

U.S. POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
IMMIGRATION AND CLAIMS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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AUGUST 2, 2001
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U.S. POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 2001

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION AND CLAIMS,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in Room 2237, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. George W. Gekas [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. GEKAS. The hour of 10 o'clock having arrived, this special hearing of the Immigration and Naturalization Subcommittee will come to order. We note the presence of a hearing quorum with the attendance of the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Smith, and the Chair. In the past, we are fond of saying that we try valiantly to have the gavel fall precisely on time, and hope against hope that a quorum should appear in time to hear the testimony.

Today's testimony is mostly about numbers. I have never been a good student of numbers or an expert at it, but some of these numbers should be very important in the daily reckoning of every American citizen as to the future of each family and to the future of the Nation. We are talking about the number of immigrants that are now extant in the land where the latest count seems to be about 28 million.

That, ladies and gentlemen, constitutes 10 percent of the entire population of the Nation, more or less. And it denotes that since 1990, there has been a vaulting of expectations on the part of the numbers of immigrants and it has brought about the attendant problems that we in this Committee and in the Congress generally and in the populace of the Nation readily perceive.

What we are going to do today is to listen to what I anticipate is to be very valid and very poignant testimony on the numbers, the problems that they cause, what we can do about the numbers and what we can expect, pro and con, from the rising numbers about which we speak. And the policy yet to be fully formulated for immigration in the next decade and more, that is left for us yet to mold, but we are going to do it and the testimony that we are going to hear today, I venture to say, would be important in every deliberation we undertake between now and the actual passage of legislation dealing with a long-term immigration policy.

So, with that, I yield back the balance of my own time and I would yield to the gentleman from Texas for an opening statement.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a very brief opening statement. And first I want to thank you for having a hearing on such an important subject. I would also like to thank the wit-

nesses for their testimony today which I have had a chance to read in the last 24 hours and, on the way, to making a couple of points that they made that I think are so important.

I do want to apologize to you, Mr. Chairman, because I regret that I am going to have to leave, I am afraid, before we get to the questioning period. I have a mandatory meeting of the bankruptcy conferees at 10:30 that has been called by the Chairman of the full Committee and we don't want to keep him waiting.

Mr. GEKAS. Now that you mention that, I say to the gentleman, I too am a Member of that conference. I have already indicated that I will not be able to attend the 10:30 preliminary meeting, but I ask you now to convey my apologies.

Mr. SMITH. I will try to represent you well, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GEKAS. And you will have my proxy, whether it is legal or not, to act for me.

Mr. SMITH. I thank you for that. But that is why I won't be able to stay perhaps beyond 10:30. I do want to say to the witnesses today that you are testifying, I think, on one the most important subjects that we will hear about during the course of the year.

And just to mention some points that caught my eye that I hope you will explore further in your testimony that I think are so important is basically the incredible impact of immigration on America today, or, rather, our immigration policy in America today. As far as the numbers go, we know that in this decade we will see more immigrants coming to America legally, I think, than in any other decade in American history. But the difference between this decade and decades, say, in the early 1900's is that there is no foreseeable diminution of immigrant levels; whereas in the 1920's, for example, the immigrant levels there were followed by pretty much of a hiatus of 30 or 40 years.

The second point that I thought was so important is that one third of our immigrants today do not have a high school education, and what is the implication of that for an America that prides itself on skilled and educated jobs, and what is the impact of that on unskilled workers in America?

Another point I think that was so important was that, as I recall, over half of our future population growth in America is going to be directly attributable to immigration and what are the consequences and impact of that, both on American workers and on the environment.

And, finally, I thought one of our panelists made an interesting point that immigration, as some would argue, is not a panacea for the problems that Social Security faces in the coming years as well.

But, Mr. Chairman, there are just a lot of very interesting points that I think our witnesses make. And while I may not be here for the question period, I do look forward to hearing from them as you do.

Thank you and yield back.

Mr. GEKAS. Yes. We thank the gentleman. I wanted to add for the world to hear, that we consider ourselves lucky to have the gentleman from Texas as part of the Committee because he is the predecessor to the Chair in this important Committee, and brings with him to this Committee the reservoir of accomplishment over

the last 6 years which he has been able to hone. And on top of that, he comes from Texas.

The President of the United States today in the Republican Conference, made a statement that shows the pervasive effect of Texas on our civilization. He said, I am so glad to have Dick Cheney as my Vice Presidential first candidate, co-partner in the campaign, and now Vice President. He said, it is a credit to our respective States, Texas and Texas.

So now we have Texas again on this Committee and we are happy that that is the case. We will proceed with the introduction of the witnesses for today:

Dr. John Long, the Chief of the Population Division of the U.S. Census Bureau. He directs the Census Bureau's activities in population estimates and projection of demographic analysis for the U.S., as well as its international demographic program. Dr. Long received his Ph.D from the University of North Carolina. His current professional interests include the relationship between population and the environment and studies of population migration and immigration.

Joining him is Dr. Jeffrey Passel, Principal Research Associate in the Population Studies Center of the Urban Institute. Prior to joining the Urban Institute in 1989, Dr. Passel directed the Census Bureau's program of population estimates and projections. He has consulted with the Census Monitoring Board in the use of demographic analysis in evaluating Census 2000. Dr. Passel is a member of the Population Association of America and the American Statistical Association.

With these witnesses is the third, Dr. Steven Camarota, Director of Research at the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington, D.C. He has a Ph.D. From the University of Virginia in public policy analysis and a master's degree in political science from the University of Pennsylvania. He has been widely published on the political and economic effects of immigration in the United States.

Dr. William Elder joins them. He is Chairman of the Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization. The acronym is SUSPS. That is it. That is the toughest one I have had to pronounce since I have been Chairman. A faction of the Sierra club. Mr. Elder has studied population sprawl, growth management in the environment for 10 years. He has been a member of the Sierra Club since 1994. He is also the founder and managing director of Alternatives for Growth Washington, a start-up nonprofit organization which seeks to leave a better and sustainable quality of life to succeeding generations of Washingtonians. Mr. Elder has also worked in the health care industry for 30 years.

The bells have summoned us to the floor for a vote. And I am pondering, even as I speak here, as to whether we should even start with the testimony until we return. I think it is the wiser step to recess now for the purposes of this vote and ask you to be patient, along with us, to eventually reclaim our time here at the witness table. So with that, I declare a recess for 15 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. GEKAS. The time of the recess having expired, the Committee will come to order. The introductions that we have made also indicate the order in which we will hear the witnesses, starting with

Dr. Long. We say at the outset that, with unanimous consent, without objection, the written statements of each of the witnesses will be automatically accepted for the record and we will ask each witness to try to summarize the written testimony within a period of 5 minutes. We will give some leeway, perhaps 30, 40 seconds, who knows? But that is the parameter with which we want to proceed.

So, we will start with Dr. Long.

STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN F. LONG, CHIEF OF THE POPULATION DIVISION, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Mr. LONG. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I want to begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the population of the United States as determined by Census 2000 and about the role of international migration in the growth of the Nation's population. In Census 2000 we counted 281 million people. The estimated growth if the population between 1980—excuse me, between 1990 and 2000 was 33 million. And that was the largest numeric increase between any two censuses in our country. It represents a 13.2 percent growth in the population during the 1990's and was larger than the 9.8 percent growth in the 1980's.

The growth in the population during the decade is the result of natural increase—that, is the difference between births and deaths—and the net change due to international migration. This change due to international migration actually includes a large number of types of migration. Some of those are legal permanent immigration, temporary migration, out migration from the United States, unauthorized migration, migration of civilian citizens, and migration to and from Puerto Rico.

In addition, some the estimated change between censuses may reflect improvements in census coverage. Between 1990 and 2000, natural increase accounted for more than half the growth in the size of our population. Although we don't yet have migration related data from Census 2000 to quantify exactly the contribution of international migration to population growth, we estimate that it accounted for about 12 million people during the decade. That is more than a third of total change since 1990. This estimate is based upon the apparent improvement in census coverage and data from other sources suggesting an increase in the size of the foreign-born population.

While waiting for this full set of data from Census 2000, we have been able to analyze the March 2000 Current Population Survey and controlled it to population totals that came out of Census 2000. And from those results we can estimate a foreign-born population of the United States of about 30 million, almost 11 percent of the U.S. population. The foreign-born population as measured by the 1990 census back in 1990 was around 20 million, which was about 8 percent of population.

Just to give a little historical perspective, the lowest percentage foreign born that we have ever had in the country was about 5 percent in 1970, and the highest we ever measured in the census was about 15 percent in 1890.

Estimates of change to the foreign-born population between two censuses are affected by several factors in addition to international

migration, including deaths of some foreign-born individuals living in the United States, and improvements in census coverage.

The estimates we have given you today are subject to revision as we continue our research. We are examining the contribution of international migration to population growth during the last decade by looking at several different data sets. The results of other data sets will become available in time, including the Census 2000 Supplementary Survey which actually will be available next week. We will continue to evaluate those for further information about the foreign-born population.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to additional discussions with you when those data become available and when the Census 2000 data themselves are finally completely released. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Long follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN F. LONG

Mr. Chairman, Ms. Jackson Lee, and Members of the Committee:

I want to begin by thanking you for the opportunity to speak with you today about the population of the United States as determined by Census 2000, and the role of international migration in the growth in the Nation's population.

EARLY RESULTS FROM CENSUS 2000

In Census 2000, we counted 281.4 million people in the United States. This growth of 32.7 million people during the decade represented a 13.2 percent increase from the 248.7 million people counted during the 1990 Census. The estimated growth in the population between the 1990 and 2000 censuses was the largest numeric increase between any two censuses in our history, and the 13.2 percent growth was much larger than the 9.8 percent growth (an increase of 22.0 million people) between the 1980 and 1990 Censuses.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

The Census Bureau's estimate of growth in the population during the decade is the result of natural increase (the difference between births and deaths that occur during the time period), and the net change due to international migration. In addition, some of the estimated growth in the population may reflect improvement in census coverage. The change due to international migration includes all types of migration, such as, legal immigration, temporary migration, emigration, unauthorized migration, migration of civilian citizens, and migration from Puerto Rico.

Between the 1990 Census and Census 2000, natural increase accounted for more than half of the growth to the size of the population. Although we do not yet have migration-related data from Census 2000 to quantify the contribution of international migration to population growth exactly, we estimate international migration accounted for most of the remaining growth in the population. Our current assumption of net international migration is about 12 million people during the decade. This assumption is based on the apparent improvement in census coverage of the total population, and data from other sources suggesting an increase in size of the foreign born population.

ALTERNATIVE DATA SOURCES

Ultimately, we will re-evaluate our assumptions about international migration during the 1990s on the basis of migration-related data from the Census 2000 long form. Prior to the tabulation and release of these data from the long form, we are using other data sets as proxies, for evaluating the size of the foreign-born population. We will use three alternative data sets: the March 2000 Current Population Survey, controlled to reflect the Census 2000 results on age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin; the Census 2000 Supplemental Survey; and preliminary results for nativity data from Census 2000 (citizenship, place of birth, and year of entry).

We intend to use these data sets before the Census 2000 long-form data are ready to release, to evaluate our current assumptions about the principal components of net international migration to the United States, and to evaluate any changes in the quality of data about the foreign-born population between the 1990 Census and Census 2000. Differences between the results from these data sets and the 1990

Census will help explain some of the differences between the results from Census 2000 and our expected population levels.

While waiting for the Census 2000 data on the foreign-born population which will become available later this year, we have been able to analyze one of the other data sets, the March 2000 Current Population Survey controlled to population totals from Census 2000. From these results of the Current Population Survey, we estimate a foreign-born population in 2000 of about 30 million (or 10.9% of the total population). The foreign-born population, as measured by the 1990 Census, was nearly 20 million (or 7.9% of the total population). For historical perspective, the lowest percent foreign born was 4.7 percent in 1970, and the highest was 14.8 percent in 1890.

The 10 million increase in the foreign-born population should not be misinterpreted as the international migration that occurred from 1990 to 2000, which we stated previously was about 12 million. Estimates of change to the foreign-born population between the two censuses were affected by several factors in addition to international migration, including deaths of some foreign-born individuals living in the United States between 1990 and 2000, and improvement in census coverage.

These estimates are subject to revision as we continue our research examining the contribution of international migration to population growth during the last decade. As results from other surveys become available (for example, data from the Census 2000 Supplemental Survey will be released later this month), we will evaluate them for additional information about the foreign-born population in the United States. During the coming year, we will also be re-estimating the population growth of the United States during the last decade and calculating the component of that growth that is due to international migration.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to additional discussions with you, and other Members of the subcommittee, on this topic once additional data from Census 2000 are available.

Mr. GEKAS. Yes. We thank you Dr. Long. We will turn to your companion at the witness table, Dr. Passel.

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY S. PASSEL, PRINCIPAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, POPULATION STUDIES CENTER, THE URBAN INSTITUTE

Mr. PASSEL. Mr. Chairman, I too would like to thank you and the Committee and particularly Congresswoman Jackson-Lee for inviting me to testify today. As you introduced me, my name is Jeff Passel. I am a demographer at the Urban Institute and its Immigration Studies Program. I have been doing research on immigration and its impacts for more than two decades, beginning when I worked at the Census Bureau.

I would like in my remarks today to emphasize three points: first, the scale and pace of today's immigration in historical context; the current pace of immigrant integration and the need to assess the proper role of immigrant policy—that is, what policies and programs we have for immigrants after they are here; and the need to deal properly with legal status in research and policy.

