



Costs of Immigration Greater Than FAIR Survey Shows

A report published by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) entitled “The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on U.S. Taxpayers” has provided a much-needed public service, giving us some real numbers detailing the high cost of illegal immigration to the average tax-paying American.

The major drawback of the report is that it probably understates the negative consequences of continued illegal immigration on the country.



But the raw figures are certainly bad enough. The report concluded that the flood of illegal immigration is costing American taxpayers \$135 billion per year. This is the most in U.S. history, with the bulk of the costs caused by free medical care, education, and large costs for increased law-enforcement problems.

Americans have long been aware of the high fiscal costs of illegal immigration, but those who argue that this surge of illegal immigration is somehow good for the country have often countered that illegal aliens pay taxes to all levels of government, off-setting these outlays. But FAIR’s report ably refuted that argument, demonstrating that illegal aliens pay about \$19 billion in taxes, resulting in an overall net loss to the taxpayer of \$116 billion.

What is particularly perverse about this situation is that state and local governments bear most of the burden, while the federal government collects the most in taxes!

Costs to state and local governments was pegged at more than \$88 billion, but costs to the federal government was much less, at \$45 billion. Of the nearly \$19 billion in taxes, however, paid by undocumented aliens, about \$15.5 billion goes to the federal treasury, with a mere \$3.5 billion to state and local governments.

Yet as state governments struggle to deal with the financial burden imposed upon them by this surge in illegal immigration, they find themselves lectured to by those at the federal level about how they should be more hospitable to illegal aliens.

And it is expected to get worse. FAIR states that costs have increased by about \$3 billion in just the past four years. “Clearly, the cost of doing nothing to stop illegal immigration is far too high,” said FAIR’s executive director, Dan Stein. “President Trump has laid out a comprehensive strategy to regain control of illegal immigration and bring down these costs. Building the wall, enhancing interior enforcement and mandating national E-verify will go a long way in bringing these ridiculously high costs under control.”

FAIR estimates that the cost of teaching a child here illegally who doesn’t speak English is more than \$12,000 a year.

“The United States recoups only about 14 percent of the amount expended annually on illegal aliens,” FAIR said in its report. “If the same jobs held by illegal aliens were filled by legal workers, at the



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prevailing market wage, it may safely be presumed that federal, state, and local governments would receive higher tax payments.”

FAIR notes that the costs of illegal immigration include \$29 billion in medical care, \$23 billion for additional law enforcement, \$46 billion for education, and \$9 billion for welfare.

These costs are shocking, in and of themselves, but the FAIR report does not address the future consequences of admitting more and more illegal aliens. While some results cannot even be predicted with certainty, we can be reasonably sure that many of these immigrants will eventually become voters, and will be much more likely to vote for candidates favoring an ever-larger welfare state and increased immigration, which will continue to compound the problem.

Additionally, a country is not just an area marked on a map. It possesses a national identity or an ideal based on a common culture and values. If immigration from other cultures is large enough, it can change the culture of the country.

This unfortunate situation also weakens American unity and patriotism. Large numbers of immigrants are actually discouraged from assimilating. This results in the decline of American national sovereignty in the face of international institutions — the World Court, the World Trade Organization, the United Nations — which grow increasingly more powerful. When President Obama campaigned in 2008, he promised the “transformation” of America. Near the end of his term, while speaking to a group of newly naturalized Americans, he commented that they were an important part of creating the “new” America he envisioned.

As high as the costs documented by the FAIR report are, they are dwarfed by the costs of the loss of American sovereignty and the electoral consequences of a strong majority of these immigrants casting their votes for advocates of Big Government. Tom Woods, the author of *The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History* and multiple other works, arguing for small and limited government, asked whether we will “be more or less free after even two or more generations of immigration the size and composition of recent decades. That immigrants and the American bureaucracy that serves them will become yet another pressure group, clamoring for privileges and benefits in Washington, can scarcely be doubted.”

Woods added, “A facile advocacy of open borders gives the central state exactly what it wants; the chance to supersede the preferences of property owners, and to provide the pretext for further encroachments on local and individual liberty.”

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