

Effects of illegal immigration



Illegal immigrants entering the United States from other countries has played a major impact on the quality of life of our society.

The majority of Americans believe there are no benefits to United States citizens by having illegal immigrants remain in this country. Much of the funding that would typically go to tax paying citizens is now being directed to programs for illegal immigrants, which do not make enough money to financially support themselves and their families. To date, the largest costs that have been paid out to as a result of illegal immigration are Medicaid (\$2. 5 billion); treatment for the uninsured (\$2. 2 billion); food assistance programs such as food stamps, WIC and free school lunches (\$1. 9 billion); the federal prison and court systems (\$1.

6 billion); and federal aid to schools (\$1. 4 billion). (Camarota, 2004)

Taxpayers should not have to absorb the costs for education, medical care, welfare or incarceration for those that were not invited to this country. An estimated two thirds of illegals who are house hold heads lack a high school diploma. (Camarota, 2004) Without adequate education, illegal immigrants subject themselves to jobs set aside for unskilled workers with low paying salaries. Due to the fact that many of the illegal immigrants live below the poverty level, money must be allocated for funding to help offset the costs of necessities such as education.

The 1982 Supreme Court Case of Plyer vs. Doe makes it illegal to deny children of illegal immigrants the right to go to school. Another factor in this equation is the children of illegal aliens that were born in the United States and are therefore citizens. In either case, both are living in households of

illegal immigrants, many of whom are living below the poverty level, and would be considered in the same category with the children not born in the United States because they are living under the same circumstances. The total K-12 school expenditure for illegal immigrants costs the states nearly \$12 billion annually, and when the children born here to illegal aliens are added, the costs more than double to \$28. billion.

(Martin, 2005) Money has to also be allotted for adult illegal immigrants, many of which cannot speak English and therefore have to take classes to be able to effectively communicate and be a member of society. As a country, we are sacrificing the quality of life and education of our children to support the quality of life for those who have broken the law by being here. Efforts are underway in several states and in Congress to allow illegal aliens to pay steeply discounted in-state tuition at public colleges and universities— rates not available to American citizens from other states. (Martin, 2005) One such program – The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act – has been recently reintroduced by lawmakers. This program would allow students who were brought to the United States as an illegal immigrant prior to the age of 16 to become a citizen provided they go to college or the military. Initiatives like this make it hard for the U.

S. taxpayer to embrace the masses of illegal aliens when same aid cannot be obtained for themselves or their children for pursuit of higher education. If we continue to receive the amount of illegal aliens that are believed to be entering the country as they have in the past few years, education costs are going to skyrocket beyond control. This could severely impact the quality of life for future generations as a result. Already a heavy burden for the U.

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S. taxpayer, there seems to be no relief in sight. In a perfect world, if the United States was a self-sufficient country with an overabundance of money, people might not mind helping out illegal aliens in search of a better life. However, the reality is that the United States cannot continue to foot the bill for the education of illegal immigrants at the cost of cutting funding for programs and aid to taxpayers. An additional expenditure that is being paid as the result of illegal immigration would be the cost of healthcare.

As the amount of illegal immigrants entering and existing in the country increase, the health care industry is feeling the strain of trying to care for all of these people. The effects for the taxpayer would be a rise in health insurance premiums to cover the costs being incurred for the uninsured. Under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act, hospitals with emergency rooms are required to treat and stabilize patients with emergency medical needs regardless whether or not they are able to pay for the treatment. These hospitals are then caught between a rock and a hard place because there is no guarantee that the costs involved in treating these patients will ever be reimbursed. Because there is a mandatory requirement to treat people that come to the hospital in an emergency type situation, many illegal use the emergency room for all preventative needs as opposed to emergencies.

People should be entitled to treatment for illnesses regardless of whether they have healthcare or not. The problem comes in when the system is abused in a manner like the one we are presently witnessing, where the emergency room is being used to treat both emergency and non-emergency situations. Another issue affecting our healthcare system is the women that

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are coming into the United States to give birth to what is known as anchor babies. Anchor babies are offspring of illegal aliens who come into the country to deliver their children so they can be U. S.

citizens. The reason the children are called anchor babies is because they are considered the foundation and woman who give birth to them rely on the fact that at some point these children will be allowed to sponsor the mother and the entire family to become U. S. citizens.