As Dr. Long said, the evidence is that there are more than 30 million immigrants residing in the United States today, comprising about 11 percent the population. Clearly, these numbers are large, relative to the total population. However, the percentage foreign born is lower than historical levels. From roughly 1870 through 1920, 13 to 15 percent of the U.S. population was foreign born. We have experienced very rapid growth in the last 30 years, which puts today in a different context.

The successful integration of new immigrants into American society in the past has led to enormous advances both for the immigrants and for the entire country. There is every indication, I believe, that today's immigrants and their children, just as previous

waves of immigrants, are adapting to life in the United States. Two key trends have emerged in the 1990's that I think will require continued attention in the policy arena. First is the dispersal of immigrants to nontraditional settlement areas around the country; and second, the large and increasing flows, particularly of unauthorized immigrants.

While the largest numbers of immigrants live in California, New York, Texas, and Florida, the immigrant populations that grew the fastest during the last decade can be found in such nontraditional immigration states as Idaho, Arkansas, North Carolina, Nevada and Kentucky. These areas and many others around the country have not had much experience with immigrants and may not have the resources necessary to aid in the integration and settlement process. For example, schools in these areas may not be able to find enough bilingual teachers to cope with the immigrant populations. Additional resources such as EIEP funds can help in this process.

The second point is that we are continuing to experience large inflows of new immigrants. There is some uncertainty about the numbers, but 11 to 14 million new immigrants came to the country in the 1990's. While these flows are largely legal, the undocumented population has reached unprecedented levels. My own estimates, based on the limited data currently available, suggest that there may be 8 to 9 million unauthorized aliens living in the country, accounting for almost 30 percent of the immigrant population, as the chart over there shows.

Since many undocumented immigrants eventually become legal residents and many have children who are U.S. citizens, we must guard against implementing policies that impede the eventual integration of persons who live in these households into American society.

Finally, while there is an ever-increasing amount of data on immigrants available, it is easy to reach erroneous policy conclusions if legal status of the immigrants is not properly taken into account. For example, our own research at the Urban Institute has found that incomes of legal immigrants and refugees increase the longer they are in the country, but we don't find the same pattern for the undocumented population.

If we ignore legal status, we can get a misleading picture of—just to name two specific areas—economic progress of immigrants and benefits use by immigrants. The antidote to this is continued improvements in data, in collection methods, and in measurement techniques. The Census Bureau is beginning some efforts in this area, but I think it requires investment of additional time and money on the part of a number of different organizations and agencies.

Throughout our history, immigrants have made remarkable contributions to American society. While today's immigrants are following similar paths, we need to ensure that government policies and programs aid the immigrants and, in doing so, aid society as a whole, rather than unnecessarily impeding their progress.

In closing, I would like to strongly endorse the sentiment expressed by President Bush last month on his visit to Ellis Island. He said, "Immigration is not a problem to be solved; it is a sign

of a confident and successful Nation.” And I would add to that, we need to continue to deal with immigration in this spirit.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Passel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFFREY S. PASSEL

U.S. IMMIGRATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Testimony Prepared for the Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims
Hearing on “The U.S. Population and Immigration”
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
August 2, 2001

by

Jeffrey S. Passel and Michael Fix¹
Immigration Studies Program
Urban Institute
Washington, D.C. 20037

The 20th century began with the country in the midst of the greatest wave of immigration in its history. The century ended in the midst of another period of high immigration, greater in numerical terms but smaller in its relative impact than the immigration of 100 years earlier. The issues raised at the turn of the 21st century parallel those of the earlier wave: Can the country accommodate the new immigrants? Who benefits from the arrival of the immigrants? Who is harmed? Can the immigrants be absorbed and integrated or are they simply too “different” from the rest of the country? Will the country change as a result of the immigrants, and how?

In the past, such questions proved difficult to answer on a contemporaneous basis and the situation is not substantially different today. A growing body of research can be brought to bear on these issues however. In this document, we draw on our own research and that of our colleagues as well as scholars at the Urban Institute and elsewhere to assess some of the impacts of immigration on the United States. In the first section, we examine some of the basic demographic trends regarding the scale of immigration, its pace and characteristics. The results from Census 2000 have called into question some of the basic information regarding immigration that until six to nine months ago was widely agreed upon. The surprise figures from the Census suggest strongly that immigration levels, particularly undocumented and temporary immigration, are substantially higher than most had suspected.

The next section addresses some of the basic socioeconomic characteristics of immigrants living in the country. Questions of integration and adaptation of the new immigrants involve not only the immigrants themselves, but their native-born offspring. The U.S.-born children of this newest wave of immigrants, which is traditionally deemed to have begun in 1965, are reaching adulthood so that we can examine how 20 to 35 year-old children of immigrants have fared to date. While the available evidence is mixed, there are some encouraging signs. Considerations of immigrant adaptation lead naturally to the consideration of the country’s minimal *immigrant* policies, the costs and benefits of immigration, and the potential need to explicitly design integration programs and policies on a larger scale than is currently done. The final section draws heavily on work done by Fix and Wendy Zimmermann to address immigrant integration. We close with the common plea of researchers for more, and

¹ The views and opinions expressed are the authors and do not necessarily represent nor should they be attributed to the Urban Institute, its staff, officers or trustees, or any organizations providing financial support.

better, data. While there is a certain *pro forma* character to this discussion, mismatches between policy and need that we and others have observed, as well the sudden “appearance” in national data of 3 million Hispanics and 1 million Asians, probably resulting from the mismeasurement of immigration flows highlight the strong need for improvement in this area.

Immigration Trends

During the 1990s, more immigrants came to live in the United States than in any decade in the nation’s history (Figure 1). In-flows have steadily increased since the 1930s and have more than tripled in the last generation. The growth in immigration has been driven in part by legislative increases in legal admission ceilings in 1965, 1976, and 1990. Further, the acceptance of political refugees from various parts of the world has contributed to the diversity of sources and rising flows.

Current Levels are High, but Uncertain

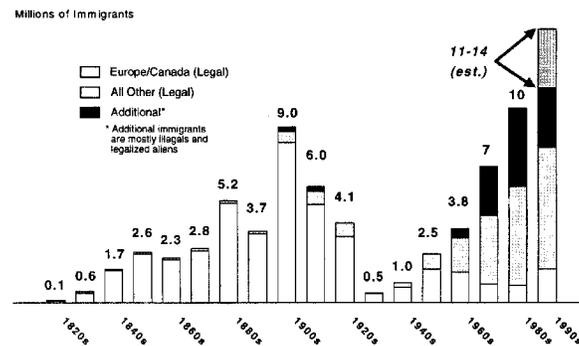


Figure 1. Immigration by Decade, 1821-1830 to 1991-2000

Source: INS data and Urban Institute estimates.

Not only did legal immigration flows increase steadily, large-scale undocumented immigration began in the 1970s and gradually increased since, with only a slight diminution surrounding the enactment of IRCA in 1986. The uncertainty surrounding the magnitude of immigration flows during the 1990s is directly attributable to the difficulties of measuring undocumented immigration (discussed below).

A direct consequence of large and increasing entries of immigrants is that the share of the U.S. population that is foreign-born has also grown. In 1970, the foreign-born population numbered slightly less than 10 million and accounted for less than 5 percent of the population. (See Figure 2.) Although this percentage was anomalously low, it represents a significant point

in the current collective memory of the country. There were relatively few immigrants and they were disproportionately elderly (and their numbers decreasing from mortality).

Immigrant Numbers at Peak -- Percentage is Not

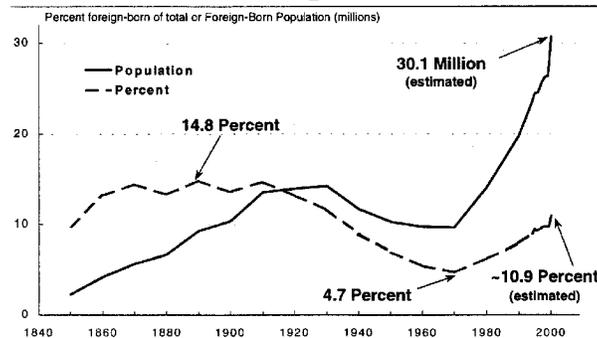


Figure 2. Foreign-Born Population: 1850-2000

Source: Decennial Census data, Urban Institute estimates, and CPS tabulations.

More typical of the U.S. historical experience, however, was the situation at the *beginning* of the 20th century. At that time, about one-seventh of the U.S. population was foreign-born, as was the case from 1870 to 1930. More recently, since the low of 4.7 percent foreign-born in 1970, the percentage foreign-born has more than doubled to almost 11 percent as the number of immigrants living in the country more than tripled to just over 30 million.² This very rapid change occurred in the space of one generation as the percentage foreign-born approaches the levels experienced at the height of the 19th century wave of immigration.

Dispersal. The very large numbers of immigrants arriving and the large foreign-born population means that the impact of the new immigrants is being felt in areas outside those traditionally settled by immigrants since even a small percentage of the increasing foreign-born population can lead to noticeable local populations. However, a new settlement pattern has emerged that has resulted in sizable new immigrant communities outside the traditional receiving states.

Throughout much of the 1970s, all of the 1980s, and into the early 1990s, almost 75 percent of newly-arriving immigrants settled in just 6 states (California, New York, Texas,

² This figure is an estimate based on Passel's reweighting the March 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS) to agree with population totals by age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and state from Census 2000. Definitive figures must await the release of sample data in late 2002. Some preliminary results may be available soon, however.

Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois). About one-third settled in California alone. In the late 1990s, however, this pattern changed. California still received the largest numbers of new immigrants, but only about 22 percent of the total settled there, instead of the more usual 33 percent. The immigrants who would have gone to California did not settle in the other large immigrant-receiving states as they continued to get about 40 percent of new arrivals. Instead, they went to a swath of states across the middle of the country stretching from Oregon to Arizona to Iowa and Arkansas to Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia. (See Figure 3.) The foreign-born population in these states grew twice as fast during the 1990s as it did in the more traditional immigrant receiving states.

New Immigration Growth Centers

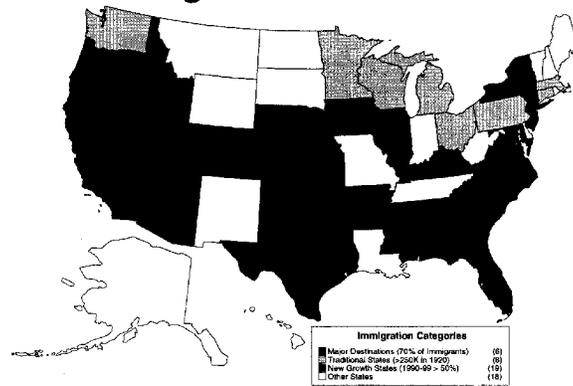


Figure 3. Immigration Settlement Patterns in the 1990s

Source: Passel and Zimmermann, 2001.

This dispersal appears to have been led by immigrants, especially Mexicans, initially moving out of California and other traditional settlement areas. Later, as the new communities were established, they attracted new immigrants arriving directly from outside the country. The immigrants, many of whom are undocumented, appear to have been drawn by readily-available, low-wage employment, and affordable living conditions. The results of this redistribution appear, at this point, in Census 2000 as very rapid growth of the Hispanic population (and to some extent the Asian population). More definitive analyses must await the full release of sample data from Census 2000.

Legal Status of the Immigrant Population. The new laws relating to immigrants passed in 1996, especially welfare reform, brought into focus some of the basic deficiencies of the nation's immigration data systems. This law limits access to a range of benefits for many categories of non-citizens, some of whom had formerly been eligible and receiving benefits. For

example, legal permanent residents who have not worked 40 quarters in the United States and refugees who have been in the U.S. for more than 5 years are no longer eligible; naturalized citizens remain eligible. In addition, whereas eligibility rules governing aliens (legal and undocumented), had been the exclusive province of the federal government, the welfare reform law devolved responsibility for setting many of these eligibility rules, such as those covering undocumented aliens, to the states. Since the financial responsibility for providing services to the groups no longer eligible for federally-provided coverage was also devolved to states and localities, a number of new parties became interested in the numbers of naturalized citizens and aliens of various types, and in rates of naturalization; moreover, such data are needed for states and even smaller governmental units. Many of the population numbers needed are available only as rough estimates or simply do not exist.

There are five main legal statuses pertaining to immigrant populations that are of interest to most observers. In roughly decreasing order of size, they are:

- Legal permanent residents;
- Naturalized citizens;
- Undocumented aliens;
- Refugees, asylees, and parolees; and
- Legal nonimmigrant residents.

In addition, for some purposes, many users want data for subgroups of these major groups — family-sponsored immigrants, employment immigrants, foreign students (a category of non-immigrants) to name just a few. Data are needed on the numbers in each category, the inflows and outflows each year (or at least the annual net change), and characteristics of the particular individuals. Interestingly enough, the only one of the five groups for which there are “official” estimates of size and annual net change is the one most would characterize as the hardest to measure — undocumented aliens. Using a combination of demographic estimation techniques and survey data,³ we at the Urban Institute have developed some estimates of the populations in the key legal statuses, shown in Figure 4.

The largest group in the foreign-born population is legal aliens, or aliens admitted for permanent residence (LPRs). There are about 9.3 million LPRs as of 2000, representing about 30 percent of the roughly 30 million foreign-born residents of the country. The LPRs, as defined here, include a number of different immigrant groups, but only those persons who are not U.S. citizens. The LPRs include regular family-based and employment-based immigrants; they also include aliens who acquired legal status under IRCA, the so-called SAWs and LAWs. LPRs, as defined here, do not include humanitarian admissions (since 1980), nor do they include a number of persons authorized to be in the country, but not on a permanent basis, such as asylum applicants, persons with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and the “family fairness” immigrants. Largely as a consequence of high naturalization rates, the LPR alien population is has actually decreased in recent years.

