



Group Claims 80% of U.S. Population Growth Is From Immigration

The Alexandria, Virginia-based Negative Population Growth, Inc. (NPG) recently issued a statement asserting that 80 percent of U.S. population growth results from immigration, which includes both legal and illegal immigrants, as well as American-born children of immigrants. While the group's data about the percentage of population increase attributable to immigration may be valid, given the NPG's mandate to oppose all population increase, regardless of the nature of such increase, it is important to factor in the organization's inherent bias when assessing its warning.



"With increased population, we see a direct increase in the problems our nation faces on a daily basis: pollution, over-consumption, traffic gridlock, crowded schools and hospitals, overburdened social services, unemployment, crumbling infrastructure, urban sprawl, over-development, threatened or extinct animal and plant species, and dwindling natural resources," Tracy Canada, the group's deputy director, told the *Washington Examiner*.

Canada added, "Immigrants to the U.S. are also found to greatly increase their consumption — and their resulting footprints — upon settling here, which furthers our nation's environmental impact."

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Because of the recent large increase in the number of illegal immigrants entering our country, NPG — according to its president, Donald Mann — is planning a public campaign to warn about the dangers created by letting immigration continue unchecked. However, NPG's statements indicate that the group's opposition to immigration includes regulated legal immigration that many conservatives and libertarians actually regard as possibly being beneficial to our nation's economy. Differing views on immigration, in this case, come down to how one views population growth.

The zero-population-growth doomsayers still accept the now-discredited Malthusian catastrophe theory — first promulgated in Thomas Malthus' 1798 work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* — in which Malthus claimed, "The power of population is so superior to the power of the earth to produce subsistence for man that premature death must in some shape or other visit the human race."

However, the advent of modern agricultural methods have long demonstrated that Malthus' theory was false, as food production continues to outpace population growth.

Modern champions of the free market regard human beings as resources rather than liabilities and constitutional conservatives alarmed by the recent influx of illegal immigrants base their concerns on not only the economic cost, but on issues such as the necessity for sovereign nations to control their borders. Even those who welcome legal immigrants for the potential contribution they may make to our social and economic structure, however, recognize that "undocumented" (i.e., illegal) immigration can



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have very heavy costs.

A recent study released by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) compiled the cost of providing education, healthcare, law enforcement, and social and government services to illegal immigrants and their dependents in California alone and found it to be \$25.3 billion per year.

The report, "The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on California Taxpayers (2014)," noted that these costs amount to about \$2,370 for each California household headed by a U.S. citizen. A summary of the report on FAIR's website states,

Nearly half of those expenditures (\$12.3 billion) result from the costs of K-12 education for the children of illegal aliens — both those illegally in the country and those born in the United States. Another major outlay (\$2.1 billion) results from the need to provide supplemental English language instruction to Limited English Proficient students, many of whom are children of illegal aliens. Together, these educational costs are 57.1 percent of total expenditures.

Other fiscal outlays result from the costs of medical care (\$4.0 billion), public assistance services (\$800 million), administration of justice functions (\$4.4 billion), and general governmental services (\$1.6 billion).

FAIR noted that while some tax revenue is collected from the illegal immigrant population, one must also take into consideration that the \$3.5 billion in taxes collected from illegal immigrants in the form of sales and other taxes does not truly offset the fiscal costs, because similar, and likely greater, tax revenue would be collected if the same jobs held by illegal immigrants were filled by legal workers.

FAIR produced a similar report entitled "The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on Texans" last January that stated, "There are about 1,810,000 illegal aliens residing in Texas — 70,000 more than resided in the state in 2010 when we estimated the fiscal burden at nearly \$8.9 billion annually." The report noted,

In 2013, illegal immigration cost Texas taxpayers about \$12.1 billion annually. That amounts to more than \$1,197 for every Texas household headed by a native-born or naturalized U.S. citizen.

As *The New American* noted recently, Karen Woodson, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) director for public schools in Montgomery County, Maryland, told reporters: "All of the unaccompanied minors [who have migrated illegally] from Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador enrolling in MCPS [Maryland County Public Schools] do qualify for enrollment in the ESOL program where they receive instruction in English as a new language, as well as parent engagement and counseling supports."

With such a large number of unaccompanied illegal migrants from Central America in the country, the costs for educating these children in the ESOL program undoubtedly represents just a fraction of the total costs to the taxpayers of caring for these minors.

Down near the Mexican border, McAllen, Texas Mayor Jim Darling told the Homeland Security and Public Safety Committee of the Texas House of Representatives that his city has spent \$1.5 million so far this year to deal with the immigration crisis.

The United States has a long history of welcoming legal immigrants, and those immigrants have made great contributions to our nation. Even their contribution to the growth of our nation's population has been beneficial, since without those workers to labor in our nation's mines, steel mills, ship yards, and farms, our nation would never have become a great industrial and agricultural power. Our problem is not overpopulation, but uncontrolled illegal immigration that threatens our economic well-being and



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our national security.

Photo of welcome sign at a immigrant detention facility in Texas: AP Images

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