

## **Conservative Responses to May 6, 2013, Heritage Foundation Report**

*Last updated May 7, 2013*

### **Tim Kane, former Director and Research Fellow at the Heritage Foundation:**

“Unless they expect readers to believe all this household income (a) generates no productive work (e.g., makes product, mows lawns, nurses the sick, and starts businesses that hire other Americans) and (b) is 100% remitted abroad, consuming nothing in the U.S. macro economy, then the report is misleading.”

### **Alex Nowrasteh, Researcher, Cato Institute**

“The new Heritage report is still depressingly static, leading to a massive underestimation of the economic benefits of immigration and diminishing estimated tax revenue. It explicitly refuses to consider the GDP growth and economic productivity gains from immigration reform—factors that increase native-born American [incomes](#). An overlooked flaw is that the study doesn’t even score the specific immigration reform proposal in the Senate. Its flawed methodology and lack of relevancy to the current immigration reform proposal relegate this study to irrelevancy.”

### **Joshua Culling, State Affairs Manager, Americans for Tax Reform**

“This study is every bit as flawed as its 2007 iteration. This static analysis takes into account none of the universally-accepted economic benefits of immigration, choosing only to focus on costs. But the costs estimates are unfairly inflated ... Lawmakers and the American public should rely on an accurate accounting of immigration reform’s costs and benefits. Unfortunately, this study inaccurately reflects only one side of the ledger.”

### **Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wisconsin), House Budget Committee Chairman**

“The Congressional Budget Office has found that fixing our broken immigration system could help our economy grow. A proper accounting of immigration reform should take into account these dynamic effects.”

### **Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Arizona)**

“Here we go again. New Heritage study claims huge cost for Immigration Reform. Ignores economic benefits. No dynamic scoring.”

### **Douglas Holtz-Eakin, President, American Action Forum; Former Head of the Congressional Budget Office**

[Quoting an earlier Heritage Foundation Report] “ ‘Regrettably, a number of myths about immigration work against a reasoned debate. The sum of these myths is that immigrants lower the standard of living of U.S. natives. This simply is not supported by the evidence.’ Of course it isn’t. After all, conservatives understand the flexibility and growth capacity of markets ... Reality should not disguise the core opportunity afforded by immigration reform: a stronger economy,

more rapid economic growth, greater economic opportunity, and a commitment to the premise that free people in pursuit of their dreams benefit all of society.”

**Former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour (R)**

“That Heritage is trying to kill this in the crib now, I think, is a political statement that they know that this is going to be a movement for reform that’s going to get stronger and stronger because it’s truly good policy.”

**James Pethokoukis, Money & Politics Columnist-Blogger for the American Enterprise Institute**

“The study, however, fails to capture indirect but important economic impacts of immigration such as increasing economic activity or positively affecting American employment. Both of those would lead to higher tax revenues and reduced transfer payments. Surely every effort should be given to factoring in such dynamic impacts of immigration reform. The Heritage study says, for instance, that ‘taxes and benefits must be viewed holistically.’ So, too, immigration overall. Big policy changes don’t exist in a vacuum, isolated from the rest of the economy ... Not making these added calculations raises red flags as to the study’s completeness.”

**Bipartisan Policy Center (includes Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Former Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour)**

“Recent reports have claimed that legalizing the current undocumented population, as proposed by the Senate Gang of Eight, will cost our country \$6.3 trillion. We strongly believe that this study’s modeling and assumptions are fundamentally flawed because they do not account for the many contributions that an appropriately reformed immigration system can afford our economy and our country.

“Immigrants contribute profoundly to our society, be they first generation entrepreneurs or essential low-skilled workers. Highly-educated immigrants create jobs for Americans, while a measured influx of lesser-skilled workers assures that essential jobs in agriculture and other areas will be performed. Secondary effects of an appropriately reformed and responsive immigration system will include growing our housing market, strengthening our financial system, and supporting our social safety programs. When public discourse focuses solely on potential costs of reform, we lose sight of key economic benefits of a smarter immigration policy. These newest members of our communities are future consumers, home-buyers, doctors and teachers. They start a disproportionate number of new businesses, employing hundreds of thousands of workers and contributing billions to the economy. Newly legalized immigrants would further expand the economy and our tax base, particularly after earning full access to the institutions that helped make America the world’s greatest mobilizer of human potential.

“If implemented smartly to grow our economy while protecting our borders, immigration reform will benefit all Americans.”