The naturalized citizen population is a rapidly growing segment of the immigrant population. We estimate that there are approximately 9.2 million naturalized citizens who moved from the LPR alien population to become citizens and another 0.7 million citizens who entered as post-1980 refugees. The naturalized citizens also account for approximately

³ A description of methods similar to those used to derive the data in Figure 4 can be found in Passel and Clark, 1998.

30 percent of the foreign-born population. This population should continue to grow rapidly through 2002 or 2003 until the INS reduces the backlog of applications for naturalization.

Humanitarian immigrants who entered the United States since 1980 account for about 2.3 million or 7 percent of the foreign-born population. This group includes refugees, asylees, Amerasians, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and certain parolees. Approximately one-third of the humanitarian entrants since 1980 have become naturalized citizens.

Legal Status of Immigrants

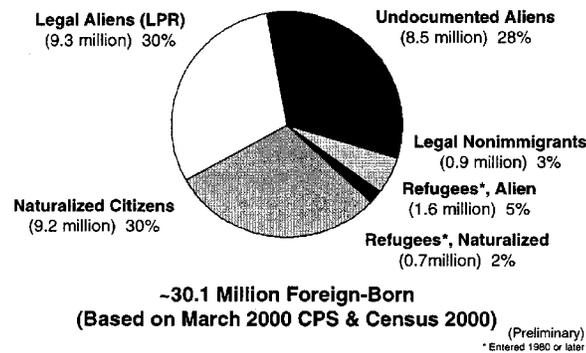


Figure 4. Legal Status of the Foreign-Born Population, 2000

Source: Urban Institute.

“Nonimmigrants” are aliens admitted to the United States for specific, temporary periods, and for specific purposes. There are solid figures on annual admissions for nonimmigrants, but virtually no population figures because nobody keeps track of how many nonimmigrants depart or change to other immigration statuses. The largest group of nonimmigrants is probably foreign students and visiting faculty (F and J visas). Temporary workers (H-1s, H-2s, and Ls) constitute another large group. Smaller nonimmigrant groups include diplomats, treaty traders, au pairs, and the like. We estimate that about 1 million nonimmigrants are living in the United States at any given time, but recognize that there could easily be more, up to about 1.5 million.

Undocumented Aliens. In Figure 4, undocumented aliens are shown as representing about 8½ million immigrants or 28 percent of the foreign-born population. This total is substantially larger than previous estimates from the Urban Institute and represents new work based on the early results from Census 2000. As such, it has a substantial range (at least 8–9 million) and should be treated as preliminary. It is also quite a surprising number, at least to

most analysts who had been working with empirically-based estimates of this clandestine population.

Prior to October 2000, there appeared to be a fairly broad consensus regarding both the net flow of undocumented aliens into the United States and the total number living in the country. At the heart of this consensus was the work done by Robert Warren of the INS. He had estimated that there were 5 million undocumented aliens living in the United States as of October 1996 and that the average annual increase during the preceding four years was about 275,000 per year. Extrapolating from these numbers placed the undocumented population as of April 2000 (the census date) at roughly 6 million. Passel's work using the March Current Population Surveys (CPS) of 1995 and 1996 suggested that the rate of increase might be slightly higher and that the total number could be larger by several hundred thousand (Passel 2000). Nonetheless, in "round" numbers, the estimates were virtually identical. In addition, Warren had developed some new techniques that also relied on CPS data that yielded virtually identical results.

The first indications that the consensus view might be wrong came from the March 2000 CPS which became available in late fall of 2000. The total foreign-born population in the March 2000 CPS was 28.4 million, an increase of almost 2 million over the corresponding CPS figure for March 1999. This figure should not necessarily be treated as measuring the annual change in the foreign-born population, however. Annual change as measured by the CPS does not provide a very precise measure of change in the foreign-born population (i.e., net immigration) because the CPS measures can fluctuate substantially from sampling variability. Nonetheless, many researchers, including Passel and Warren, use CPS data to measure the size of the undocumented population, with measures of change coming from a series of measurements rather than year-to-year differences.

According to initial estimates, the March 2000 CPS implied about 6.8 million undocumented aliens included in the CPS, or roughly 7 million undocumented aliens in the country, rather than the widely-used 6 million figure. This new estimate raised a number of hard-to-answer questions about the current data and previous estimates. For example, had the flow of undocumented immigrants increased substantially over 1999–2000 or were the previous estimates too low? We don't yet have answers to the questions, but there are some indications from the data that both phenomena occurred. Specifically, publicity and outreach efforts associated with Census 2000 appear to have led to substantial increases in cooperation with the Census and the CPS on the part of undocumented aliens who had been in the country for a number of years and, thus, to the larger counts. In addition, the data from the 2000 CPS also suggest that the flow of undocumented immigrants over the last 4–5 years of the 1990s was significantly higher than the extrapolated trends from earlier in the decade.

Converting these observations into estimates requires assumptions that are not especially verifiable with the data now available. The principal "checkpoints" or key assumptions are: an undocumented population of 3.3 million as of the 1990 Census (or in the range of 3.0–3.5 million; net flows of 275,000 per year or more for the early part of the 1990s; an undocumented population of about 5 million "in the middle of the decade" (i.e., as of October 1996 according to Warren or about a year earlier according to Passel's estimates); and, an undocumented population near 7 million as of 2000. Reconciling these figures implies a net increase in the undocumented population of 450,000–500,000 per year for the latter part of the 1990s. Even assuming that the estimated population figures for the early 1990s are too low still implies at least 400,000 net undocumented immigration for the latter part of the 1990s.

Even these fragile new results are called into question by the results of Census 2000. The basic census count for 2000 of 281.4 million was 5–7 million higher than the demographers at the Census Bureau expected. Of particular interest for students of immigration are the figures for the immigrant-dominated populations — Hispanics and Asians. The 2000 count of Hispanics, 35.3 million, is about 3 million higher than expected based on previous estimates. Likewise the count for the Asian and Pacific Islander population of about 12 million is 10 percent or roughly 1 million higher than expected. Both Census Bureau demographers and outside demographers have surmised from these figures that the reason for the low estimates, relative to the census count, is that the Census Bureau underestimated the amount of immigration that occurred during the 1990s. The cause of the underestimation was principally, but not entirely, underestimation of the amount of undocumented immigration that occurred during the 1990s.

In addressing the questions surrounding the higher than expected population counts from Census 2000, Passel has done a preliminary analysis using data from the March 2000 CPS but reweighted to agree with the counts from Census 2000. The initial results, noted above, point to a foreign-born population in excess of 30 million which, in turn, implies that the undocumented population as of April 2000 was about 8½ million. These results are based on numerous assumptions that cannot be verified until we have more data from Census 2000. They do help to reconcile the results from Census 2000, the demographic analyses of population change during the 1990s, and the results from coverage evaluation studies of Census 2000. In addition, if Census 2000 suffers from an undercount, even the small one suggested by the evaluation studies, it would push the implied numbers of undocumented aliens somewhat higher — to about 9 million.

Until we understand better the magnitude of the undocumented population and when they entered the country, it is even more difficult to determine the size of the flow of undocumented immigrants into the country. However, if the numbers described above are “in the ballpark,” i.e., if there are 8–9 million undocumented aliens in the country, the annual increase in the undocumented population must be in excess of 500,000 per year and could possibly be higher for recent years. It should be stressed repeatedly that these figures are somewhat speculative. However, they do draw on what data we have available, namely CPS data from 2000 and the complete-count data from census 2000.

In discussing these figures, it is worth noting who is included in the estimates of the undocumented population. The definitions and numbers for the undocumented population arise from a set of standard estimation techniques. Basically, recent estimates rely heavily on residual techniques whereby an estimate of legal foreign-born residents is subtracted from a survey-based estimate of the total foreign-born population (from the decennial census or the Current Population Survey). The estimates of the legally-resident foreign-born population generally use the categories discussed above — i.e., LPRs, humanitarian admissions, and nonimmigrants. The estimated undocumented population thus includes all foreign-born persons who do not fall into these legal admission categories. It mainly includes clandestine entrants who sneak into the country, usually across the Mexican border and visa abusers, or persons who enter legally with a document permitting them to be in the United States for a specific period of time, but who then fail to leave.

There are, however, some other categories of aliens who may be entitled to remain in the United States for limited periods of time and are not actually deportable, but who are not included in the legal population estimate. These groups include so-called “family fairness”

immigrants, asylum applicants, persons with temporary protected status (TPS), and the new K and V visa. These groups could account for at least 1 million and possibly 2 million persons or even more who are estimated as part of the “illegal” population who are not actually deportable, and who are on the road to becoming legal immigrants.

By far the largest group of undocumented immigrants is persons from Mexico who probably represent half or more of the total number. Other parts of Latin America — Central America (mainly El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras), the Caribbean (e.g., the Dominican Republic), and South America (e.g., Colombia) — probably account for another one-quarter of the undocumented population. Visa overstayers may account for one-third or more of the undocumented population.

Immigrant Families. Determining and classifying the legal status of immigrant families is even more complicated than for individuals. For example, Fix and Zimmermann (1999) found that households headed by noncitizens are more likely to contain children than those headed by citizens (55 percent versus 35 percent). Moreover, since about four-fifths of the children of immigrants are U.S. natives, most of the noncitizen families contain persons with quite different legal statuses. In particular, 85 percent of immigrant families with children are so-called “mixed status” families — that is, families where at least one parent is a noncitizen and at least one child is a citizen.

“Mixed” Families are Common

Percent of Children in Families with 1+ non-citizen parent & 1+ citizen child

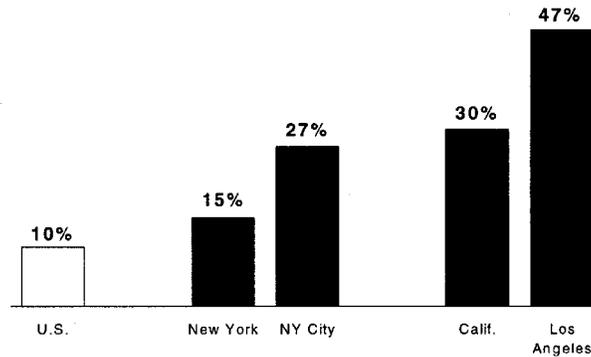


Figure 5. Percent “Mixed” of Families with Children, 1998

Source: Fix and Zimmermann, 1999.

The importance of these mixed status families can be easily overlooked, but the principal findings are quite striking. Nationally, about 1 in 10 children (among *all* children) lives in a mixed family (Figure 5) and three-quarters of all children in families headed by noncitizens are

U.S.-born citizens. The proportions vary considerably across the country. In New York City, 27 percent of all children are in mixed status families; in Los Angeles, almost half (47 percent are). In New York state, 70 percent of families with children that are headed by *undocumented* immigrants contain children who are U.S. citizens.

Not only are these mixed status families demographically important, they are even more prevalent among the families affected by social welfare policy. Fix and Zimmermann found that the percentages of low-income children in mixed status families are even larger than among all children; 15 percent of low-income children are in these families. Moreover, 21 percent of uninsured children are in mixed status families nationwide and fully one-half in California. They argue that these mixed status families pose special issues for policymakers. The imposition of restrictions on benefits eligibility for noncitizens tends to affect citizen children. On the other hand, policies intended to extend benefits to noncitizen children are limited in their coverage because most children in immigrant families are already citizens.

Characteristics of the Immigrant Population

Immigration obviously has impacts beyond just the demographic ones described. Immigrants add to the U.S. labor force numerically and contribute their human capital. Concerns have arisen over labor market impacts of immigrants, both for their concentration in specific, low-skilled occupations and for their overall potential impact on native employment. While not addressing these concerns directly, we present information from our CPS analyses on characteristics of immigrants of different legal/admission statuses. The differences among the immigrant groups are substantial and, in many cases, greater than native-immigrants differences.

Educational Attainment. Overall, immigrants are much more likely than natives to have low levels of education, as 32 percent of the foreign-born population aged 25–64 has not graduated from high school versus only 11 percent of natives in the same age group. The data in Figure 6 do show that the recent immigrants have generally higher levels of education than earlier immigrants. In addition, differences from natives are much less for legal immigrants and even refugees than for all immigrants, as 27 percent of these groups have less education than a high school diploma.⁴ This compositional effect occurs because the undocumented population disproportionately has a very large proportion of persons with very low levels of education (58 percent with less than a high school diploma).

At the upper end of the education distribution, i.e., those with at least a Bachelor's degree, immigrants overall are just as likely as natives to have such a degree (27 percent for natives and immigrants), notwithstanding the overrepresentation of immigrants at lower levels of education. The undocumented group, however, is less than half as likely as natives to have a college degree (11 percent). Legal immigrants are somewhat more likely than natives to be well-educated (30 percent with college degrees) as well as more poorly educated, as previously noted. Those immigrants who have naturalized have even higher percentages with college degrees. These results show clearly that use of CPS data covering all immigrants to characterize the legal immigrants exaggerates the percentage of legal immigrants at lower levels of education because of the presence of sizable numbers of undocumented immigrants in the CPS data.

⁴ The figures cited are averages of the recent and longer-term immigrants shown in Figure 5.

