



Heritage Foundation Report Co-Author Says Latinos Have Lower IQ

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A conservative think tank released a controversial report this week saying that immigration reform would cost about \$6.3 trillion is considering enlisting a powerful public relations firm to fight fallout connected to the study, Politico reports.

After seeing its report come under fire from both liberals and conservatives – many of whom called the study biased and inaccurate – news then came out that one of its two authors previously said that blacks and Hispanics are intellectually inferior to whites.

The author, Jason Richwine, who is a senior policy analyst at The Heritage Foundation, said in his Harvard public policy doctoral dissertation that the IQ difference between white Americans and immigrants needs to factor in to decisions about which immigrants will be admitted to the United States to live.

“No one knows whether Hispanics will ever reach IQ parity with whites,” Richwine wrote, “but the prediction that new Hispanic immigrants will have low-IQ children and grandchildren is difficult to argue against.”

The Heritage Foundation has distanced itself from the controversial argument, saying it does not reflect its views. In a blog post, a spokesman for the think tank stressed Richwine’s secondary role in the report, depicting Robert Rector as the lead author.

A Politico story said that Michael Gonzalez, The Heritage Foundation’s vice president of communications, would not say whether or not the think tank was considering hiring a public relations firm.

“If Heritage does hire an outside consulting firm, it would be a significant move,” the publication said. “The fact that outside help is under consideration suggests that the group, which has publicly rejected criticisms of the report and one of its coauthors, is seriously concerned about potential damage to its reputation.”

The think tank is defending, however, the controversial report and its contention that reforming the immigration system – particularly allowing millions of undocumented immigrants to legalize their status -- would cost \$6.3 trillion. That pricetag is being disputed by leaders on both sides of the immigration debate, many of whom say that, among other things, it fails to take into account the economic benefits of immigration reform.

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican who is part of a bipartisan measure to reform U.S. immigration laws, has been particularly critical of the report.

But in the last few days, the Richwine controversy has overshadowed the findings of the report.

“Its findings do not reflect the positions of The Heritage Foundation or the conclusions of our study on the cost of amnesty to U.S. taxpayers, as race and ethnicity are not part of Heritage immigration policy recommendations,” Gonzalez wrote in a blog.

The Republican-led organization says the costs come from more than \$9 trillion in government benefits to newly legalized immigrants over their lifetimes — only partially counterbalanced by \$3 trillion they would pay in taxes.

During Congress' last immigration debate, in 2007, a Heritage report said the bill under consideration at the time would cost \$2.6 trillion. The conclusion was criticized, but carried weight with Republicans and the bill was defeated.

“Amnesty is unfair to those who come here lawfully and those who are waiting,” former Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.), Heritage’s president, said during a presentation Monday. “It will cost the American taxpayer trillions of dollars over the next several decades and it will make our immigration problems worse.”

Alex Nowrasteh of the Cato Institute said the new Heritage study has issues.

“They do not consider that increased legal immigration will increase the size of the U.S. economy and thus increase tax revenues – contrary to an overwhelming contrary consensus in the economics literature,” Nowrasteh told Politico.

In his dissertation, Richwine wrote: “The average IQ of immigrants in the United States is substantially lower than that of the white native population, and the difference is likely to persist over several generations. The consequences are a lack of socioeconomic assimilation among low-IQ immigrant groups, more underclass behavior, less social trust, and an increase in the proportion of unskilled workers in the American labor market.”

A Washington Post story that first reported on the dissertation said vestiges of Richwine's controversial view of today's immigrants are echoed in the Heritage Foundation report. It cited an excerpt: “The legal immigration system should be altered to greatly reduce the number of low-skill immigrants entering the country and increase the number of new entrants with high levels of education and skills that are in demand by U.S. firms.”