



Immigration REPORT

SUCCESS: FAIR Plays Key Role in Rolling Back Guestworker Increases

An effort led by FAIR was instrumental in a decision by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to cancel discretionary increases in the H-2B guest worker program. Earlier this year, before the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, Acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf, exercising discretionary authority, approved the issuance of an additional 35,000 H-2B “seasonal worker” visas, bringing the total to about 100,000 for the year. FAIR strongly opposed Wolf’s original decision.

As the COVID-19 virus struck the country and crippled our economy, those seasonal jobs all but disappeared, as did the dubious need for foreign workers to fill them. In response, FAIR led an effort to convince Wolf to cancel the additional 35,000 visas. In early April, DHS, in a tweet, made the welcome announcement that the department’s “rule on the H-2B cap is on hold pending review due to present economic circumstances. No additional H-2B visas will be released until further notice.”

In the lead-up to Wolf’s decision, FAIR met with key members of the Executive Branch and White House staff to argue for cancellation of the additional guest worker visas. That effort was augmented by an op-ed from FAIR’s president Dan Stein, published in the influential online journal, The Daily Caller, making the

case for why those additional visas were not only unnecessary, but harmful to the millions of Americans who were losing their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Reinforcing the points made in Stein’s op-ed, Fox News host and commentator Tucker Carlson, who is also the founder of the Daily Caller news and opinion site, also issued a forceful plea to the DHS and the Trump administration to freeze guest worker visas. Americans who were employed in retail, service, and hospitality jobs were hit first and hardest by the COVID-19 economic crisis.

Amazingly, in spite of the labor market carnage

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Guestworker Increase

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wrought by the crisis, cheap labor interests and mass immigration advocates were still calling for unabated continuation of guest worker admissions. “Dozens of small businesses across the country in landscaping, hospitality, construction, etc. are going out of business now because of [the administration’s] delay in issuing H-2Bs,” complained the American Immigration Lawyers Association of the Carolinas in a tweet.

Throughout the years, FAIR’s efforts on behalf of

American workers and taxpayers have been an important counterbalance to the massively funded array of industry and immigrant advocacy groups pushing narrow interest agendas. In the midst of the current crisis FAIR’s efforts once again benefited American workers at a time of unprecedented need. ■

Polls Show Americans Understand the Need for Secure Borders in the Face of a Global Pandemic

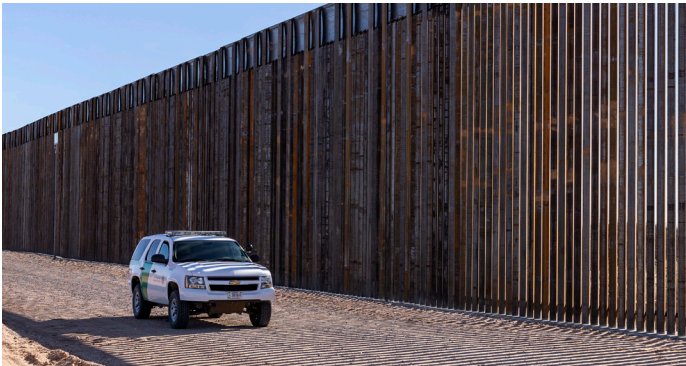


Image Credit: Flickr U.S. Customs and Border Protection

The economic and political elite may not have much use for secure borders, or the concept of national sovereignty, but significant majorities of Americans do. And, according to recent polls, those opinions have been bolstered as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The monthly , which tracks public opinion on a variety of important issues, found unprecedented support for strong border enforcement in a nationwide poll conducted in late March. That poll found that 83 percent of respondents support a complete cessation of immigration across the U.S.-Mexico border. These opinions cut across all racial, ethnic and party lines. A temporary immigration halt was supported by 73 percent of Democrats, 84 percent of Independents, and 93 percent of Republicans. In the same poll, voters also expressed strong support for measures implemented by the Trump administration to curb last year’s surge of illegal immigration across our southern border.

