

THE POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION

IMMIGRANTS AND IMMIGRATION MYTHBUSTERS: Addressing Common Misconceptions

Immigrants and immigration are good for our country, our communities, and our economy. New arrivals to the U.S. help drive business creation, fuel innovation, fill essential workforce needs, and strengthen the middle class. Family-based immigration promotes family unity and integration, all core principles of American values. The success of our nation comes, in large part, from our longstanding tradition of encouraging men and women seeking a better life to leave everything they know to begin contributing to the United States. Severely limiting legal immigration puts this at risk. Instead, we should protect and expand current immigration levels and work to pass immigration reform that makes it safer, faster and more efficient for prospective immigrants to enter the U.S. and begin contributing to our society.

AMERICAN WORKFORCE

Myth: Immigration hurts American workers. Immigrants increase competition in the labor market, making it harder for Americans to get jobs, and depressing wages.

FACT: Research indicates that immigrants complement, rather than compete with American workers, creating jobs as business owners, consumers and taxpayers. Immigration brings in entrepreneurs who start [Fortune 500 companies](#), hire native-born American workers, boost wages and strengthen the middle class. Further, immigrants increase productivity; as baby boomers retire over the next 20 years, immigrants will help fill the labor demand and maintain our social safety net.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Myth: Immigrants harm American workers and are a drain on the U.S. economy.

FACT: The United States needs young immigrants to stay competitive, create economic growth, and prepare for an aging workforce and the increased retirements of the “Baby Boomer” generation to avoid the fate of other [aging nations](#). Immigrants add trillions of dollars to our Gross Domestic Product and tax revenue including, [\\$2 trillion](#) to the U.S. GDP in 2016 and [\\$329 billion](#) to state and local and federal taxes annually. Cuts to our legal immigration system would have devastating effects on our economy, including a [2% decrease](#) in the U.S. GDP by 2040, a [12.5%](#) decrease in U.S. economic growth, and [4.6 million](#) fewer jobs. Middle class families and [Rust Belt](#) states would be hit particularly hard, as they rely on immigration to stabilize their populations and revive their economies.

EDUCATION

Myth: Immigrants are not educated and have no skills to offer Americans.

FACT: [43%](#) of all recently-arrived immigrants are college graduates - compared to 29% of native-born Americans, and [40% of Fortune 500 companies](#) were founded by immigrants and their children, employing over 10 million people worldwide. [Immigrants start 20% of our businesses despite being only 13% of the population](#), keeping our workforce flexible, allowing our companies to grow faster, and increasing the productivity of American workers by bringing in individuals with diverse skill sets and new ideas.

TAXES AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Myth: Immigrants are a burden to essential services like schools, hospitals and highways. Less immigration would benefit taxpayers.

FACT: Immigrants make significant contributions to tax revenue including [\\$329 billion](#) in state and local and federal taxes annually. Undocumented immigrants [contribute](#) roughly \$11.74 billion a year in state and local taxes, including more than \$7 billion in sales and excise taxes, \$3.6 billion in property taxes, and \$1.1 billion in personal income taxes; funding our schools, hospitals, highways and other essential services. This number would increase by [\\$2.18 billion](#) annually if they were given legal status as part of an immigration reform package. Additionally, immigrants make enormous contributions to Social Security. If current legal immigration levels were cut by 50%, the Social Security fund would lose [\\$1.5 trillion](#) in revenue.

ANNUAL LEVELS OF IMMIGRATION

Myth: The American people want to see a reduction in immigration.

FACT: More than [75%](#) of Americans oppose making cuts to our legal immigration system.

Myth: Reducing immigration levels will relieve pressure on the labor market, and make our economy stronger.

FACT: Immigrants are innovators, job creators, and consumers with an enormous spending power that drives our economy, and creates employment opportunities for all Americans. In 2014, after immigrants spent billions of dollars on state and local, and federal taxes, they were left with [\\$927 billion](#) in spending power, which they used to purchase goods and services, stimulate local business activity, and create jobs. Proposed cuts would exclude 22 million people from the United States over the next five decades, making it the largest cut to legal immigration since the 1920s. This would have devastating effects on our economy, including a [2% decrease](#) in the U.S. GDP by 2040, a [12.5% decrease](#) in U.S. economic growth, and [4.6 million](#) fewer jobs.

H-1B VISAS

Myth: U.S. technology companies abuse the H-1B program, pay their employees low wages and displace American workers.

FACT: U.S. technology companies use H-1B visas to fill key targeted spots at their companies. Of the [top 30 technology companies](#) who applied for H-1Bs in 2017, the average tech salary was \$123,000. Enacting sensible reforms to the H-1B visa such as anti-hoarding provisions, raising the wage exemption level and requiring specific attestation for super-dependent companies, would protect American workers and enable American businesses to get the workers they need. Additionally, a large portion of all [H-1B visa fees](#) go to American worker retraining programs, helping citizens gain skills to obtain jobs or upgrade their employment.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Myth: International students take jobs away from Americans.

FACT: International students are a powerful economic asset due to their entrepreneurial spirit, innovative skills and vast spending power. They spend billions of dollars as consumers, supporting local businesses, and go on to found companies like Google, Yahoo! and Trulia, employing hundreds of thousands of Americans. Researchers estimate that by 2020 there will be [1.3 million](#) unfilled science, technology, engineering, and math, or STEM, jobs in the U.S., a shortfall that will make it harder for American companies to stay competitive and create jobs. Luckily, international students gravitate towards these fields and make up between [40 and 70 percent](#) of all graduate students in STEM fields at U.S. colleges and universities. For every international student who receives a graduate STEM degree in the U.S., and is hired by a U.S. employer, [2.6 jobs](#) are added to our economy.

HOUSING

Myth: Immigrants drive down housing values in neighborhoods across America.

FACT: Today's immigrants are revitalizing U.S. cities across the country, becoming U.S. citizens, learning English, and buying homes. In fact, immigrants add [\\$3.7 trillion](#) to housing markets nationwide.

MASS DEPORTATION

Myth: Deporting as many undocumented immigrants as possible is good for the American economy and American families.

FACT: Mass deportation would [impoverish American families and create enormous social costs](#). Such a program would reduce the national GDP by \$4.7 trillion over ten years, jeopardize our housing market, and decrease the median household income by 47%, throwing many U.S. families into poverty. Further, it would take 20 years, and cost U.S. taxpayers between [\\$400 to \\$600 billion](#).

PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP

Myth: Providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants would hurt American workers.

FACT: Providing an [earned pathway to citizenship](#) for the roughly 11 million undocumented immigrants in the U.S. would increase their wages and spending power and, over 10 years, boost U.S. GDP by \$1.4 trillion, increase the total income for all Americans by \$791 billion, generate \$184 billion in additional state and local and federal tax revenue from currently undocumented immigrants, and add more than 2 million jobs to the U.S. economy.

DREAMERS AND THE ECONOMY

Myth: Dreamers are a drain on the economy. Giving them legal status would only make things worse for struggling Americans.

FACT: Dreamers are an enormous economic benefit. More than [91%](#) of DACA recipients are either employed or in school, helping to boost the U.S. economy through their spending and tax dollars. They are doctors and nurses who care for the elderly and sick, teachers who educate the next generation of American leaders, and engineers who build American roads and bridges. If Congress fails to provide protections for these young people, the U.S. GDP will be reduced by [\\$460 billion](#) annually. However, if Dreamers were instead provided with legal status and a pathway to citizenship, [\\$1 trillion](#) would be added to the GDP over a decade.