



Ann Coulter Is Wrong About Latinos

By Michelle Fields – July 8th, 2013

Conservative pundit Ann Coulter has been one of the loudest critics of immigration reform, claiming it will give the Democratic Party more voters since Latinos are a lazy, liberal and government-dependent people.

While there are many sound arguments to make against the Gang of Eight's immigration bill, the basis of Coulter's arguments focus on offensive stereotypes and her analysis of the potential political consequences of immigration reform is greatly exaggerated.

Ann Coulter's offensive and inaccurate comments about Latinos are causing more harm than good for the conservative movement, and for America.

Many on the right have recommended that the GOP improve its messaging with Latinos and work on reforming our broken immigration system. Coulter, on the other hand, believes that Latinos aren't worthwhile because they are "the bottom of the barrel" and that it's impossible to "turn Mexico's underclass into Republicans."

Not only are Coulter's comments insulting, but it is also clear that she doesn't know very much about the Latino community or immigration. First off, the idea that all undocumented immigrants are "Mexico's underclass" is false. Latinos account for 80 percent of undocumented immigrants in America, and, obviously, not all of them are from Mexico. Also, no, Latinos aren't a bunch of lazy people sitting around doing nothing. According to U.S. Census data, Hispanic entrepreneurs opened twice as many businesses as the national average in the 2000s.

In addition, the very act of leaving one's home country to seek opportunity in another isn't exactly a characteristic of a lazy person. If anything, it shows entrepreneurial spirit, risk-taking, and motivation — all of which are attributes that benefit the country.

Coulter also incorrectly argues that passing immigration reform will turn America into a "dumping ground for the world's welfare cases" because Latino immigrants are reliant on welfare. According to a Cato Institute study by Leighton Ku and Brian Bruen, poor immigrants use welfare programs less than native-born Americans, and when poor immigrants do use welfare programs it costs less.

Coulter and others will likely point out that the number is probably low because undocumented immigrants do not qualify for entitlement programs. But the fact that immigrants come to a

country knowing that they will not qualify for free government benefits proves that they aren't in it for the welfare programs. Immigrants come here to work, not to become dependent on the government. They take a huge risk by leaving behind their country, family, and friends in order to come to America. They come here because they are attracted to America's labor market, not our entitlement programs.

Coulter has been scaring Republicans into rejecting immigration reform for faulty political reasons. Coulter claims that immigration reform will give Democrats "30 million new voters" and "a permanent majority." She says that if the Republican Party fixes our immigration system, then "they deserve to die."

The notion that we should not fix the immigration problem in this country because it will give the Democratic Party more voters is both immoral and incorrect. Not every immigrant will choose the pathway to citizenship and become a voter. For example, less than half of the people eligible for citizenship after the 1986 immigration bill decided to become a citizen. The truth is that most eligible voters do not turn up to vote and it's safe to say that Latino immigrants would likely be no different from any other group.

For example, in 2012, only 48 percent of Latinos turned up to vote at the polls. Coulter's assumption that every single undocumented immigrant will one day be eligible to become a citizen, will want to go through the difficult process of becoming a citizen, will turn out to vote on election day, and will be a Democrat is wrong.

She also incorrectly believes Latinos are a lost cause because they're "hopeless Democrats." According to Resurgent Republic, 54 percent of Latinos identify ideologically as "conservative" and only 39 percent identify as "liberal." Unsurprisingly, Latinos share many of the same values as Republicans, such as: faith, hard work, and family values. They even came out in large numbers for George W. Bush in 2004, giving Bush 44 percent of the Latino vote.

The reason why the Republican Party has lost Latino voters, and why Mitt Romney was only able to get 27 percent of the Latino vote, has little to do with Latinos and more to do with the Republican Party.

There are legitimate reasons to be against the immigration reform currently being proposed in Congress. However, Coulter ignores them and instead resorts to harsh rhetoric to make bad arguments. Coulter's offensive and inaccurate comments about Latinos are causing more harm than good for the conservative movement, and for America.