More Immigrants with High and Low Education Levels

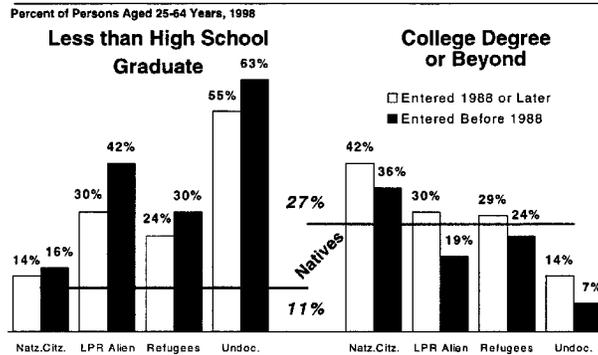


Figure 6. Educational Attainment by Nativity and Legal Status, March 1998

Source: Urban Institute.

Income. Income is a major determinant of life chances and life style in the United States. While immigrants are generally thought to have lower incomes than natives, the reality is somewhat more complex. Almost all immigrant groups show income increases with increasing duration of residence in the United States. Thus, to some degree, the lower incomes of immigrants overall reflect the fact that many immigrants have not been in the United States long enough for their incomes to approach those of natives. In addition, there are sizable differences between immigrants groups with legal immigrants, especially LPRs and naturalized citizens, having higher incomes than undocumented aliens and refugees. The income differences that do exist between native and immigrant families tend to be exacerbated because immigrants have somewhat larger families. Thus, the family's income must provide for more people in immigrant families than in native families.

The education differentials noted above translate rather directly into income differences across native and immigrant populations. Thus, the mean income for foreign-born households (\$45,400 in 1997)⁵ is 10 percent lower than the mean for native households (\$50,200). Differences among immigrant groups are more substantial than this native-immigrant difference, however. LPR entrants have household incomes (\$49,100) only 2 percent lower than native households, whereas refugee incomes (\$37,100) are 26 percent lower.⁶ Undocumented immigrants have the lowest incomes of any group (\$31,500) — more than one-third below those of natives.

⁵ The data on income come from the March 1998 CPS but refer to income received in 1997.

⁶ The figures cited are averages of the recent and longer-term immigrants shown in Figure 6.

The growth in income between newly-arrived immigrants (i.e., those in the country of 10 years or less) and those in the country longer (i.e., more than 10 years) is impressive. Among LPRs, the longer-term residents have incomes that are roughly the same as those of natives and 14 percent higher than their newly-arrived counterparts (\$50,400 versus \$44,000, in Figure 7). Refugees show a larger differential, 21 percent growth, but even the longer-term residents have incomes (\$41,000) that are 18 percent lower than natives. The differences between LPRs and refugees reflect not only the education differentials between the groups, but undoubtedly also are a function of the more traumatic situation facing refugees in their home countries and the likely greater presence of support networks among LPRs in the United States.

Integration is Dynamic

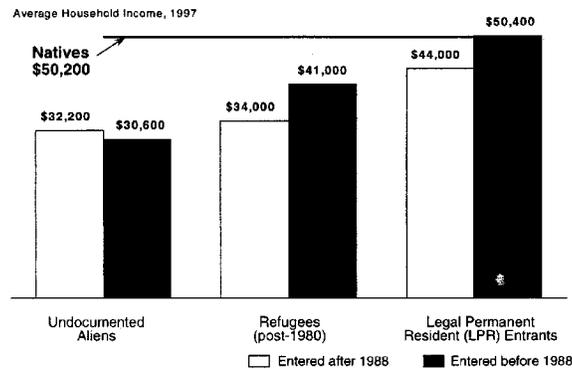


Figure 7. Household Income by Nativity and Legal Status of Head, 1997

Source: Urban Institute, March 1998 CPS.

Because immigrants can change status (for instance, LPR aliens naturalizing or undocumented aliens becoming LPR aliens), some income differences observed between groups is attributable to selectivity in the transition. For example, long-term naturalized citizens have higher incomes than long-term LPR aliens in part because the more successful chose to naturalize. As a result, the average income of long-term LPR aliens is not substantially higher than the short-term LPR aliens'. In a similar vein, there is little difference in incomes between short and long-term undocumented aliens. Part of the reason for the lower incomes of this group (beyond their low levels of education) is the necessity of working without valid documents. Any such wage penalty is not obviated by longer residence in the United States. Further, to the extent that undocumented aliens stay in the country for long periods, many eventually acquire legal status and thus pass into the LPR groups. As a result, those longer-term residents left in the undocumented category are likely to be among the least successful economically.

Change Across Generations. A full assessment of integration of the children of today's immigrants will require the passage of decades. However, The U.S.-born children of the earliest post-1965 immigrants are beginning to enter adulthood. Jennifer Van Hook and Passel have analyzed cross-generational trends using CPS data from 1995 through 1998 to examine generational differences among persons in their twenties (i.e., born after 1965). We compare the following groups:

- 1st generation — immigrants entering the U.S. after age 10;
- 1.5 generation — immigrants entering the U.S. before age 10;
- 2nd generation — persons born in the United States with one or two immigrant parents;
- 3rd- and-higher generations — natives with native parents.

By the 2nd generation, immigrants *overall* have reached (or exceeded in some instances) the levels attained by 3rd generation non-Hispanic native whites in terms of educational attainment (i.e., percent with high school diploma and percent with bachelor's degree or more), labor force participation, wages, and household income. There are substantial differences across racial and ethnic groups — Asian and Pacific Islanders generally are doing better than whites, Hispanics doing worse, and 2nd generation blacks show mixed outcomes. For wages, virtually all of the differences across generations and across racial/ethnic groups can be explained by educational differences; when the groups are standardized by educational attainment the wage differences are not statistically significant.

While generally positive integrative trends are found in economic areas, a more mixed picture emerges in the social statistics. First, we do find that intermarriage across racial and ethnic lines increases with generational duration in the United States. On the other hand, our results show convergence across generations to native patterns of family disintegration. Among these young adult cohorts, the first generation is considerably less likely than natives to be divorced. By the 2nd generation, the proportion divorced or separated is double that of the 1st generation and at the level of 3rd generation non-Hispanic whites. A similar pattern occurs for the proportion of parents who are unmarried.⁷

Fiscal Costs and Benefits of Immigration. Measuring the fiscal impact of immigration has proved to be very difficult for a number reasons, many of which are methodological in nature. First, there is no general agreement and no clear rationale for deciding which costs and impacts to include, not on how to measure them. Some of the considerations include: Should the accounting be done on a cross-sectional or longitudinal basis? How are public goods accounted for in the analysis? How are costs and revenues attributed to generations? (For example, if the cost of educating native-born children of immigrants is attributed to the immigrant parents, what happens to the taxes paid by those children when they mature. And, what about their children?) More broadly, how are cross-generational transfers treated? Should education be considered a "cost" or an "investment"? What assumptions are to be made about the overall fiscal picture?

In the past decade, a number of studies have been attempted to address the question of fiscal impacts. Several conclusions have emerged upon which there appears to be fairly widespread agreement. First, immigrants (and immigrant households) pay a considerable amount in taxes to all levels of government. However, because immigrant incomes are generally

⁷ Again, there is substantial variation across racial/ethnic groups. Moreover, the rates of family dissolution and single parenthood for the 1st and 2nd generations are lower than among 3rd+ generation blacks.

lower than native incomes when considered on a cross-sectional basis, the taxes from immigrants on a per capita or per household basis are lower than for natives. Similarly, the net balance of taxes and social spending directed toward families is more positive for native families than for immigrant families. This result derives principally from three factors: the previously-mentioned income differences; the biggest cost associated with immigrant families in general is the cost of educating children; and immigrant families have more children than native families.

The National Academy of Sciences (1997) attempted the most extensive study of this issue to date. In their study, the Academy attempted to model costs and taxes on a longitudinal basis and take into account the future generations derived from immigrants. Their main conclusion was that, on average, an additional immigrant generated a positive net contribution to the country. This varied considerably according to a number of factors. In general, the younger the immigrant, the greater the net contribution because younger immigrants have longer working times in the U.S. when they pay taxes.⁸ The more highly educated the immigrant the greater the net contribution. Again, this result is related to income. More highly educated immigrants tend to have higher incomes and pay higher taxes.

The balance of taxes versus costs tends to favor the federal government. More taxes are directed to the federal government than to state and local governments. On the other hand, the highest "costs" associated with immigrants tend to be for educating children and most of these costs are incurred by state and local governments. This particular result points out some of the major problems with these analyses. Most of the costs of educating immigrant children are spent on natives (the U.S.-born children). Yet, the research shows clearly the payoffs to education. Moreover, since this is the most critical factor for the integration of immigrants and their offspring, it is the most critical for the long-term health of the U.S. economy.

Implications

There is no doubt that there are a very large number of immigrants living in the United States and that their numbers will continue to grow. It is generally accepted that previous groups of immigrants have been integrated into the country. Moreover, the results presented suggest that the current group of immigrants is integrating, but that there may be some issues that need to be addressed. Elsewhere, we have argued that there is a basic mismatch "between the nation's essentially liberal, if highly-regulated *immigration* policies and its historically *laissez faire immigrant* policies. That is, even though the nation admits more immigrants who are on a track for citizenship than any other country, U.S. immigration policies have been essentially ad hoc and small scale." (Fix, Zimmermann, and Passel 2001.) Consequently, given the magnitude of the immigrant population, the time may be ripe to explicitly consider immigrant integration issues and programs.

The issues involved are complex, but there is no doubt that successful integration of immigrants and their children will be a crucial factor in the country's future. We have raised a number of principles to be considered in an integration agenda. First, how do we best promote the social and economic mobility of immigrants and their families? These include some difficult cases such as refugees and limited English speakers. How should legal immigrants and citizen

⁸ This generalization applies to adult immigrants. The net contribution of immigrant children is somewhat lower because the costs of their education are paid in the U.S. From this perspective, the "ideal" time for immigrants to come to the U.S. is just after completing their education, preferably college.

children be treated? How do we deal with undocumented populations? What is the proper role for sponsors? How do we promote intergovernmental fiscal equity regarding immigrant taxes and spending? What is the best role for the private sector?

Data Needs. The successful design of integration strategies and monitoring of new programs and policies will require more and better data. There have been great strides made in producing data for immigrants. Without the collection of nativity data in the CPS, we would know considerably less than we do and would probably still be basing assessments on data from the 1990 Census. Both the Census Bureau and INS are to be commended for instituting the CPS data collection in 1994.

However, more improvements are needed. Sample sizes are still small, especially for some populations. Information on legal status is limited, but critical for distinguishing differential impacts and consequences. Along these lines, improvements in data collection will be required to gather accurate information. There should be up-to-date, accurate estimates for the immigrant population is a variety of legal statuses, not just undocumented immigrants. To achieve this end, more data on immigration flows into (and out of) the United States needs to be collected in ways that conform to demographic and commonsensical notions of immigration. Finally, there needs to be better definition of the proper roles for government agencies (notably the Census Bureau and INS) in the collection, production, and analysis of immigration data.

Mr. GEKAS. We thank you and we turn to the next witness, Mr.—or Dr. Camarota, my fellow Pennsylvanian.

STATEMENT OF DR. STEVEN A. CAMAROTA, DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES

Mr. CAMAROTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank yourself and the rest of the Committee for offering me the opportunity to testify at this hearing on immigrations impact on population and population growth in the United States. My name is Steven Camarota and I am Director of Research at the Center for Immigration Studies, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization here in Washington.

Well, as I am sure you know, when the results of the 2000 census were released in January of this year, many people at the Census Bureau and elsewhere were somewhat surprised to learn that the U.S. population grew by 32.7 million. As we have already heard, that is the largest single-decade increase in U.S. history. In fact, since just 1980, the United States has added the equivalent of the entire population of France, 55 million people to our population.

The United States is almost the only advanced industrial country with rapid population growth. What accounts for this extraordinary increase? Analysis of the latest data indicates that it is immigration policy. It has become what might be termed the determinant factor in U.S. population growth. Now, I say immigration policy rather than just immigration, because in the discussions that follow, it is important to keep in mind that the level of immigration, and thus its impact on population growth over the last decade and into the future, reflect policies and choices made by the Federal Government in terms of concerning who may come in and also the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration. So it is a policy.

Looking at the 1990's as a useful starting point for thinking about immigration's impact on U.S. population growth, when the full results of the census are in, it seems very likely that they will

show a total immigrant population of 30 or 31 million. The figures include both legal and illegal immigrants. The census asks immigrants what year they came to live in the United States, and it seems likely that something like 13 million of the 30 or 31 million living in the United States will indicate that they arrived in the 1990's.

These numbers are truly extraordinary because they mean that at least 1.3 million immigrants are now settling in the United States each year. That is legal and illegal. The current numbers mean that roughly 40 percent of the nearly 33 million increase in the size of the U.S. population during the 1990's is directly attributable to the arrival of new immigrants. We know this simply by dividing the 13 million, the number of new immigrants, by total population growth. It is really very simple.

In addition to their arrival in the United States, immigrants also cause population growth by having children, just like any other people. During the 1990's, it is likely that immigrant women gave birth to an estimated 6.9 million children. So if we add together the number of births and the number of new arrivals, then the total impact on population growth is around 20 to 21 million of the total 33 million, or roughly two thirds of population growth in the United States is new immigrants and births to immigrant women.

We also know that in the future the Census Bureau tells that immigration will add something like 76 million people to the U.S. population between now and 2050. Now, these individuals are people who have not yet arrived. It is their arrival, and then the children, that they will have, that will grow the U.S. population by roughly 80 million people over the next 50 years.

The Census Bureau projection tells us that the impact, of course, is enormous; and if we carry this out into the 21st century, immigration is likely to add something like 200 million people to the U.S. population over the next 100 years.

