



Fact Check Team: How much is the migrant influx costing American taxpayers?

By Courtney Rau

April 12th 2023

As debate over how to handle immigration along the southern border continues, new data shows just how much the recent surge of migrants could cost American taxpayers.

A new study from the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) estimates that overall, “illegal immigration” costs American taxpayers at least \$151 billion a year for things like education, welfare and medical costs.

The report notes that on an individual basis, an American taxpayer is shelling out almost \$1,200 per year.

FAIR arrived at this number by "subtracting the tax revenue paid by illegal aliens — just under \$232 billion — from the gross negative economic impact of illegal immigration: \$182 billion.”

However, an expert at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think-tank, said FAIR is presenting a faulty analysis because the report counts the U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants, who are American citizens, as a cost factor. It also does not include the tax contributions of those American citizens.

The Cato Institute has its own analysis that looks at the economic impact of all immigrants, regardless of legal status. Their report shows that in 2018, for every \$1.43 a first-generation immigrant pays in taxes, they consume \$1 in government benefits, while native-born Americans pay \$0.72 in taxes for every \$1 they receive in government benefits.

The Fact Check Team reached out to the White House yesterday for their estimate but has not heard back.

Sanctuary cities are struggling to keep up with the influx of migrants.

For example, in New York City, Mayor Eric Adams says the city has seen more than 50,000 “asylum seekers” within the last year and the city estimates it could cost as much as \$2 billion in 2023. Because of the influx, last week, Adams ordered city agencies to cut a combined \$1.1 billion from their budgets every year for the next four years.

In Chicago, last month the City Council approved \$20 million for things like emergency food and shelter for migrants.

Last week, government officials in Denver, Colorado estimated the cost of housing migrants in the city could be as much as \$20 million for a six-month period.

The federal government is stepping in to help. The government’s 2023 budget includes an additional \$800 million for FEMA to help communities experiencing large numbers of migrants. Additionally, the Biden administration announced earlier this year that they were “increasing funding available to border cities and those cities receiving an influx of migrants.”