

Are illegal immigrants costing California too much? Is the cost incurred by the residence more than the revenue they bring California? Are illegal immigrants worth having in California? Or do they merely add to an ever-growing deficit, to which there seems no end?

Illegal immigrants in California are adversely affecting domestic workers through wage depression and job competition. According to a study conducted by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), illegal immigration costs California nearly \$22 billion each year. Thus California is compelled to pay \$2,724 per household for the health care, education, welfare and incarceration of illegal immigrants (Romero, 2007). Illegal immigration has aggravated the unemployment crisis in California. Approximately 10 percent of the entire work force in California comprises of illegal workers. This is indicative of the fact that nearly 3 million unemployed Californians have to compete with almost 2 million illegal immigrants for scarce jobs. Most companies hire undocumented workers at well-below minimum wages, which makes it difficult for the native residents to compete with them (Devadas and Luckstead, 2008). Since California follows a progressive tax structure where taxpayers pay taxes in proportion to their rising incomes, illegal immigrants get the advantage of paying low taxes and utilizing poverty oriented programs higher in proportion to the natives. As a result, illegal immigrants draw resources away from needed programs for legal residents, and suppress economic growth because of the need to inflate taxes to cover the costs of their mandated services (Romero, 2007).