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Conservatives Are Slamming The New Immigration Study From A Conservative Think Tank

By: Walter Hickey – May 6, 2013

The Heritage Foundation released a report by Robert Rector and Jason Richwine claiming that the Gang of Eight plan would cost \$6.3 trillion over the next fifty years, and even conservatives are piling on the study.

In chief opposition to the Heritage plan is Americans for Tax Reform.

Grover Norquist's group has been in favor of immigration reform on the right, and called the Heritage study's cost estimates "vastly overblown."

Rep. Paul Ryan, the well-respected Chairman of the House Budget Committee, told CQ Roll Call that he didn't agree with the findings of the study.

"The Congressional Budget Office has found that fixing our broken immigration system could help our economy grow," he told Roll Call's David Drucker. "A proper accounting of immigration reform should take into account these dynamic effects."

Robert Costa at the National Review reports that Florida Senator Marco Rubio — the chief Republican patron of the immigration bill — also disputes the study.

"We don't have a bill," Rubio said, "so I don't think they've issued an analysis on this yet, but that's not true,"

Former Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, the co-chairman of the immigration task force at the Bipartisan Policy Center and one of the members of the group that did the "autopsy" on the 2012 election, had harsh words for the study:

Freshman Arizona Senator Jeff Flake criticized the study in a tweet because they Rector and Richwine only used static scoring:

Alex Nowrasteh at the Cato Institute, a libertarian-leaning think-tank, called the study's 2007 predecessor "fatally flawed" and argued that using a static fiscal scoring system — as the most recent study does — would be highly unrealistic.

Madeline Zavodny at the American Enterprise Institute, another free-market think tank, suggested that the Heritage study wasn't relevant to immigration reform.

A major criticism of the study is its constricted look at strictly costs while not taking into account the positive economic effect that a comprehensive immigration reform package will have.