Similarly, the Rasmussen Polling company’s

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Secure Borders

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“Immigration Index” survey registered strong support for government efforts to prevent illegal aliens from taking U.S. jobs. That poll, conducted as the COVID-19 crisis was ravaging the American labor market, found overwhelming support for making E-Verify a mandatory part of the hiring process. Sixty-seven percent of respondents agreed that American jobs should be protected by requiring all employers to use the highly reliable E-Verify program.

Obviously, concerns about the security, health, and effects of excessive and unregulated immigration

have been heightened by the current national crisis. But even in more normal times, most Americans have understood setting reasonable limits on immigration and demanding that everyone who enters does so legally is vital to protecting American workers and taxpayers, in addition to protecting national security and public health.

These opinions are not likely to dissipate even after the current emergency abates, as much as the economic and political elite would like a return to immigration chaos as usual. ■

New Report from FAIR: Spending on Illegal Aliens Nearly Rivals Money Spent on the Needs of Veterans

Our government officials claim to honor our veterans -- men and women who have served in our armed forces, fought in wars, and sacrificed to protect our nation’s interests and our freedoms. However, a new analysis by FAIR finds that government spending on illegal aliens and their dependents is approaching, on a per capita basis, what we allocate to meet the needs of veterans.

Currently, the United States allocates \$217 billion a year to address the needs and provide care for our 19.5 million veterans. That figure is about \$26 billion shy of what it will cost to meet the needs of veterans in the coming fiscal year. At the same time, the country is spending about \$132 billion a year to provide services and benefits for an estimated illegal alien population of 14.3 million and their dependents. On a per capita basis, we now spend about \$9,200 a year on illegal aliens and their families and about \$11,100 on the needs of veterans.

Veterans, of course, have earned the assistance they receive from American taxpayers. Many struggle with mental health, physical health, and other issues owing to their service in combat. As a result, veter-

ans, as a group, have greater needs for care -- needs that have often been neglected. The results have been higher rates of homelessness, and alcohol and substance abuse among veterans than the population as

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a whole. These inadequately addressed problems of veterans also make it more difficult for them to find and hold jobs, which in turn leads to higher rates of poverty.

Veterans in Need

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But even as the veterans who political leaders claim to honor struggle, many of those leaders are devoting more of our scarce resources to the interests and demands of illegal aliens. A few glaring examples pointed to in FAIR's report include:

- Veterans needing health care in California can wait nearly 100 days to see a provider. At the same time, the California Legislature dedicated an additional \$98 million to grant health care benefits to illegal aliens between the ages of 19 and 25 last year. In April, Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed state funding to earmark \$125 million in assistance to illegal aliens as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Across the country, state and local governments have established legal defense funds to help illegal aliens fight efforts to remove them. In the meantime, thousands of veterans in these same jurisdictions are living on the streets.

- New York State set aside \$27 million a year to help illegal aliens pay for college tuition, while rejecting a few hundred thousand dollars to provide tuition assistance to the children of soldiers killed or disabled in combat.

Allocating a vast (and growing) amount of public money on illegal aliens while the needs of veterans are being neglected is indicative of a society with misplaced priorities.

The full report, [Veteran Needs vs. Illegal Alien Costs](#) can be found on FAIR's website, www.fairus.org. ■



Image Credit: istock

Federal Lawmakers Push for Relief Checks for Illegal Aliens; Others Call for End to Immigration Enforcement

After several unseemly delays as Congress squabbled over numerous pork barrel provisions in the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act, desperate American families finally began receiving assistance checks in mid-April. Those stimulus checks are limited to those who filed tax returns using valid Social Security numbers (SSNs), but not those who filed with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs). Illegal aliens who file tax returns (generally because they are eligible for refunds or tax credits) do so using ITINs, meaning that they cannot claim benefits under the CARES Act.