Not only is this abuse of the 14th amendment, this is more incentive for an illegal immigrant to come to the United States to hide out and wait until they are sponsored and can apply for citizenship. The 14th amendment was designed to help African Americans with reforms after the Civil War by providing citizenship to black people born in the United States. The United States did not face the immigration issues that we experience today so there were never any stipulations added to this amendment to address them. Clearly, there is a misinterpretation of a law which needs to be amended. Allowing this piggyback behavior will cause more illegal immigrants to take their chances by coming to the United States.

The United States government should step in and say that if a child is born to parents whom are illegal immigrants, the child will then be considered as such. How can illegal behavior end in such positive results? Never in U. S. history have we seen the amount of immigration which we are currently dealing with.

Because of this, our country is being forced to deal with an issue that many have turned their heads and denied. The estimated 4 to 8 million illegal

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immigrants in the United States are from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean and often come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. (Thomas, 2003) While there are illegal immigrants that seek medical attention when healthcare is required, there are many that do not utilize these resources. This poses an issue because there are people in this country in need of medical assistance but scared to come forward due to the fear of being in the country illegally and possibly sent back to their country as a result. What that means to the U. S.

citizens is being subjected to people that are walking around medical ailments and possibly no prior medical exam or knowledge as to what they could be infected with. Contagious diseases that U. S. citizens have been treated for through vaccinations from childhood into their adult lives are now being introduced to this country by way of illegal immigrants in need of healthcare.

This is yet another avenue for money to be spent on treating those illegal immigrants that choose to come forward and need treatment for these diseases. Welfare in the form of food stamps, subsidized lunch and food stamps is not typically granted to an illegal immigrant, but if their children are born in this country then they are eligible to receive assistance. Children born to illegal immigrants have the same rights that the children of a U. S. citizen would. Funds for this type of assistance is utilized far more by immigrants than by the natives of this country.

The fees for the incarceration of illegal immigrants is another expense that the U. S taxpayer is responsible for. States such as New York have received

partial compensation under the federal State Alien Assistance program (SCAAP) that was established to compensate the states and local jurisdictions for incarceration of undocumented aliens who are serving time for a felony conviction or at least two misdemeanors. If using tax dollars to support illegal immigrants whose income are below poverty level is not enough, now taxpayers can look forward to paying for illegal immigrants to come to this country and commit crimes. Not enough is being done to communicate the existence of illegal immigrants once identified by the prison systems. The easiest thing to do would be to notify immigration when these criminals are released they can be deported.

Once a criminal is allowed to be released, trying to locate them would be like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Certain states have gone so far as to sue the federal government for the costs associated with housing, feeding and supervising illegal aliens. Their belief is since the federal government is not enforcing the laws to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the country; they should be responsible for incurring the costs. The question that comes to the mind of Americans is whether or not the effect of illegal immigration is fair. Tax dollars of hard working Americans are being shelled out to people that have come to our country without an invitation.

In order to resolve this issue, we need to start by enforcing strict laws and punishment for those who enter the country illegally, as well as those businesses that choose to hire known illegal immigrants. Another resolution would be to require a larger security presence at the borders. By extending our hands to illegal immigrants to cover the remainder of what can not be afforded, we are leaving U. S.

citizens that might be in the same situation to fend for their selves. The United States has their own unemployment issues to deal with and the tolerance of allowing illegal immigrants to come into the country and take over the jobs that U. S. citizens should be doing is not helping the situation. Until the United States makes a conscious effort to address the issue of illegal immigration, things will only get worse.

We should also look at the number of citizens which we allow to enter the country legally. This is another method to encourage illegal immigration by allowing people to sneak in the country and piggyback off of established family members while they attempt to obtain citizenship for themselves. No other country is going to allow millions of people to enter, uninvited and not attempting to go through the proper means to enter the country the proper way and spend their taxpayer's money on funding to make life comfortable for those who choose to go by false identities and not make themselves known. There is a process that anyone wanting to enter the country should follow and the rules should not be broken for those that choose not to follow them. As of the American taxpayer does not already have enough burdens in the way of paying for things that they have no control over like war, U.

S. citizens can also look forward to knowing that their hard earned tax dollars are going towards a better life for the people that snuck into this country and chose to stay and build families at the taxpayer's expense. This issue has effected each aspect of our society from the healthcare to our education system and even the justice system. Until the government lifts the welcome mat from beneath the people that are crossing our borders uninvited - we

can look forward to higher taxes and a lower quality of life – at least for the natural born citizens.

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