistance.
- **IOWA:** A 2007 report from the Iowa Policy Project concluded that “undocumented immigrants pay an estimated aggregate amount of \$40 million to \$62 million in state taxes each year.” Moreover, “undocumented immigrants working on the books...and their employers also contribute annually an estimated \$50 million to \$77.8 million in federal Social Security and Medicare taxes from which they will never benefit. Rather than draining state resources, undocumented immigrants are in some cases subsidizing services that only documented residents can access.”

## **Costs Will Remain as Long as Illegals Still Exist**

<http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/fiscalexec.html>

Center For Immigration Studies

The High Cost of Cheap Labor

Illegal Immigration and the Federal Budget

August 2004

As Long as Illegals Remain, So Will Costs. The relatively low receipt of services by illegals is important from a policy perspective because it means that the amount of money that can be saved by further efforts to curtail their use of public services is probably very limited. As already discussed, the average illegal household is estimated to receive less than half as much in services from the federal government as do other households, even though their households are 17 percent larger on average. This, coupled with the fact that benefits are often received on behalf of their U.S.-born children who are awarded citizenship at birth under current law, means that it is very difficult to avoid many of the costs as long as the illegal aliens remain in the country. In addition, if they are allowed to stay, most of the costs they impose will be for programs whose use is difficult to prevent politically or as a practical matter. For example, denying illegals benefits such as the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program might encounter significant political opposition. And incarcerating illegals who have been convicted of crimes is an unavoidable cost of having a large illegal population. Thus, if we want to avoid the costs, we must look to alternatives other than trying to cut them off from public services.

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## Immigrants Less Likely to be Involved in Crime

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration Policy Center Special Report  
A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

### Immigrants and Crime

The persistent myth that immigrants are more prone to criminality than the native-born continues to circulate viciously among politicians, commentators, and the public despite a century's worth of contrary evidence that immigrants are less likely than the native-born to be in prison, and that high rates of immigration are not associated with higher rates of crime.

- Immigrants are five times less likely to be in prison than the native-born: A 2007 study by University of California-Irvine sociologist Rubén G. Rumbaut found that the 3.5% incarceration rate for native-born men ages 18-39 was five times higher than the 0.7% rate for immigrant men in 2000. The lower incarceration rates of immigrants compared to natives “holds true especially for the Mexicans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans who make up the bulk of the undocumented population.”

- Undocumented immigration is NOT associated with higher crime rates: Although the undocumented immigrant population doubled from 1994 to 2005, the violent crime rate in the United States declined by 34.2 % and the property crime rate fell by 26.4% during the same period. Border cities and other cities with large immigrant populations also experienced decreasing crime rates.

- Crime is lowest in the states with the most immigrants: According to a 2008 report from the conservative Americas Majority Foundation, crime rates are lowest in states with the highest immigration growth rates. From 1999 to 2006, the total crime rate declined 13.6% in the 19 highest-immigration states, compared to a 7.1% decline in the other 32 states. In 2006, the 10 “high influx” states—those with the most dramatic, recent increases in immigration—had the lowest rates of violent crime and total crime.

- New Jersey: An analysis of data from the New Jersey Department of Corrections and U.S. Census Bureau by New Jersey's Star-Ledger in April 2008 found that “US citizens are twice as likely to land in New Jersey's prisons as legal and illegal immigrants.” In fact, “non-U.S. citizens make up 10% of the state's overall population, but just 5% of the inmates in prison.”

## **Immigrants Less Likely to be Involved in Crime Cont'd**

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration Policy Center Special Report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

- California: Foreign-born adults in California have lower incarceration rates than their native-born counterparts. According to a June 2008 report from the Public Policy Institute of California, “the incarceration rate for foreign-born adults is 297 per 100,000 in the population, compared to 813 per 100,000 for U.S.-born adults. The foreign-born, who make up roughly 35% of California’s adult population, constitute 17% of the state prison population, a proportion that has remained fairly constant since 1990.”
- The argument that undocumented immigrants are “criminals” because they are “illegal” is highly misleading. “Unlawful presence” in the United States (such as overstaying a visa) is a civil violation of immigration law, not a criminal violation. “Entry Without Inspection” (entering the United States without authorization) is a misdemeanor. More importantly, neither of these offenses constitutes a threat to public safety—unlike crimes such as murder, assault, and robbery, all of which immigrants are much less likely to commit than natives.

