

The Deficit and Illegal Immigration

The California's state 2023-2024 budget morphs from a \$97.5 billion surplus to a \$31.5 billion deficit. These estimates are based on the assumption that the economy does not go into recession.

There are many proposed causes for these large swings in the numbers that include the loss of tax revenue from those leaving the state, the coronavirus, and the international business climate.

We would like to propose that a large portion of the deficit can be contributed to the state declaring that it is a sanctuary state and the resulting illegal immigration. California is home to more than two million illegal immigrants. With the federal governments open boarder policy the number continues to grow.

There are three budget areas that are directly impacted, education, housing and health care.

According to a report published by the Public Policy Institute of California in 2017, it was estimated that there were around 250,000 undocumented children under 18 years old in California at that time. Obviously, these numbers have increased.

For the fiscal year 2023-2024, the California state budget allocated approximately \$82.4 billion for K-12 education. Recent data indicate that 5% of the children are undocumented, which equates to the state spending **\$4.12 billion** on the education of undocumented children.

In the United States, eligibility for public housing programs, including those in California, is generally based on income and other factors rather than citizenship or immigration status.

The state has allocated \$20.6 Billion towards housing and homelessness programs. Recent budget actions have increased the state's fiscal role in addressing housing affordability and homelessness. Since the state does not track whether a person is illegal when applying for public housing we have to assume a number. Recent data indicates that 6% of the state's population is illegal. This would relate to spending **\$1.24 billion** on illegal immigration.

Medi-Cal expansion provided 286,000 undocumented Californians with comprehensive health care. May 2016, children under 19 years of age became eligible for full scope Medi-Cal benefits, and in January 2020, full scope Medi-Cal was extended to young adults ages 19 through 25, regardless of immigration status.

The governor's 2023-2024 budget for health care is \$38.7 billion. Using the 6% number for illegals, that equates to **\$2.32 billion**.

As a result of this year's weather the state sent **\$95 million** to undocumented flooding victims.

In 2021, the State of California implemented various programs and initiatives to provide direct assistance to individuals and households, including non-residents. However, the specific details and eligibility criteria for these programs can vary. Here are a few examples of direct assistance programs in California in 2021:

COVID-19 Relief Programs: California implemented several programs to provide financial assistance to individuals and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs included stimulus payments, rent relief programs, and assistance for small businesses. Some of these programs were open to both residents and non-residents who met the eligibility requirements.

Emergency Housing Assistance: The state provided emergency housing assistance to individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. These programs aimed to offer temporary shelter, rental assistance, or supportive services. Some programs may have been available to non-residents depending on their specific circumstances.

CalFresh (SNAP): CalFresh is California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), providing nutrition assistance to eligible low-income individuals and families. Non-residents, who meet the eligibility criteria, including income requirements, may be eligible for CalFresh benefits.

Health Care Assistance: California offers health care assistance through programs such as Medi-Cal, which provides health coverage to low-income individuals and families. Eligibility for Medi-Cal is primarily based on income and household size, and non-residents may be eligible under certain circumstances.

There are some that say that it is money well spent.

Advocates of open borders and immigration argue that there are several advantages to allowing more freedom of movement and addressing the issue of undocumented immigration. Here are some commonly cited benefits:

Economic growth and labor market benefits: Immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, can contribute to the economy by filling labor market gaps, especially in sectors with labor shortages. They often take up low-skilled jobs that native-born workers may not be willing to do. This can boost productivity, economic output, and overall economic growth.

Innovation and entrepreneurship: Immigrants have a long history of driving innovation and entrepreneurship in their host countries. Many successful businesses and startups have been founded by immigrants. By encouraging immigration, countries can attract talented individuals who bring new ideas, skills, and perspectives, which can spur innovation and economic development.

Cultural enrichment and diversity: Open borders and immigration can lead to cultural exchange and enrichment. Immigrants bring their unique traditions, languages, and customs, contributing to the diversity of a society. This diversity can enhance cultural understanding, promote tolerance, and create vibrant multicultural communities.

Humanitarian considerations: Allowing open borders and addressing undocumented immigration can be seen as a response to humanitarian crises and a commitment to human rights. By providing pathways for legal immigration and protecting the rights of migrants, countries can offer refuge to those fleeing persecution, violence, or extreme poverty.

Mutual benefits and reciprocity: Opening borders can promote mutually beneficial relationships between countries. Bilateral agreements that facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services can lead to increased trade, investment, and cooperation. This can strengthen diplomatic ties and foster economic interdependence.

Reducing human trafficking and smuggling: One argument is that by establishing legal pathways for immigration, the prevalence of human trafficking and smuggling may decrease. When people are forced to migrate through irregular channels due to restrictive immigration policies, they become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Legal avenues for migration can help protect individuals and combat human trafficking.

The advocates against open borders and illegal immigration argue the negatives of illegal immigration. Here are some commonly cited Impacts:

Critics argue that illegal immigration can have negative economic consequences. They claim that undocumented immigrants might take jobs from native workers, lower wages in certain sectors, and strain public resources such as healthcare and education.

National Security: Opponents of open borders argue that unrestricted immigration can pose risks to national security. They contend that without proper border controls, it becomes easier for individuals with malicious intent, including potential terrorists or criminals, to enter a country undetected.

Social Services and Public Resources: Some critics argue that undocumented immigrants can strain social services and public resources, particularly in areas with large populations of unauthorized residents. They claim that the cost of providing

healthcare, education, and other services to undocumented immigrants falls on taxpayers.

Rule of Law: Critics of illegal immigration argue that it undermines the rule of law. They believe that allowing people to enter or reside in a country without going through proper channels sets a precedent that disregards established immigration laws and encourages future illegal immigration.

Exploitation and Labor Conditions: Some opponents of illegal immigration argue that undocumented workers are vulnerable to exploitation by employers who may pay lower wages or subject them to unsafe working conditions. They argue that this creates an unfair labor market and can harm both immigrants and native workers.

Cultural and Social Integration: Critics of open borders often express concerns about the ability of societies to assimilate large numbers of immigrants quickly. They argue that cultural differences and language barriers can hinder social cohesion and lead to social tensions or conflicts.

Whether you are for or against spending on illegal immigration, what is certain is that the taxpayers of California are spending a minimum of \$7.8 billion on illegal immigration which is 25% of the deficit.

Not included in these numbers is the **\$7 billion** that the federal, state and local governments spend on illegal immigrant law enforcement.

What is not talked about is the quality of life issues such as the quality of education in the public school system or the lack of sufficient low cost housing/homeless due to the influx of large numbers of illegal immigrants.