The State Immigration Project

Started in 2012, The State Immigration Project targeted five states (CO, NY, NC, TX, and VA) with the goal of providing much-needed fiscal analysis. The project now includes 13 state groups around the country (the five original plus FL, GA, MA, MI, MN, NJ, NM, and WI). Originally created in response to the rise in SB1070-like “show me your papers” legislation around the country, the project was established in recognition of both the profound impact of state-level immigration policy debates and the lack of reliable, nonpartisan analyses of the state-level economic role that immigrants play and of the fiscal impacts (both positive and negative) of proposed policies in those debates. The project is now a blend of defensive efforts designed to thwart anti-immigrant policies as well as a concerted effort to make the case that New Americans make states richer, more vibrant places to live and that pursuing inclusive state policies like driver’s licenses and tuition equity are essential to creating thriving economies and communities.

One unique aspect of this project is that project groups work in close collaboration with immigrants’ rights advocates and coalitions in their state. This collaboration allows project staff to respond to priorities and goals of the community and contribute their fiscal and economic expertise to those efforts. The result is an authentic policy agenda strengthened by the unique skills and knowledge that SPP groups bring in terms of budget processes, tax policy, and a general understanding of their respective state capitols.

As part of the project SPP groups have access to technical support and training from CBPP, the National Immigration Law Center (NILC), and the Partnership group in New York — the Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI) — whose immigration policy expertise allows it to serve a dual role as a national technical assistance provider and instate expert on immigration policy in New York. In addition, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy is funded through this project to update annually their much-cited report on the state and local taxes paid by undocumented immigrants in each state along with various analyses based on Federal immigration policy developments including how much those taxes would increase under comprehensive immigration reform or the effect of preserving or expanding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA).

While most of the project work is focused on the 13 target states, we extend the project’s impact into many more states by leveraging the Partnership as a whole. All of the 40-plus groups in the Partnership are encouraged to participate in our educational webinars on immigration policy work, as well as our conference workshops on the topic. In addition, some of the materials produced by the project’s national partners provide 50-state data that Partnership groups in many states can put to use. For example, the annual ITEP report on taxes paid by undocumented immigrants includes state specific estimates and FPI’s reports often include state-by-state data, as well. One recent FPI report included 50-state data on the cost of ending DACA. Partnership groups throughout the network picked up these data points and produced blogs, infographics, press releases, and other materials that highlighted the impact of ending the policy on their states. Additionally, analyses produced by project states serve as models for groups in other states that want to do similar work. For instance, in the last couple of years, Partnership groups in Kentucky and Maryland have produced analyses useful in state immigration policy debates in their states, drawing on model reports produced elsewhere and with the support of the project’s national partners.

The State Immigration Project is fast becoming one of the most effective and far-reaching regranting projects run by CBPP and its growth and evolution show no signs of slowing.
The State Immigration Project

Started in 2012 in response to the rise of “show me your papers” legislation.

Five original states: CO, NY, NC, TX, VA

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Technical assistance available from CBPP, NILC, ITEP, and FPI

Annual and interim reports plus monthly bullet points to CBPP

Annual convening and IMPACT conference session

Opportunities for renewals based on performance and project goals
Report Templates

• Public Charge
• Dream Act
• DACA
• 2020 Census
• ITEP’s Taxes Paid by Undocumented Immigrants
Templates and Data in Action

**Public Charge**

**This change has not yet been enacted. But who’s affected?**

**Direct Effect:** If this rule were to be enacted as currently written, it would most directly affect people applying for a Green Card through specific immigration pathways, such as a family-based visa. About 37,000 people obtained Green Cards in Massachusetts in 2017, but not all would be in the category of immigrants affected.

**Chilling Effect:** This rule could cause as many as 500,000 people in Massachusetts to withdraw from needed health, housing, or food benefits. They fear not being able to prove their legal status. This fear of being deported if they apply for a benefit or get help with housing, food, or medical care.

**What if the Proposed Rule Were Applied to You?**

[Graph showing the percentage of U.S. citizens and non-citizens who would be affected by the proposed public charge rule.]

**Figure 1. Proposed Rule Could Subject Many More to Public Charge Determination.**

If applied to U.S.-Born People in North Carolina Would Struggle to Be Deemed Acceptable

- Percent of Population that Could be a Public Charge
  - Current Rule: 8%
  - Proposed Rule: 33%

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities analysis.

**State Priorities Partnership**

Advancing Equity, Powering Prosperity

In Virginia, the chilling effect would include 355,000 people and 160,000 children. These people are in families with at least one non-citizen, and receiving one of the named benefits in order to put food on the table or otherwise meet basic needs. In both cases, the large majority of the impacted kids are U.S. citizens. Estimates looking at income levels, rather than whether someone is receiving a benefit, are similar: 430,000 Virginians could be discouraged from accessing services to meet basic needs, and 160,000 of these potentially impacted Virginians are children, according to data from Mariner. Latinx and Asian American communities would be most harmed, with one in three Latinx Virginians and one in eight Asian American Virginians likely experiencing the chilling effect.
50-State Data Interactive Spreadsheets

- Economic characteristics of immigrants
- Businessowner Data: Coming Soon!
Analytical & Methodological Help

• Driver’s Licenses
  • How did FPI calculate the sales and gas tax? Can you share the formula?

• Data Sources
  • Do you have any suggestions for top resources you rely on for a comprehensive look at this issue [importance of immigrants in the state] and/or if you have seen or given a presentation that you felt was especially effective?