

## Illegal Immigration Costs California Over Ten Billion Annually

State's "cheap labor" costs average household \$1,183 a year

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In hosting America's largest population of illegal immigrants, California bears a huge cost to provide basic human services for this fast growing, low-income segment of its population. A new study from the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) examines the costs of education, health care and incarceration of illegal aliens, and concludes that the costs to Californians is \$10.5 billion per year.

Among the key finding of the report are that the state's already struggling K-12 education system spends approximately \$7.7 billion a year to school the children of illegal aliens who now constitute 15 percent of the student body. Another \$1.4 billion of the taxpayers' money goes toward providing health care to illegal aliens and their families, the same amount that is spent incarcerating illegal aliens criminals.

"California's addiction to 'cheap' illegal alien labor is bankrupting the state and posing enormous burdens on the state's shrinking middle class tax base," stated Dan Stein, President of FAIR. "Most Californians, who have seen their taxes increase while public services deteriorate, already know the impact that mass illegal immigration is having on their communities, but even they may be shocked when they learn just how much of a drain illegal immigration has become."

The Costs of Illegal Immigration to Californians focuses on three specific program areas because those were the costs examined by researchers from the Urban Institute in 1994. Looking at the costs of education, health care and incarceration for illegal aliens in 1994, the Urban Institute estimated that California was subsidizing illegal immigrants to the tune of about \$1.1 billion. The enormous rise in the costs of illegal immigrants over the intervening ten years is due to the rapid growth in illegal residents. It is reasonable to expect those costs to continue to soar if action is not taken to turn the tide.

"Nineteen ninety-four was the same year that California voters rebelled and overwhelmingly passed Proposition 187, which sought to limit liability for mass illegal immigration. Since then, state and local governments have blatantly ignored the wishes of the voters and continued to shell out publicly financed benefits on illegal aliens," said Stein. "Predictably, the costs of illegal immigration have grown geometrically, while the state has spiraled into a fiscal crisis that has brought it near bankruptcy."

"Nothing could more starkly illustrate the very high costs of 'cheap labor' than California's current situation," continued Stein. "A small number of powerful interests in the state reap the benefits, while the average native-born family in California gets handed a nearly \$1,200 a year bill."

The [Federation for American Immigration Reform](#) is a nonprofit, public-interest, membership organization advocating immigration policy reforms that would tighten border security and prevent illegal immigration, while reducing legal immigration levels from about 1.1 million persons per year to 300,000 per year.

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