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Study says guest worker program may help stop illegal immigration

06:00 AM | Kitty Felde | KPCC

This fall, Congress is expected to tackle comprehensive immigration reform. A Washington think tank says the best way to stop illegal immigration is with a guest worker program. KPCC's Washington Correspondent Kitty Felde reports.

The Cato Institute says tougher border enforcement would reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the U.S. workforce. But the libertarian think tank says it would also increase the value of the illegal immigrant workers that remain.

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It's supply-and-demand: fewer unskilled illegal immigrant workers available for some of the grimeiest work means their pay goes up. And Cato estimates that as their pay went up, everyone else's income would go down by about half a percent.

But Cato says if the U.S. adopted a guest worker program for low-skilled immigrants, it would hold down their pay and increase everyone else's by more than a percent. The Cato study says a guest worker program that offered temporary green cards to immigrant workers would eliminate smuggler fees and create higher immigrant productivity. The Cato Institute did not examine the economic impact of giving illegal immigrants permanent legal status.

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Full Cato Study on Immigration

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Estoban

1 hour, 58 minutes ago

Our unemployment rate for American workers is nearly 10%! We have a dozen guest worker programs right now! The government is bringing in over a million foreign workers a year! Stop guest worker programs, build the fence, deport all illegal aliens and jail and fine the greedy criminal employers that hire them!

oscar

26 minutes ago

Hey Estoban, are you willing to clean toilets in hotels?, cook in a 110 f hot line to serve others? Pick up vegetables?, clean someones home?, Take care of childrens that are not yours?. The answer is simple that 10% of american are with out a job not because of the housekeeping or the dishwasher.... They are unemployee because they don't want to do any physical work at all and about the pay; if a restaurant pays \$15 hr (that's what a average american want to do per hr) to a dishwasher you will be pay more money for every meal you and your family eat. I think the articule was very good because that's the only comun sense answer to the problem. Please open your eyes and stop listen to thoses stupid and racist liberal radio shows, they get pay to have stuck to the radio. Duh!

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