Now, there are a lot of effects. We could debate the costs and benefits, but in general it should be the case that most people would agree that births to immigrants and the arrival of new immigrants is roughly two thirds of U.S. population growth. Now, if we grow our population and continue to do so at this rate, it probably has significant consequences for some quality-of-life issues such as sprawl and congestion. You can't add 80 million people to the population without having to develop a whole lot more land that is currently not developed.

It also has enormous impact on the size of school-aged population. Roughly 90 percent of the increase in the number of children in public schools in the United States over the last 20 years is a direct result of post-1970 immigration.

Population growth may also have some implications for the size and scope of government, in that the more people come in contact with each other. As the population grows, it may require government to step in and regulate behavior. It is no accident that cities have many more regulations than rural areas, precisely for this reason.

One final point I would like to touch on is can immigration solve the Social Security funding program? The answer appears to be no. The Census Bureau's population projections state that immigration

is a highly inefficient means for increasing the proportion of population who are workers in the long run. According to their estimates, 60 percent of the population will be of working age in 2050 if immigration continues at this level, 58 percent will be of working age if there's no immigration. I can explain. We can talk about why that is, why it doesn't have a big impact, but my time is out.

I guess my final point would be that we at least have to understand that we are making choices that will impact our children and their children for the decades and centuries to come, and is a choice that cannot be undone.

Mr. GEKAS. We thank you, Dr. Camarota.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Camarota follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVEN A. CAMAROTA

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee: Thank you for offering me the opportunity to testify at this hearing on immigration's impact on population growth in the United States. My name is Steven Camarota and I am Director of Research at the Center for Immigration Studies, a non-profit, non-partisan research organization in Washington that examines and critiques the impact of immigration on the United States. Among its many activities, the Center is a subcontractor to the U.S. Bureau of the Census on an evaluation of the foreign-born data in the Bureau' new American Community Survey.

When the results of the 2000 Census were released in January of this year, many people at the Census Bureau and elsewhere were surprised to learn that the U.S. population grew by 32.7 million people, the largest single-decade population increase in U.S. history. In fact, since 1980, the United States has added 55 million people to its population—the equivalent of the entire population of France. The United States is virtually the only advanced industrialized countries in its rate of population increase. What accounts for this extraordinary increase in population size? The facts are not really in dispute.

Analysis of the latest data indicates that immigration policy has become the determinant factor in U.S. population growth over the last decade. More importantly, without a change in current policy, immigration will continue to drive U.S. population growth throughout the 21st century. I say "immigration policy" rather than just "immigration" because in the discussion that follows it is important to keep in mind that the level of immigration and thus its impact on population growth over the last decade and in the future, reflects policies and choices made by the federal government concerning who may be allowed into the country legally and the level of resources devoted to controlling illegal immigration.

IMMIGRATION'S IMPACT ON POPULATION GROWTH IN THE 1990S

While there are different ways of thinking about immigration's impact on U.S. population growth, the demographic facts are clear. Looking at immigration's impact in the 1990s is a useful starting point because it provides a great deal of insight into the effect of immigration on population growth not only in the immediate past but also in the immediate future. When the full results of the 2000 Census are in, they will almost certainly show a total foreign-born population of between 30 and 31 million. This figure includes both legal and illegal immigrants.¹ The Census will also likely show that of the 30-plus million immigrants living in the United States in 2000, between 13 and 14 million arrived in the just 1990s. These numbers are extraordinary because they mean that at least 1.3 million immigrants are settling in the United States each year. To put this into historical perspective, during the last great wave of immigration 100 years ago, which itself was a break with the past, about 850,000 people entered the country each year between 1900 and 1910. There can be no doubt that we are in the midst of another great wave of immigration.

¹We know this because the Census Bureau has already reweighted the March 2000 Current Population Survey to reflect the results of the 2000 Census and found a total foreign-born population of 30.1 million. To this figure one needs to add the 600,000 immigrants living in what the Census Bureau refers to as group quarters, such as prisons and nursing homes. Most of these individuals are not included the CPS because the survey is designed primarily to capture persons in the work force. In 1990 there were 489,000 immigrants living in group quarters, and that number has increased by at least 100,000 over the last 10 years.

The current numbers mean that about 40 percent of the nearly 33 million increase in the size of the U.S. population during the 1990s is directly attributable to the arrival of new immigrants. We know this simply by dividing 13 million (the number of new immigrants) by the total increase in the size of the U.S. population (32.7 million). If the figure is 14 million, the immigration impact is 43 percent. This is just simple division. In addition to their arrival in the United States, immigrants also cause population growth because, like all people, immigrants have children. During the 1990s, immigrant women gave birth to an estimated 6.9 million children.² If we add together the number of births to immigrants and the number of new arrivals, then immigration during the 1990s is equal to 20 or 21 million or a little less than two-thirds of the nearly 33 million increase in the size of the U.S. population over the last 10 years. In a very real sense, immigration has become the determinant factor in U.S. population growth.

THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION ON POPULATION GROWTH IN THE FUTURE

We not only have a good idea of immigration's impact on population growth in the 1990s, we can also estimate its likely impact in the future. The most recent Census Bureau projections provide insight into the likely effect of immigration on population growth throughout this century. According to the Census Bureau's middle-range projections, if current trends continue, the U.S. population will grow to 404 million by 2050. If there were no immigration, these same projections indicate that the U.S. population would be 328 million (76 million fewer) in 2050. This means that immigration will account for about 63 percent of U.S. population growth over the next 50 years. Put another way, immigrants who have not yet arrived, but who will come to this country between now and 2050, will add the equivalent of the combined current populations of California, Texas, and New York State, to the United States over the next 50 years. Of course, if high immigration is allowed to continue, then its impact on population growth will also continue, and the middle-range Census Bureau projections show the United States will reach a total population 571 million by 2100.³ Again, these are the Census Bureau's middle-range projections—that is, they are the most likely. While the Census Bureau does not have a crystal ball, these projections do tell us a couple of things. First, the impact of immigration is enormous, adding perhaps 200 million people to the American population by 2100. Second, even without immigration there will still be significant population growth because we have created what is called "population momentum" by allowing in so many people over the last three decades. Thus we will have a good deal of it even without future immigration.

It is important to realize that the above projections are now widely acknowledged as having been too low because they are based on the results of the 1990 Census. If one projects forward from the 2000 Census, then the size of the U.S. population in 2050 and 2100 will necessarily be much larger because the projection would be based on a much larger starting point. Moreover, the latest Census Bureau projections are also too low because they assumed a level of immigration that we now know is too low. The Census Bureau had previously assumed that legal and illegal immigration would average 1.1 or 1.2 million people annually for much of this century.⁴ We now know that this is almost certainly incorrect. Current immigration is already 1.3 million people annually, and without a change in policy it will almost certainly increase in the coming decades. It now seems clear that the Census Bureau has also over estimated the number of immigrants who leave the country each year. Analysis of the year-of-entry question from the Current Population Survey, taken each month by the Census Bureau, shows that relatively few people are leaving the country. There is little doubt that if current trends continue, immigration

²These figures are for birth to all foreign-born women, including those who arrived prior to 1990. In the past I have estimated that there were 6.4 million births to immigrant women in the 1990s. This estimate was of children born in the United States to immigrant women during the 1990s and who were still living in the United States at the time of the 2000 Census. I have adjusted upward my previous estimate of 6.4 million based on the results of the reweighted Current Population Survey.

³See *Methodology and Assumptions for the Population Projections of the United States: 1999 to 2100 Population Division*. U.S. Bureau of the Census. Working Paper No. 38. Frederick W. Hollmann, Tammany J. Mulder, and Jeffrey E. Kallan. Table E (page 28) shows the various migration assumptions used in the Census Bureau's population projections. Table F (page 29) reports the results of these assumptions.

⁴*Methodology and Assumptions for the Population Projections of the United States: 1999 to 2100 Population Division*. U.S. Bureau of the Census. Working Paper No. 38. Frederick W. Hollmann, Tammany J. Mulder, and Jeffrey E. Kallan. Table E page 29.

will add to the country by 2050 many more people than the 76 million indicated by the last Census Bureau population projections.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF POPULATION GROWTH?

While there should be no real debate about the overall impact of immigration on population growth, there is, and should be, a debate over whether this kind of increase in population is desirable for the country. Below I examine some of the consequences that would seem to be unavoidable if the population continues to grow dramatically. There are clearly benefits from population growth: many advocates of high immigration, for example point, to the increase in equity for owners of real estate and greater opportunities and choices it should create for businesses and consumers. Nonetheless, there are clearly real costs as well:

Sprawl and Congestion. If we accept the admittedly low projections discussed above, which indicate immigration will add 76 million people to the population over the next 50 years, it means that we will have to build something like 30 million more housing units than would otherwise have been necessary, assuming the current average household size. This must have some implications for worsening the problems of sprawl, congestion, and loss of open spaces, even if one makes optimistic assumptions about successful urban planning and “smart growth.” A nation simply cannot add nearly 80 million people to the population and not have to develop a great deal of undeveloped land.

Can we quantify the role that population growth plays in causing land to become built up, which is a basic definition of sprawl? It turns out that we can. At its simplest level, there are only two possible reasons for an increase in developed land. Either each person is taking up more land, there are more people, or some combination of the two. It's the same with any natural resource. For example, if one wants to know why the United States consumes more oil annually now than it did 20 years ago, it is either because there are more Americans or because each of us is using more oil, or some combination of the two. In the case of sprawl, the natural resource being consumed is land.

If one compares the increase in developed land in the nation's 100 largest urbanized areas between 1970 and 1990, it turns out that the causes of sprawl are split right down the middle between population growth and increases in per-person land consumption. Of course, this is not true in every city, but overall, population growth and increases in per-person land consumption contributed to sprawl in equal proportions.⁵ While we cannot say with absolute certainty that population growth will continue to cause more and more land to be developed, both past experience and common sense strongly suggest that population growth of this kind has important implications for the preservation of farm land, open space, and the overall quality of life in many areas of the country.

Size of the School-Age Population. In the last few years, a good deal of attention has been focused on the dramatic increases in enrollment experienced by many school districts across the country. The Department of Education recently reported that the number of children in public schools has grown by nearly 8 million in the last two decades.⁶ All observers agree that this growth has strained the resources of many school districts. Increased funding for education at the state, local, and federal levels has barely been able to keep pace with new construction and to prevent class size from growing. While it has been suggested that this increase is the result of the children of baby boomers reaching school age (the so called “baby boom echo”), it is clear from the Current Population Survey (CPS) that immigration policy explains the growth in the number of children in public schools.

We know that immigration accounts for the dramatic increase in school enrollment because the CPS not only asks all respondents their age and if they are immigrants, it also asks when they came to live in the United States. In addition, the CPS asks all persons if their parents were immigrants. With this data, it is a very simple matter to estimate the impact of recent immigration on public schools. In 2000, there were about 8 million school-age children (ages 5 to 17) of immigrants who had arrived since 1970. This is equal to all of the growth in the school-age population over in the last 20 years. Thus, immigration accounts for virtually all of the national increase in the school-age population over the last few decades, not the baby boom echo. The children of immigrants account for such a large percentage of the school-age population because a higher proportion of immigrant women are in

⁵*Out Smarting Smart Growth: Immigration, Population Growth and Suburban Sprawl.* Roy Beck, Leon Kolankiewicz and Steven A. Camarota. Center for Immigration Studies. Washington DC. Forthcoming.

⁶See *A Back to School Special Report On The Baby Boom Echo.* www.ed.gov/pubs/bbecho00.

their childbearing years and because immigrants tend to have more children than natives. More importantly, without a change in immigration policy, the number of children in our already overtaxed schools will continue to grow. The absorption capacity of American public education is clearly an important issue that needs to be taken into account when formulating a sensible immigration policy. Failure to consider this capacity may have very real consequences for public education in the United States.

Size and Scope of Government. As the population grows, the role of government, by necessity, has to grow with it. It is no accident that cities have many more regulations on everything from parking to trash collection than do rural areas. In sparsely populated states like Wyoming, the state legislature meets in regular session only every other year, while California's is the most active in the country. As population size and density grow and people come into greater contact and conflict with one another, the need for government to regulate social interactions almost always increases. By increasing the size of the U.S. population, immigration policy may unavoidably require more and more regulations on the daily lives of Americans.

Dealing with Global Warming. President Bush recently indicated that, although the United States will not ratify the Kyoto treaty on global warming, he does recognize that global warming caused by the burning of fossil fuels is a genuine problem. Whatever we decide to do about this issue, the size of our population will matter a great deal. Because any international agreement we sign to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases will limit *total* U.S. emissions, not per-person emissions, a larger population will require each individual to cut back more in order to keep total output at some agreed-upon level. Consider the following: If the United States were to try to limit its emission of greenhouse gases to 1.6 billion metric tons annually, the 1990 level, then the average American can produce no more than 5.2 tons of greenhouse gases if our population is 308 million in 2025, as it would be if there was no immigration. However, if the U.S. population grows to 338 million in 2025, as it is projected to do if current immigration trends continue, then per-person emissions will have to be cut back to 4.7 tons per year. Thus in the next two decades, because of population growth, each American will have to cut back 10 percent more on his production of greenhouse gases than would otherwise have been necessary just to keep the country at the same level. It is simple mathematics. In fact, we could easily face a situation in which each individual could cut back significantly on his or her consumption of fossil fuels and yet total consumption would actually rise because the increase in population is more than the decrease in per-person emissions.

