

Immigration Reform Could Boost U.S. Economy

Study shows immigration bill would create 14,000 jobs in each congressional district

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Protesters push for immigration reform at a rally on August 16, 2013 in Miami, Florida.

Opponents to immigration reform have called the Senate's bipartisan and comprehensive immigration reform bill a "job killer," but a new report by the conservative-leaning American Action Network, is evidence that the bill might just be the stimulus Congress has been looking for to put the stagnant economy into overdrive.

From California to South Carolina, the report shows that the Senate's immigration bill would create an average of 14,000 jobs per congressional district in the next decade.

Majority Whip Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., a key member of the House leadership whose agricultural district is more than 30 percent Latino, would see nearly 17,000 new jobs back home if the Senate bill were implemented. And even Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, who has made headlines for expressing disdain for immigrants who entered the country illegally, would see more than 13,000 new jobs in his district.

It is not the first to show that immigration reform could stimulate the economy. The Congressional Budget Office estimated the Senate bill would cut the deficit by more than \$680 billion, and a July study by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy showed that reform would boost state and local tax revenues by \$2 billion a year.

In June, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act of 2013 complete with its reformed visa programs and a path to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants who entered the country illegally. But Republican leaders within the House of Representatives have sworn off the bill as too progressive, expensive and ineffective. They even blasted the border surge plan, which would double the number of border patrol agents.

House Speaker John Boehner has stated he won't bring the Senate bill to floor, but will instead count on his committee leaders to work on legislation piece by piece. So far, the House has cleared border security bills from committee, but have not dealt with the question of what to do with immigrants living in the country illegally.

The American Action Network has spent \$1 million fighting for immigration reform since March and is optimistic their efforts and the report might push House Republicans to act more quickly when they return from recess. The AAN is part of a broader coalition of Republican think tanks and leaders pushing an economic argument for immigration reform and hoping to convince members on the fence that supporting comprehensive reform could help the government generate more revenue.

"These findings prove that conservative immigration reform would help local economies in every district in America. Congress should continue working on true methodical immigration reform to fix the broken border and help local economies grow," AAN leader Brian Walsh said in a statement.

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