## **Illegal Immigrants are Not Crime Prone**

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford University

August and September 2008

The most desperate argument of the restrictionists is one with the broadest potential appeal: national security. There are two parts to this argument. The first is that immigrants from Latin America are crime-prone; the second, related, point is that welcoming in large numbers of people from south of the border would leave us vulnerable to terrorists. Every week, Lou Dobbs and his pugnacious counterpart on Fox News, Bill O'Reilly, go out of their way to cull local news stories and highlight crimes perpetrated by illegal immigrants. Yet as Riley shows, citing numerous government and nongovernmental studies, immigrants commit less crime than native-born Americans and have been committing less crime for decades. According to the Justice Department, while noncitizens make up 7 percent of the population, they account for only 6.4 percent of prisoners. This should not be surprising, considering the fact that the vast majority of immigrants — especially those hailing from Latin America, who face great hazards in doing so — come to America to work and make a better life. As for the fear that a generous border policy would leave the country susceptible to Islamic terrorists, no potential terrorists have been caught sneaking across the southern border, and limited counter-terrorism funds would be far better spent on programs other than the construction of a massive wall that determined Islamists could easily penetrate if they so desired.

## **Anti-Immigration Advocates Fear a Different US**

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford University

August and September 2008

Moving on from the economic case against immigration, Riley gets to the heart of the debate, which is really a cultural one. Underlying the anti-immigration cause is a not-so-veiled concern about the type of people who are entering the country in such great numbers. One suspects that if the 12 million illegal immigrants currently residing in the United States hailed from Great Britain or Germany, those forces arrayed against comprehensive immigration reform would be lacking just a little bit of their ardor. Pat Buchanan admitted as much in 1991, when he asked, "If we had to take a million immigrants in, say Zulus, next year, or Englishmen, and put them up in Virginia, what group would be easier to assimilate and would cause less problems for the people of Virginia?" A primary impulse of the restrictionists is a deep-seated fear of what Latino immigrants bring to the United States, and an apprehension that these newcomers will remake America in their own image. Riley presents the arresting statistic that 40 percent of new illegal immigrants are foreigners who overstay their visas. Surely the fact that these culprits are rarely ever mentioned in the vitriolic immigration debates has something to do with the fact that so many of them originate from places other than south of the border, seeing that so few visas are given to unskilled workers.

## **Claims Against Immigration are Racist**

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/26115979.html>

Hoover Institute, Stanford University

August and September 2008

The Federation for American Immigration Reform (fair), the leading anti-immigration group in Washington, has received \$1.5 million from the Pioneer Fund, a eugenicist philanthropic organization. John Tanton, the preeminent funder of anti-immigration efforts, has openly speculated, “As Whites see their power and control over their daily lives declining, will they simply go quietly into the night?” Riley documents how much of modern day anti-immigration sentiment is predicated on centuries-old Malthusian fears of overpopulation proffered by long-since discredited population theorists like Paul Ehrlich. Careful students of American history will notice that the language of restrictionists — characterizing immigrants as shiftless, lazy, and crime-prone — borrows motifs from the openly racist arguments leveled against southern and eastern European immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

## Pollution is a Global Problem

<http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/index.php?content=sr081005>

Immigration policy center special report

A CANDIDATES GUIDE TO IMMIGRATION

### Immigration and the Environment

Some commentators argue that immigration contributes to “over-population” in the U.S. and therefore causes more pollution, greater consumption of scarce resources, and more damage to the environment.

This argument not only ignores the economic forces that drive immigration, but also misses the fundamental point that “over-population” is not the cause of U.S. environmental woes. Solving our environmental problems isn’t as simple as curbing immigration to the U.S. Ultimately, immigrants are not the problem—the U.S. lifestyle, our systems of production and consumption, and the policies that shape them are. We need real, rational solutions and leadership on environmental issues, not scapegoats.

- “Over-Population” is not what damages the U.S. environment: Levels of environmental destruction and resource consumption are not directly related to population size, even in countries such as the U.S. and those of the European Union (EU) that have similar standards of living. Rather, they are conditioned by a wide range of factors, such as the degree to which a society depends upon polluting and non-renewable fossil fuels; utilizes pollution-reduction technologies; develops systems of mass transit to minimize individual automobile use; uses plastics and other non-biodegradable materials in manufacturing and packaging consumer goods; recycles potentially recyclable materials; and controls agricultural run-off into waterways.
- A few people can pollute a lot, or a lot of people can pollute a little: According to the World Resources Institute, in 2000 the U.S. was home to 30.9% fewer people than the nations of the EU-15, yet consumed 50.5% more energy and produced 70.6% more “greenhouse gases,” such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Even though the U.S. contained only 4.6% of the world’s population, it accounted for 21.1% of global energy consumption and generated 19.2% of all greenhouse gases. The problem is not the number of people in the U.S.; rather, the problem is the way the U.S. produces goods and consumes resources.

## **Pollution is a Global Problem Cont'd**

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- Blaming immigrants for climate change suggests that less-developed countries should stay that way: According to those who blame immigrants for our environmental woes, immigrants would ultimately produce less CO2 if they just remained in their less-industrialized (and therefore less-CO2-emitting) home countries. Based on this logic, illegal immigration isn't the problem, increased wealth and international development are.
- The U.S. isn't a lifeboat with limited resources that will sink with too many people: When it comes to the global warming crisis, we'll all sink or swim together.