These restrictions have not sat well with illegal aliens, their advocates, and far left members of Congress. Those members of Congress are aiming to rectify what they see as a great injustice. “I was ap-

palled to learn hardworking, taxpaying immigrants were left out of the \$2 trillion CARES Act. These taxpayers work in critical sectors of our economy, like agriculture, and contribute greatly to our country,” complained Rep. Lou Correa (D-Calif.), who apparently did not read the bill before voting on it, and is oblivious to the important distinction between immigrants and illegal aliens. Legal immigrants are eligible for relief under the CARES Act.

To correct this “egregious error” Correa introduced the No Taxpayer Left Behind Act, which would make illegal aliens eligible to receive federal relief benefits. Correa is being backed by the usual suspects on the far left fringe of the House of Representatives.

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“Squad” leader Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) tweeted “Thanks to GOP, these checks will be cut off the backs of *taxpaying immigrants* who get nothing.” Likewise, Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) “corrected” a headline in the New York Post which read, “‘Squad’ members want to make illegal immigrants eligible for coronavirus aid” by crossing out illegal immigrants and replacing it with “American taxpayers” in bold red letters. “There, fixed it for you,” she added.

Another bill authored by Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.), called the Automatic BOOST to Communities Act, would provide \$2,000 prepaid debit cards to everyone in the United States including, “non-citizens, including undocumented people, permanent residents, and temporary visitors whose stay exceeds three months.”



The illegal-alien-pay-taxes argument is the most frequent justification that advocates use for demanding illegal aliens get relief checks. However, while illegal aliens do pay some taxes, their contributions far short of the costs of the benefits and services they and their families use, by about \$132 billion annually. Paying taxes does not make one a full-fledged mem-

ber of American society or absolve people for having violated our laws. Paying taxes is a basic obligation for offsetting the costs of the services and benefits society provides (even if it is a small fraction of the actual costs), and is a legal obligation for everyone who earns money in the United States.

It is unlikely that these bills will make it to the floor of the Democratic-controlled House, much less be approved by the Republican-led Senate or be signed by the president. But they do signal the intent of the far left to push as hard as they possibly can to ensure that illegal aliens are included in subsequent relief legislation that might be considered by Congress as the COVID-19 emergency and its economic devastation linger on.

Effort to halt all immigration enforcement

While some lawmakers are fighting to gain federal relief assistance for illegal aliens, others are using the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity to end virtually all immigration enforcement. (Many of these lawmakers were calling for abolishing ICE even before the pandemic.)

In April, Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.) and Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) announced their bicameral introduction of the Federal Immigrant Release for Safety and Security Together (FIRST) Act. The FIRST Act calls for a total cessation of all immigration enforcement in the United States and would facilitate the release of thousands of detained illegal aliens throughout the country, regardless of their criminal history. They were joined by prominent members of the Senate (several of whom sought the Democratic presidential nomination), including Elizabeth Warren (Mass.), Kamala Harris (Calif.), Bernie Sanders (Vt.), Kirsten Gillibrand (N.Y.), and Mazie Hirono (Hawaii).

The bill would require ICE to cease all immigration enforcement except against the most violent and dangerous criminal aliens. Incredibly, the bill prevents using pending criminal charges as a reason to justify detention. It states that the Secretary of Homeland Security “may not justify the redetention of a covered individual solely based on the fact that the individual has a criminal charge pending against him or her; or was convicted of a crime more than 5 years previously.”

As Californians Reel from the Effects of COVID-19, State and Local Pols Rush Relief... to Illegal Aliens

Between mid-March and mid-April, some 2.7 million Californians filed first-time claims for unemployment benefits, as the COVID-19 crisis wreaked havoc on the state's economy. In the face of the greatest health and economic emergency in living memory, California politicians responded as they always do: They found money (that the state clearly does not have right now) to provide relief to illegal aliens.



Image Credit: istock

As state and local officials were scrambling to keep California's economy afloat, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a new Disaster Relief Assistance fund specifically dedicated to providing cash assistance to illegal aliens affected by the crisis. The state set aside \$75 million to disburse checks to some 150,000 illegal aliens. An additional \$50 million from private foundations and donors will augment the fund. Individual illegal aliens are eligible for payments of \$500, while households may be eligible for \$1,000.

