



News from the Fiscal Policy Institute

For immediate release

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Fiscal Policy Institute

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New report

<http://fiscalfpolicy.org/economic-and-tax-contributions-of-undocumented-immigrants-in-ny>

*Unauthorized Immigrants Add \$40 Billion to the
New York Economy and \$1.1 Billion to State and Local Taxes
What's at Stake in Mass Deportation*

Unauthorized, or undocumented, immigrants contribute \$11.7 billion to state and local taxes nationally, and \$1.1 billion in New York State alone, according to a 50-state study released today by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, and co-released in New York by the Fiscal Policy Institute.

In addition, according to a companion report by the Fiscal Policy Institute, unauthorized immigrants are responsible for \$40 billion, or three percent, of New York State's total economic output (GDP). Unauthorized immigrants are playing a particularly large role in certain industries: they account for 11 percent of GDP in leisure and hospitality, and nine percent in agriculture, construction, and the sector that includes nail salons, car washes, dry cleaners, and cluster of other services.

The report also includes regional data about the number of unauthorized immigrants and the occupations in which they work. These are available for New York City, Long Island, Hudson Valley, and Northern and Western New York.

“This report shows what's at stake with a policy of mass deportation—it's billions of dollars,” says David Dyssegaard Kallick, director of the Fiscal Policy Institute's Immigration Research Initiative. “In fact, these calculations show the minimum New York could lose, since forcing out that many people would inevitably entail huge disruptions to the economy—as well as to our social and political fabric—that would go far beyond the loss of the workers.”

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The report points out that deporting the 817,000 unauthorized immigrants in New York State would entail uprooting more people than live in the cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers combined.

The report found that unauthorized immigrants currently pay \$565 million in sales taxes (and related excise taxes), \$183 million in personal income tax, and \$355 million in property tax. These tax contributions would be larger still if unauthorized immigrants were granted legal status under comprehensive immigration reform. If the immigrants who are currently unauthorized were to gain legal status, New York State would reap an additional \$247 million in tax revenues.

“Good policy is informed policy,” said Meg Wiehe, ITEP director of programs. “Just as the horrendous impact of breaking up families under a mass deportation policy should not be ignored, nor should policymakers overlook the significant contributions undocumented immigrants make to our state and local revenues and the economy.

“Keep in mind most state and local taxes are collected from people regardless of immigration status,” Wiehe added. “Undocumented immigrants, like everyone else, pay sales and excise taxes when they purchase goods and services. They pay property taxes directly on their homes or indirectly as renters. And, many undocumented immigrants also pay state income taxes.”

To view the 50-state report from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, go to www.itep.org/immigration/.

The Fiscal Policy Institute report on New York State and its regions, together with the economic role of unauthorized immigrants as well as the tax contributions, is at: <http://fiscalspolicy.org/economic-and-tax-contributions-of-undocumented-immigrants-in-ny>.

The Fiscal Policy Institute (www.fiscalspolicy.org) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research and education organization committed to improving public policies and private practices to better the economic and social conditions of all New Yorkers. FPI’s Immigration Research Initiative looks at immigration issues in New York State, and around the country.

The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (www.itep.org) is a non-profit, non-partisan research organization that works on federal, state, and local tax policy issues. ITEP’s mission is to ensure that elected officials, the media, and the general public have access to accurate, timely, and straightforward information that allows them to understand the effects of current and proposed tax policies. ITEP’s work focuses particularly on issues of tax fairness and sustainability.