Not only does this situation have important implications for the standard of living in the United States, it may also adversely affect the competitiveness of U.S. industry. Our primary economic competitors, such as Japan and Germany, do not have to deal with rapid population growth as they seek to cut their emissions of greenhouse gases. It is also worth noting that because most immigrants come from developing countries, immigration has the effect of transferring population from the less-polluting parts of the world to the more-polluting parts of the world. Thus even if the highest priority is placed on reducing the emission of greenhouse gases worldwide, immigration is still counterproductive. Dramatic increases in population make dealing with environmental problems more difficult. It would seem there is simply no way around this problem.

Can Immigration Solve the Social Security Funding Problem? Many advocates of high immigration argue that it can help our nation deal with the problems created by an aging society, including the need to provide funding for the large number of Social Security recipients who are expected when the baby boomers begin to retire. The Census Bureau's latest population projections specifically address this question and state that immigration is a "highly inefficient" means for increasing the proportion of the population who are workers in the long run. According to the report, if immigration remains high, 60 percent of the population will be of working-age in 2050, compared to 58 percent if there is no immigration.⁷ Why does immigration have so little impact on the share of the population who are workers? There are three reasons: First, the average immigrant arrives in his late 20s and is actually not that much younger than the average native. Second, the immigrants who enter today will eventually age and add to the size of the elderly population in the future. And it is the future when Society Security faces its funding crisis, not today. If we really wanted immigration to help with the problem then you would need to have little or no immigration right now, wait 15 or so years and then begin allowing in

⁷*Methodology and Assumptions for the Population Projections of the United States: 1999 to 2100 Population Division.* U.S. Bureau of the Census. Working Paper No. 38. Frederick W. Hollmann, Tammany J. Mulder, and Jeffrey E. Kallan. Pages 20–21.

young immigrants. The third reason immigration cannot fundamentally change the ratio of workers to non-workers is because the higher fertility of immigrants means that they significantly increase the number of children in the population, who like the elderly must be supported by others. The simple fact is we must look elsewhere to solve the challenges created by our aging society.

CONCLUSION

The impact of immigration on population growth is not in dispute. The entrance of 1.3 million legal and illegal immigrants annually cannot help but to grow the nation's population. Rather than debating the exact size of the impact of immigration on population growth, we need a rational debate over whether we want federal immigration policy to grow the U.S. population by tens of millions of people over the next few decades. It is a choice we are making not only for ourselves but for our children and their children. And it is a choice that cannot be undone.

Mr. GEKAS. And we turn to our final witness, Mr. Elder, Dr. Elder.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM G. ELDER, CHAIRMAN, SIERRANS FOR U.S. POPULATION STABILIZATION

Mr. ELDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Bill Elder. I am chairperson of a network of Sierra Club members that has been commonly referred to as Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization, or SÜSPS. Based on past election results, we represent the views of 40 percent of the nearly 700,000 members of the Sierra club. I am testifying on behalf of this network of members, not in my capacity as the population issue coordinator of the Cascade Chapter, nor am I otherwise representing the Club itself.

The subject of this hearing is the relationship between immigration and our U.S. population boom. Boom is right. Our 1990's growth of 33 million exceeds that of any other census decade in our Nation's history. Thirty-three million is equivalent to adding a State the size of California, including all of its houses, apartments, factories, office buildings, shopping centers, schools, streets, freeways and automobiles; its consumption of power, water, food and consumer goods; and its environmental waste stream of refuse, air and water pollution, to an already crowded and stressed U.S. environment.

Doing this once would be bad enough, but until Congress enacts corrective legislation, this California-size shoe-horning will occur over and over, decade after decade after decade. Of course, some economic interests with a short-term outlook welcome population growth. Environmentalists do not, because we understand its true environmental quality-of-life and economic costs.

We have already lost 95 percent of our old-growth forests and 50 percent of our wetlands. We have grown well beyond the energy supply within our border. Water supplies are declining. My home State of Washington, along with a number of others, has been growing at about 20 percent in population per decade, just like Bangladesh. We are fighting to save the last of our wild salmon runs from growth-related sprawl, dams and deforestation; a task made all the harder as State and local governments unsuccessfully struggle with the growth-caused traffic gridlock and a \$40 billion infrastructure deficit for which there is no funding plan.

The direct relationship between population growth and loss of natural resources has been a mantra of the environmental move-

ment for years. It is expressed by the formula: impact equals population times affluence times technology.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club has called for stabilizing U.S. population for over 30 years, and in 1999 the Club began favoring quote, eventual decline in U.S. population, since it has already reached levels that are not environmentally sustainable, end quote.

Population growth and immigration. It has been a tough issue for environmentalists to deal with. We value children, we value all people of the world and immigration. We have a hard time reconciling these values with the knowledge that too much of a good thing is harmful. Some organizations like the Sierra Club have adopted a position of neutrality on U.S. immigration policies, but at least 60 percent of the U.S. population growth in the nineties, 20 million, was from immigration and children born to immigrants.

Given the crucial role of immigration in the current population boom, we and 42 other environmental leaders listed in our written testimony realize that it must be addressed directly if we are to stabilize our numbers in the foreseeable future. For almost 200 years, 1776 to 1965, immigration averaged about 2 million per decade. If we had simply continued at that rate, we would now be in equilibrium with the approximately 2 million people who emigrate from the U.S. per decade. But Congress enacted legislation in 1965 and subsequent years that has more than quadrupled the rate of immigration. Intentionally or not, Congress created the current population boom. It replaced the baby boom with an immigration boom.

The progress of the American people toward a stable and sustainable population and the sacrifices made in voluntarily adopting replacement level reproduction, an average of two births per woman, have been undone by our government.

Respected environmental organizations recognize that continued growth in U.S. population and our consumption is decimating the natural resources that this and future generations need to live healthy and satisfying lives. Our network of Sierra Club members urges Congress to enact a comprehensive population policy for the United States that includes an end to U.S. population growth at the earliest possible time through a reduction in natural increase and net immigration.

Thank you very much, and I will be happy to respond to questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Elder follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM G. ELDER

INTRODUCTION.

My name is Bill (William G.) Elder. I am chairperson of a network of Sierra Club members that has been commonly referred to as Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization or SUSPS. Based on past election results, we represent the views of more than 40% of the nearly 700,000 members of the Sierra Club.

I am testifying on behalf of this network of club members. I am not representing the Sierra Club or speaking in my capacity as Population Issue Coordinator of the club's Cascade Chapter.

We thank the Subcommittee for this opportunity to share our views with you—and would like to summarize them briefly before going into more detail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

The invitation we received indicated the purpose of this hearing is “. . .to examine the relationship between immigration and the population boom that the U.S. is experiencing.” The use of the term “population boom” is absolutely correct. Our 1990–2000 growth of 32.7 million exceeds that of any other census decade in our nation’s history—including the 1960–70 peak of the “baby boom” (28.4 million) and the mass immigration period of 1900–10 (16.3 million).

While some economic interests welcome the short-term profits of population booms, we do not. Looking ahead, we see long-term environmental and economic disaster for our country. We’ve already lost 95% of the old growth forests and 50% of the wetlands of this nation. We have grown well beyond the energy supply within our borders. Water supplies are declining.

Whether the issue is sprawl, endangered species, wetlands, clean air and water, forest or wilderness preservation—the environmental (and quality of life) impact of adding 33 million people per decade is extremely harmful. It is the equivalent of shoehorning another state the size of California—including all its homes, office buildings, shopping centers, schools and churches, freeways, power, water and food consumption, and waste products—to an already crowded and stressed U.S. environment. And not just doing it once, but then over and over, decade after decade after decade.

The role of immigration in this population boom is crucial. At least 60% of our population growth in the 90’s (20 million) was from immigration and children born to immigrants. Some put the figure higher, at 70%. With no change in immigration legislation, this growth will continue unabated and constitute the sole cause of population growth in the U.S. as the momentum and ‘echoes’ of the baby boom fades away. The Census Bureau projects that unless current trends are changed, U.S. population will double within the lifetime of today’s children.

The American people did their part to solve the environmental problems presented by the baby boom. We voluntarily adopted replacement level reproduction averaging two births per woman (although this is still high compared to 1.4 in other developed nations). We have also made some ‘gains’—albeit very limited—in reducing consumption per capita in areas such as electric power and use of lower polluting technologies.

But Congress, intentionally or not, has completely undone this sacrifice of the American people and our progress towards a stable and sustainable population by creating an ‘immigration boom.’ Immigration that averaged about two million per decade over the history of our nation has been expanded four fold by various acts of Congress beginning in 1965. (Since about two million people now leave the U.S. per decade, immigration of this traditional level would represent replacement level immigration.)

This new population boom must be addressed, not only for the sake of the quality of environment and life we pass to future generations of Americans, but also to be responsible to the citizens of the rest of the world who should not have to bear the burden of ever increasing resource consumption of our country.

We urge Congress to enact a comprehensive population policy for the United States that includes an end to U.S. population growth at the earliest possible time through reduction in natural increase (births minus deaths) and net immigration (immigration minus emigration).

BACKGROUND: WHY CONSERVATIONISTS/ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POPULATION.

The environmental movement has been guided by the following fundamental formula for years. Environmental damage or loss of a natural resource equals:

- increase in population
- multiplied by consumption per capita
- multiplied by waste/harmful effects per unit of production.

Taking electric power as an example—if U.S. population increases 13% (as it did last decade), consumption per capita remains unchanged, and we have to add natural gas and coal fired power plants to accommodate the growth at say a 2% increase in air pollution per megawatt produced—we will suffer a 15% increase in air pollution. Put another way, to do no additional harm to air quality, all of our businesses and people would need to reduce their use of power by 15%. And then, do so again and again if Congress allows population growth to continue unabated in future decades.

Of course, as environmentalists, we think people are entitled to cleaner air (water that we can swim and fish in, etc.) not just the same quality we have now. We also think that many Americans will make sacrifices to accomplish such goals. But we do not think Americans will respond to the call to conserve—only to see the fruits of their sacrifice eaten up by government sponsored population growth.

Taking a longer term view, the U.S. is the third most populated country in the world. With our de facto 'growth forever' population policy we are headed in the same direction as the first two—China and India. (The U.S. could hit a billion persons within about 100 years according to some Census Bureau scenarios.) We see the environmental damage these countries have experienced with only a fraction of the consumption per capita of the U.S. and find this vision of America very sobering.

THE SIERRA CLUB ITSELF RECOGNIZES THE NEED TO STABILIZE U.S. POPULATION
BECAUSE THE U.S. POPULATION IS NOT ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE.

The Sierra Club has been calling for stabilizing U.S. population for over 30 years. In 1999, the club's board of directors went even further by calling for *reduction in U.S. population* stating: "The Board clarified that Sierra Club favors an eventual decline in U.S. population, since the population has already reached levels that are not environmentally sustainable."

(see www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/population.asp
and www.sierraclub.org/population/faq.asp)

A 1989 report published by the club's Population Committee summarized the club's traditional position on the environmental damage caused by U.S. population growth and also identified the need to address immigration:

"The Sierra Club has long supported the idea that an end to population growth in the U.S. and each country around the world is essential to environmental protection. In particular, Club policy calls for "development by the federal government of a population policy for the United States" and for the U.S. "to end (its) population growth as soon as feasible."

The U.S. population continues to increase by about two and a half million people a year, the result of an excess of births plus in-migrants over deaths plus out-migrants. While population growth rates in less-developed countries are larger, America's numbers and growth have a disproportionate impact on the environment, on natural resources, on global warming, on air and water pollution.

Since 1981 the Club has supported and testified in favor of bills in the House and Senate that would declare population stabilization to be the goal of the country, and that would call for the preparation of an explicit population policy that leads to the achievement of population stabilization. The motto, "Stop At Two," (children) was easily achieved in the 1970s, as average family size in the U.S. dropped below 2 children per woman. Yet this proved insufficient to achieve stabilization due to substantial immigration. The Club never clarified its policy to indicate what specific family size and immigration levels would achieve this goal. This lack of clarity placed the Club in an awkward position, calling for a policy but unable to explain what that policy should be!

The Club's Population Committee began discussing this issue at its April 1988 meeting, taking advantage of the then-newly-released set of Census Bureau population projections that, for the first time, examined the effect of alternative combinations of both fertility and migration. The result of the committee's discussions was an interpretation of Club policy to cover immigration, the first time the Club has dealt with this issue in a quantitative way: Immigration to the U.S. should be no greater than that which will permit achievement of population stabilization in the U.S. This interpretation was confirmed by the Club's Conservation Coordinating Committee this past July [1988]."

SIERRANS FOR U.S. POPULATION STABILIZATION URGES CONGRESS TO REDUCE OVERALL IMMIGRATION NUMBERS AS NEEDED TO STABILIZE OUR POPULATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

A large number of Sierra Club members feel very strongly that to be environmentally responsible, we must address immigration levels because there is no hope of stabilizing our population at anything approaching a sustainable level without doing so. We have continued in our efforts as individuals despite the neutrality policy on immigration adopted by the Sierra Club Board of Directors in 1996: ("The Sierra Club, its entities, and those speaking in its name will take no position on immigration levels or on policies governing immigration into the United States.")

We (SUSPS) recognize that although different reasons may be given to INS, most people move to the U.S. for economic opportunity and the American style of life and consumption. So there will be immigration pressure unless all countries 'achieve' the same level of consumption as the U.S. (which would require two and a half earth's worth of resources according to some) or U.S. consumption decreases to those of developing countries. Neither alternative is realistic in the foreseeable future.

As the National Academy of Sciences stated in July 1997:

"As long as there is a virtually unlimited supply of potential immigrants, the nation must make choices on how many to admit."

MANY OTHER ENVIRONMENTALISTS SUPPORT THE SUSPS POSITION OF BALANCING BOTH REPRODUCTION AND IMMIGRATION TO REACH A STABLE AND SUSTAINABLE POPULATION LEVEL IN THE U.S.