The California illegal alien assistance program was set up in response to complaints from illegal aliens and the network of groups that advocate on their behalf. The bipartisan \$2.2 trillion federal CARES Act, enacted in late March, explicitly barred illegal aliens from claiming stimulus checks. That decision was

based on the sound logic that even that enormous sum is insufficient to offset the economic damage to the American economy and American workers as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, the country is under no obligation to compensate illegal aliens who lost jobs that they were statutorily barred from holding in the first place.

But the moral imperative to prioritize those who are most deserving of assistance did not seem to register with Gov. Newsom or many other state officials. "This is a state that always steps up to support those in need regardless of status," Newsom announced. "Every Californian, including our undocumented neighbors and friends, should know that California is here to support them during this crisis."

Illegal aliens living in the city of Los Angeles are eligible for an additional \$1,500 of public largesse. Mayor Eric Garcetti announced that the city would be issuing prepaid debit cards in the amounts of \$700, \$1,100, or \$1,500 (depending on the size of the household) to families in need. The mayor made it clear that illegal aliens were welcome to partake. "Applicants will not be asked anything about their immigration status. We are all Angelenos," he declared.

Other states take other stances on assistance to illegal aliens

Assistance to illegal aliens was not limited to California. In Chicago, Mayor Lori Lightfoot signed an executive order declaring illegal aliens eligible for all benefits provided by the city to people affected by the economic upheaval. Alderman George Cardenas went so far as to describe illegal aliens as "the heart and soul of the service economy."

Bucking this trend, New York, which in recent years has bent over backwards to accommodate and reward illegal aliens, demonstrated a refreshing ray of common sense. The state has been the epicenter of

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the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo has generally received high marks for his handling of the crisis.

Exercising common sense and prudence, Gov. Cuomo, faced with a projected state budget shortfall of between \$10 billion and \$15 billion, asserted that New York could not responsibly provide relief to ille-

gal aliens when so many other New Yorkers are suffering the health and economic effects of the crisis. “When you’re broke, it would be irresponsible to do these things,” Cuomo said, although he also asserted that the federal government ought to be doing more to assist illegal aliens.

Not so, New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio. In the Big Apple, illegal aliens would be eligible for emergency cash - up to \$1,000 for families with kids - from the Immigrant Emergency Relief program, funded by George Soros’ Open Society Foundations. ■

The Pandemic After the Pandemic May Include New Surges of Migration

We’re still in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, trying to figure out how to keep people healthy and the economy afloat. But we will not be out of the woods once the curve has flattened (a vague objective in itself), cautions the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The ongoing effects of the pandemic could lead to global social unrest, warns the IMF’s semi-annual Fiscal Monitor report, which was released in mid-April.



Image Credit: istock

The economic crises around the world that will linger on after the health crisis abates could spark social upheavals in countries that were already teetering on the edge. These outbreaks, which are likely to be violent, are “more likely in countries with histories of widespread corruption, lack of transparency in public policy, and poor service delivery,” states the re-

port. The IMF’s language describes precisely the sort of countries that have been producing large surges of migrants in recent years. The pandemic after the pandemic could likely include exponentially greater numbers of people seeking to migrate.

Having been unprepared for the COVID-19 crisis, the United States and other developed nations cannot afford to be caught flat-footed by the pandemic’s aftershocks. With our own economy reeling and government deficits reaching unprecedented levels, the United States will be in no position to accommodate new and larger surges of migrants.

While the United States cannot ignore the suffering of people in countries pushed to the brink by a global economic crisis, FAIR is urging the administration and Congress to both secure our borders, while preparing to assist people in their home countries. Completion of a secure border fence, which has been necessary for a long time will become critical if the IMF’s predictions are even partially accurate. Other measures, such as mandatory use of E-Verify to secure American jobs in the face of rising unemployment and closing loopholes in asylum laws will similarly be essential.

For more than half a century, the United States has had no definable national interest objective for its immigration policy. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, that is a luxury we will no longer be able to afford. ■

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