The following individuals endorsed our position that a comprehensive population policy for the United States needs to be adopted that includes an end to U.S. population growth at the earliest possible time through reduction in natural increase (births minus deaths) and net immigration (immigration minus emigration).

- Al Bartlett, Professor Emeritus of Physics, University of Colorado, Boulder
- Anthony Beilenson, U.S. Congressman 1977-1996; 100% from League of Conservation Voters; Congressional leader for international family planning
- John R. Bermingham, ZPG Board member, President Colorado Population Coalition
- Nicholaas Bloembergen, Nobel Laureate, Harvard University
- Lester Brown, co-founder and President Worldwatch Institute; co-author *State of the World* series
- William R. Catton, Jr., Professor Emeritus, Washington State University, author *Overshoot - The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change*
- Maria Hsia Chang, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Nevada, Reno
- Benny Chien, Past President, Californians for Population Stabilization; U.C. San Diego School of Medicine
- Herman Daly, co-founder International Society for Ecological Economics; co-author *For the Common Good*
- Elaine del Castillo, founder, Save Our Earth
- Brock Evans, Executive Director, Endangered Species Coalition; former Sierra Club Associate Executive Director; former Vice-President Audubon Society; former Sierra Club director; John Muir Award; (read his statement)
- Dave Foreman, co-founder Earth First!; former National Sierra Club Director (read his statement)
- Lindsey Grant, author, *Juggernaut*; former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Environment and Population Affairs
- Dorothy Green, founding President, Heal the Bay; President Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council
- Marilyn Hempel, Executive Director, Population Coalition
- Huey D. Johnson, former Secretary of Resources, State of California; President, Resource Renewal Institute
- George Kennan, former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union; Presidential Medal of Freedom; Professor Emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton
- Doug La Follette, Wisconsin Sec. of State; Board Member, Friends of the Earth
- Martin Litton, former National Sierra Club Director; John Muir Award; former senior editor Sunset magazine (read his statement *There They Go Again*)
- Jan Lundberg, President of Fossil Fuels Policy Action
- Dan Luten, past President Friends of the Earth; author, *Progress Against Growth*
- Tom McMahon, former Exec. Director Californians for Population Stabilization
- Monique Miller, Executive Director, Wild Earth magazine

- Frank Morris, Sr., former Exec. Director, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
- Farley Mowat, author, *Never Cry Wolf*, *A Whale for the Killing*, *Sea of Slaughter*
- Norman Myers Senior Advisor, United Nations Population Fund; Senior Fellow, World Wildlife Fund
- Gaylord Nelson, founder Earth Day; U.S. Senator 1963-81; sponsor, Wilderness Act; Presidential Medal of Freedom
- Tim Palmer, river conservationist; author, *California's Threatened Environment*
- Dr. David Pimentel, Professor of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell Univ.
- Marcia Pimentel, Senior Lecturer (ret.) Nutritional Science, Cornell Univ., author
- Charles Remington, co-founder Zero Population Growth; Professor of Forestry, Environmental Science and Biology, Yale University
- John F. Rohe, author: *A Bicentennial Malthusian Essay*
- Galen Rowell, nature photographer and author, *Mountain light*, *Bay Area Wild*, *The Vertical World of Yosemite*
- Claudine Schneider, U.S. Congress, 1980-90; champion of biodiversity, tropical rainforests and endangered species
- Maria Sepulveda, Executive Director, Population-Environment Balance
- George Sessions, Professor of Philosophy, Sierra College; Author, *Deep Ecology and Deep Ecology for the 21st Century*
- Beth Curry Thomas, Sierra Club National Population Committee; founder, Planned Parenthood, Hilton Head, SC
- Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior 1961-69; Counselor Grand Canyon Trust; author, *The Quiet Crisis*
- Casey Walker, Publisher, *Wild Duck Review*
- Paul Watson, co-founder Greenpeace; founder and President Sea Shepherd Conservation Society
- Carole Wilmoth, Past President Audubon Council of Texas
- E.O. Wilson, Conservation Biologist, Harvard University; author, *Diversity of Life*

Affiliations for identification purposes only

Among other environmental organizations, the Wilderness Society has exhibited the foresight and responsibility of adopting a U.S. population policy that calls for addressing immigration as part of achieving a stable population. As stated by the chairman of President Clinton's Population and Consumption Task Force: 'We believe that reducing current immigration levels is a necessary part of working toward sustainability in the United States.'

MYTHS PROPAGATED BY OTHERS TO MISLEAD THE PUBLIC AND POLICY MAKERS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN U.S. POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT NEED TO BE RECOGNIZED AS SUCH.

One myth we hear often is that population is a global problem and we should only address it globally. Of course overpopulation is a global problem. But it is also a national problem in China, India, the U.S. and many other countries. We do live in one world, but borders and governments are relevant. We make decisions as nations, and will continue to do so. The U.S. government and people have a responsibility to be willing to stabilize our population just as we need to look to the people and governments of China, India, et al, to do the same.

A second common myth is that the number of immigrants doesn't affect the U.S. environment because they are poor, live in inner cities, and take the bus etc. So, they don't consume, participate in sprawl, or clog the roads and pollute the air like everyone else.

This stereotyping of immigrants is inappropriate. Many people who move to the U.S. are not poor. They live in the suburbs and consume at American levels just like anyone else. Secondly, to the extent that some immigrants are lower income, they and their children aspire to the American standard of living and consumption, and generally achieve it in the second generation if not the first. In this respect lower income immigrants have a similar affect to that of births. Babies don't consume a lot either—but by the time they are young adults they certainly do.

CONCLUSION.

Respected organizations such as the Sierra Club and Wilderness Society and many environmental leaders recognize that continued growth in U.S. population and our consumption is decimating the natural resources that we and future generations need to live healthy and satisfying lives. Open space, forests, wetlands, water availability, air quality and endangered animal species are continually lost to satisfy the demands of a burgeoning human population. As responsible citizens of the U.S. we must act now on this issue that has such far reaching and serious consequences for future generations as well as ourselves.

We urge Congress to enact a comprehensive population policy for the United States that includes an end to U.S. population growth at the earliest possible time through reduction in natural increase (births minus deaths) and net immigration (immigration minus emigration).

ATTACHMENT: WHO/WHAT IS 'SIERRANS FOR U.S. POPULATION STABILIZATION?'

Sierrans for U.S. Population Stabilization is a network of members of the Sierra Club numbering in the thousands. We are guided by a steering committee consisting of long-time Sierra Club members.

We are concerned about the natural world being left to future generations at home and abroad. As with all priority Sierra Club programs the first responsibility is to solve a U.S. problem, in this case that of U.S. population growth and consumption in accordance with "think globally, act locally." Although we are aware the U.S. is part of a world community, we also recognize the Club's relatively limited influence abroad.

We believe a comprehensive U.S. population policy must be a part of the Club's Global Population Program [for stabilizing world population]. We support a return to 1970-1996 Sierra Club U.S. population policy which advocates zero population growth, where births equal deaths and immigration equals emigration, or any reasonable combination that will achieve US population stabilization as quickly as possible.

We reaffirm the 1970 Sierra Club policy "That we must find, encourage, and implement at the earliest possible time the necessary policies, attitudes, social standards, and actions that will, by voluntary and humane means consistent with human rights and individual conscience, bring about the stabilization of the population first of the United States and then of the world." (Sierra Club Board of Directors, 1970)

Our concern is with total numbers, not with any group or country of origin. We argue for an end to U.S. growth in numbers and consumption simply based on environmental limits. We advocate any reasonable combination of natural increase and immigration that can achieve a sustainable U.S. population.

As conservationists and loyal members, we work within the Sierra Club advocating that it must:

- Pro-actively inform, promote and lobby to support policies and programs to end U.S. population growth.
- Explicitly recognize rapid U.S. population growth among the causes of sprawl.
- Fully support other organizations and programs focused on U.S. population stabilization.
- Support reduction of consumption, especially in the U.S. and other high-consuming societies. Ending U.S. population growth in no way forecloses efforts to reduce U.S. consumption. Both are necessary as stated by the President's Council on Sustainable Development (1996).
- Support incentives that encourage family planning in the U.S. and worldwide.
- Support elimination of pro-natalist financial incentives.

Please see our website at www.SUSPS.org for additional information.

Mr. GEKAS. Yes. We thank Dr. Elder and all the witnesses.

Let the record indicate that the gentleman from California, a Member of the Committee, Congressman Issa, is present. Does the gentleman have any opening remarks he wishes to make?

Mr. ISSA. No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GEKAS. In that event, the Chair will yield itself 5 minutes for an opening round of questions for the panel. By the way, who— which witness claims—

Mr. PASSEL. That is mine.

Mr. GEKAS. That is yours? That is part of your written statement as well?

Mr. PASSEL. Yes.

Mr. GEKAS. What I wanted to ask there, in conjunction with something that Mr. Elder said, something that all of you mentioned, that the total figure of the 28 million that we are talking about includes, does it not, legal immigrants? It is legal and illegal immigrants, is it not?

Mr. PASSEL. That is right. This is based on—the 28 million figure comes, I believe, from the March 2000 Current Population Survey. That survey itself was adjusted to numbers that were below the census level, and what I did in this chart is adjusted upwards to make them agree with the census figures, and so that is why there is 30 million.

Mr. GEKAS. Well, how do you compare these figures, any one of you, with the quotas that have been established or the numbers that have been established for legal immigration? How much over that, in particular areas, do we find reflected in the 28 million figure?

Mr. PASSEL. That is in fact exactly how we arrived at the figure there of 8½ million undocumented, is compared it to the legal admissions. So basically, the estimate is that there are around 20, 20½, or 21 million people who were admitted legally to live permanently in the United States; another million who are here temporarily; and about 8½ million undocumented. If we look at annual flows, the number is about 1.2, 1.3 million per year coming to the United States. It appears that about maybe 800,000 of those are legal and the rest are undocumented.

Mr. GEKAS. Yes. That is a very important statistic that I want the Members of the Committee to take into consideration as we move down the path of policy formation.

Dr. Long, there is something that has always been puzzling to me. We consider, do we not, our Puerto Rican brethren as citizens of the United States? So when you do a census, when the census is conducted, do we categorize those who leave the island and come to the United States as migrants? They are migrants technically—or actually. But they are not immigrants, are they?

Mr. LONG. No, they are not immigrants. Of course, they are U.S. citizens and their movement back and forth is like a movement back and forth between any State in the U.S.

Mr. GEKAS. Right.

Mr. LONG. But the Census Bureau has a long tradition of counting the population and the numbers that we have all been talking about today are for the 50 States plus the District of Columbia. And the movement back and forth between that, population, has to be incorporated in our numbers. So when we talk about migration to and from those 50 States plus D.C., it includes the movement, the net movement to and from Puerto Rico. Of course, when we talk about the foreign-born population, the Puerto Ricans would not be in that number. They are native-born.

Mr. GEKAS. I think it was you, Dr. Passel, that said that the period between 1870 and 1920 was unremarkable compared to the current situation in that that was a 15 percent increase. But that does not take into account, of course that there were more—there

was more open space available, more viability in the choice of urban or rural domiciling, et cetera; is that correct?

Mr. PASSEL. Well, it was a much smaller country then; that is right. But the percentage of the population that was not native was higher at that level at that time in a smaller country.

Mr. GEKAS. It seemed to me that you were using that to demonstrate that we shouldn't be so much concerned about the percentages that apply to today's statistics because back in that period, there was even a larger or comparable percentage of immigration. And the point that I want to ask you to elucidate on is—but the times were different; they really were. And the spaces were different, were they not, with respect to our Nation's topography and geography?

Mr. PASSEL. Yes. I have not studied immigration from an environmental perspective and it is not based on my research that I can address that question. I just would note that immigration doesn't add people to the world's population; it adds people to the U.S. population. It is true.

Mr. GEKAS. I think Dr. Elder is going to pounce on us here.

Mr. ELDER. I would just like to comment. Back 100 years ago, 120 years ago, the resources of the United States seemed infinite. It seemed like we could never make a dent in them. And population, we could accommodate a larger population at that point.

And I would like to note our issue is with population, not either immigration or reproduction per se. But now, in the year 2000, we face a much different picture. We need wetlands in order to recharge our aquifers. Fifty percent of what existed 100 or more years ago is gone. That is—it is no longer available to us. It has been paved over. Similarly, with deforestation. So we are living in a much different age, where each increment of additional population places a much larger stress on the much smaller pool of resources, including open space, that remain. Thank you.

Mr. GEKAS. The time of the Chair is—has now expired. We turn to the gentleman, Mr. Issa, for any questions that he may wish to pose.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I apologize for being at a conflicting event here this morning. I guess—I apologize to all of you for not being able to hear your entire statements. I tried to get familiar with them by reading them quickly.

I guess one of my questions—start with Mr. Elder—is if you are only concerned about world population, isn't it true that people who immigrate here, their rate of birth actually slows after they get here, so if you are talking about world population, the more people you bring to America, bring up in income, the more likely you are to have those particular individuals produce less offspring net?

Mr. ELDER. Well, that may be true. And we are concerned about both worldwide population growth and growth in the United States. The thing to remember is the formula: impact equals population times affluence or consumption times technology. The problem is that the people who come to the United States start consuming at a much higher U.S. consumption level.

Mr. ISSA. That is true of Japan and a lot of other developed nations. And I don't know if we are going to solve that problem of our willingness to keep this many lights on, even if there is no camera.

I guess my second question would—sorry, but I am a Californian and so we are very sensitive about electric consumption right now. A hundred years ago, when my grandfather, or a little less than a hundred years ago when my grandfather came here, wasn't the same debate going on? Isn't it essentially the same debate of whether immigrants add net or detract from the Nation as a whole for those of you who have studied that?

Mr. PASSEL. In a lot of ways I would have to agree with that. In fact, if you go back and look at some of the press coverage and some of the written material, it is hard to tell in some cases whether it was written in the 1900's or the 1990's. Sometimes it is only the style of the language that can differentiate it. So a lot of issues seem to be the same, I would have to say. There are some differences, but many, in many cases there is quite a congruence between them.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Elder, if I can return to you. Isn't it true that we have lost more wetlands in the undeveloped areas of the world? And, if I understand, for the most part the ecosystem of the world is not where you lose it; it is the fact that you lose it somewhere on the Earth that makes the biggest impact.

Mr. ELDER. No, I disagree. I think we have a responsibility to be good stewards of the resources of this country. We are not going to import water from elsewhere. We need to take care of the environment here, and pass along a sustainable environment to future generations because they are going to need those resources here.

Mr. ISSA. I appreciate that. But when you said you weren't anti-immigration, that that wasn't your issue, that your issue was world population, here we are relatively sparsely populated by world standards for inhabitable areas, and we happen to be fairly fortunate. We have more inhabitable and less uninhabitable areas than most countries of the world our size.

I am still trying to get back to the same point. What is our goal? Is our goal, in fact, to legitimately try to look at India and China and other countries who have a much worse population, look at South and Central America and some of the destructions of the world's ecosystem and how fast it is evaporating; or is it simply to say let's justify that if more people move here, by definition, we will have more people here, and thus be more crowded?

I am hearing two sides of this from you, and I have to tell you that the credibility is on consistencies. Tell me why a net movement here is really all that bad in a country that tends to urbanize, that has retained open space at a higher level, and, in fact, to the extent that we have closed up open space, as far as I can tell it is not the immigrants. The immigrants who come to California go to the big cities, other than the ag workers, and it is the pasty-white third generation people who have a tendency—I am not quite pasty white, but I am close. They are the ones that move to the suburbs. They are the ones that my district has concreted over a whole lot, but it hasn't concreted over for the immigrants. It has concreted over for the person whose affluency now says, geez, I would like to have an acre of land, so build a highway to get me out to the country.

Mr. ELDER. Sir, I think your characterization of who is moving to the suburbs is not quite accurate. From my own experience—my

wife is Asian American, her grandparents moved to this country as agricultural workers. And the next generation, their offspring lived in the suburbs, had long commutes to their jobs. I can vouch that the third generation is consuming at the same level, whether it is open space, or any other resource, living the American lifestyle that everyone else is.

The thing is we are on a track now to become more and more like China and India. We will not solve their problems by becoming more like them. And I believe from figures I've seen, your State density now is only about 20, 25 years behind that of China's. So I think we do have an issue that is here within our borders.

Mr. ISSA. I appreciate the opportunity. I appreciate, Mr. Chairman. I will close by saying that it does seem like you are concerned about American immigration and growth, and not world population from what I can tell. Thank you.

Mr. GEKAS. We thank the gentleman and we thank the witnesses. We, by unanimous consent and without objection, will leave the record open for opening statements or other statements that the Members wish to enter into the record.

Mr. GEKAS. And until we meet again, we thank the panel for their full discussion of important statistics and issues. This hearing comes to a close.

[Whereupon, at 11:12 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR., Wisconsin
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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

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Statement for Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee
The US Population and Immigration Hearing
August 2, 2001

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RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

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ROBERT WEXLER, Florida
TAMMY BALDWIN, Wisconsin
ANTHONY D. WEINER, New York
ADAM B. SCHIFF, California

Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing. It is important to know how many immigrants we have in the United States, as well as their characteristics and effect on the United States population so that we may make better policy.

There are groups that believe that too many immigrants are coming into our nation. These groups believe that immigrants have negative effects on the population.

My response to these groups is that one cannot surmise this situation by looking only to numbers and statistics. The benefits

immigrants bring to our nation cannot be illustrated on paper and must be considered in light of the quality of life and culture they add to America.

We encounter challenges in order to accommodate the immigrants we will welcome, but the benefits of their presence clearly outweigh the work we need to do. Immigrants reflect what America stands for. They rediscover the possibilities America provides and remind those of us fortunate enough to be born here of the opportunities available to us.

Alan Greenspan echoed this idea two weeks ago when he testified on this very topic to the House Financial Services Committee. Mr. Greenspan stressed his belief that our nation benefits immensely from the presence of immigrants and that it is their entrepreneurship and hard work that makes this economy function. Mr. Greenspan also stated that immigrants have improved the current U.S. housing market and addressed the issue of immigrants and social security, bringing up the important point

that while benefits are garnered at age 62, much work goes into building those funds prior to collection.

Immigrants do not come to America for a free lunch. The typical immigrant pays an estimated \$80,000 or more in taxes than he or she will receive in local, state, and federal benefits over a lifetime. Immigrants as a group pay \$25 to \$30 billion a year more in taxes than they consume in government services. And contrary to popular belief, immigrant children are not using up American educational dollars. Only 4% of the \$227 billion we spend to educate our children is spent educating legal immigrant children.

Many of the immigrants who come to the U.S. with initiative and plans to better themselves do just that. Immigrants inspire all of us and remind us to be grateful to our ancestors for being courageous enough to come to the United States. It seems inappropriate for us to deny others the opportunity we were afforded and to prevent others from serving as the grandfathers and great grandfathers that come to the U.S. to make better lives for their families. By shutting the doors to immigrants, America will not only lose valuable individuals, it will lose a piece of its identity.

Immigration's Role in U.S. Population Growth

Prepared Statement of
Sharon McCloe Stein
Executive Director
Negative Population Growth (NPG)

Submitted for the Record to
the Immigration and Claims Subcommittee
of the Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
July 19, 2001

I am very pleased to provide a written statement regarding the important issue of immigration's role in U.S. population growth.

Negative Population Growth (NPG) is a national, non-profit organization of 26,000 concerned citizens working for a smaller, more sustainable U.S. population size, in order to protect our environment and quality of life.

I. Immigration's Contribution to U.S. Population Growth

Immigration is fundamentally a form of population growth. The U.S. Census Bureau says that two-thirds of future growth will result from immigrants arriving since 1994 and their descendants.

Today, U.S. population stands at 284 million, a 13 percent increase in the last decade. The Census Bureau's middle series projections show that if current immigration levels continue, our population will increase to 404 million by 2050 and continue to grow steeply. (Even more worrisome, the Census Bureau's high series projections-which have proven more accurate in recent years-project a population of 553 million by 2050.)

If, on the other hand, we reduce immigration to a replacement level-zero net increase-the Census Bureau projects that our population in 2050 is likely to be 328 million and the growth rate will be leveling off.

What this means is that immigration will not be a marginal contributor to future U.S. population growth, but, in fact, the primary one.

II. Why Does Population Size Matter?

a. Environment

There is an overwhelming national and international scientific consensus on the relationship between population growth and environmental degradation. All the environmental consequences of human activity increase with the growth of the population: Demands for resources increase, and pollution, deforestation, waste, habitat

destruction, and soil erosion rise. More homes, factories, and roads must be built, reducing agricultural land and open space. (Already in the U.S., we lose three acres of farmland and open space every minute to meet the needs of an expanding population.) More energy and water are used, further eroding our limited natural resources and exacerbating water and energy shortages like those already affecting many states.

This essential relationship is nearly universally recognized as one of the fundamental bases for providing international population stabilization funding. In 1994 at the International Conference on Population and the Environment, the United States and dozens of other countries reaffirmed the goal of stopping population growth as a key element in any environmental protection plan.

Consider the impact of population growth on the energy crisis. Between 1970 and 1990, when numerous conservation and efficiency measures were enacted, per capita energy consumption barely increased. But, because the U.S. population continued to grow during this period, total energy consumption increased by 36%, with more than 90% of this increase in energy consumption due entirely to population growth.

The nation's anti-sprawl, water conservation, and environmental protection priorities cannot be reconciled with the new infrastructure and resource consumption that continued growth will require. Unless we address population growth, our net environmental gains will be reduced (or even reversed) by the demands imposed by our growing population. If the population increases, as the Census Bureau projects, to 404 million by 2050, how will our current environmental victories survive?

b. Quality of life

The problems associated with continued population growth reach beyond the environment to basic quality of life: overcrowded schools, urban sprawl, increased traffic congestion, and higher costs of living.

As an area gets more populated, its infrastructure starts straining under the weight of all the new residents who must be served. Police forces, roads, and schools no longer satisfy the demands of a growing population. Farmland and forests are sacrificed to strip malls and housing developments. More and more schools, sanitary systems, roads, libraries, and water services must be built. Meanwhile, congestion increases, pollution rises, and school overcrowding goes up.

As the county commission chairman of Barrow County, Georgia, which has experienced a 55 percent growth rate in the last decade, noted, "[Population growth] doesn't increase the tax base as much as it increases the need for services in that area."

c. Education

In the last decade, school enrollments have increased by 16 percent, an increase that the Census Bureau attributes in large part to the immigration influx. Department of Education officials say that by 2100, the nation's schools will have to find room for 94 million students-nearly double the number of school-age children, ages five to 17, the nation has now.

How will our schools absorb the coming population increasing, when already they are struggling to meet the needs of existing students? Across the country, students are attending classes in portable classrooms and eating lunch in staggered schedules starting

as early as 10:30 to ease the strain on crowded cafeterias. In Georgia, a recent law requires schools to cut the class sizes over the next few years, but principals report that they simply don't have the space to do it. There are too many students for the available classrooms. More than 14,900 new classrooms are needed. In Florida, schools are so overcrowded that legislators are considering paying students to go to private schools instead of public ones. In Kansas City, one class meets in what used to be a restroom.

Rather than being used to improve the quality of education for current students, communities are forced to spend their limited tax dollars to build new schools to accommodate growth.

III. Immigration and Population Policy

The problem of U.S. overpopulation and the possibility of adopting a national population policy have been debated at the highest levels of government.

President Nixon voiced concerns about population growth in 1969, arguing that continued growth could only lead to negative consequences: "Look ahead to the end of this century," he said. "There are 200 million Americans now. By the end of the century there will be 300 million. Where are those 100 million going to be? You can't pour them into New York, into Los Angeles, into Chicago and the rest and choke those cities to death with smog and crime and all of the rest that comes with overpopulation."

In 1972, a two-year study by a joint presidential-congressional commission (the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, also known as the Rockefeller Commission) which had representatives of major corporations, unions, governments, environmental organizations, and urban, ethnic, and women's groups, recommended freezing immigration at its then-current level of about 400,000 a year as part of a national population policy.

The commission's report concluded: "We have looked for, and have not found, any convincing economic argument for continued population growth. The health of our country does not depend on it, nor does the vitality of business nor the welfare of the average person." At the time, the U.S. population was only 205 million; now the population is over 283 million—more than a third higher than when the Commission found no justification for further growth.

More recently, the President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD) advocated the goal of voluntary population stabilization in the United States, but fell short of recommending a specific immigration level. This recommendation, like the one preceding it, has not yet been acted upon.

To the contrary, our population has grown by more than 78 million, or 38 percent, in that period. Annual immigration levels have risen dramatically, from approximately 400,000 in 1970 to about one million today.

Had the Rockefeller Commission's recommendations been adopted in 1972, the United States would look very different today. If post-1972 immigration been limited to replacement level (equal to the amount of out-migration), today U.S. population would be about 243 million—41 million less than our current size.

With each passing year, it becomes more imperative that we address the problems associated with unlimited population growth. Given that our population is already above an optimal level for our resources and environment, adding large amounts of new residents at this time will create a major obstacle to efforts to preserve quality of life and

achieve environmental sustainability.

NPG recommends the immediate establishment of a commission or cabinet-level position to advise the President and the Congress on population policy, with immigration levels considered as an integral component of domestic population.

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD



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Immigration Reform

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*FAIR is a nonprofit public interest
organization working to end illegal
immigration and to set levels of legal
immigration that are consistent with
the national interest.*

July 17, 2001

Honorable George Gekas, Chairman
House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims
B-370B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20505-6217

Dear Chairman Gekas:

The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) requests that this letter be placed in the record of the Subcommittee's hearing of July 19, 2001, on the relationship between immigration and the growth in population within the United States. In short, the relationship is direct and the mass immigration of both legal and illegal immigration into the United States over the last decades is making the rate of population growth in this country unsustainable.

Population stability simply cannot be achieved until the mass immigration rate of over one million new entrants per year is curtailed. Currently about two-thirds of our population increase is due to immigrants and their offspring, and Mexicans are a quarter of our legal immigrants and half are illegal immigrants. Given the proposals President Bush is soon expected to make creating a vast new guestworker program for Mexican nationals and amnestying illegal Mexicans living and working in the United States, this letter will focus on the relationship between U.S. population and immigration from Mexico.

Partial data from the 2000 Census available from the Census Bureau indicates that in comparison to the national population increase of about 33 million persons (13.2%) between 1990-2000, those identifying themselves as Mexicans or of Mexican ancestry appear to have increased by over seven million (over 50%) from about 13.5 million in 1990 to about 20.6 million in 2000.

Some of this enormous surge in the Mexican-origin population is probably due to a decrease in the undercount of the 2000 Census, and some of the surge is due to the fact that the Mexican-origin population has a higher than replacement fertility rate, unlike other segments of the population. However, the largest contributor to this rapid surge in the Mexican-origin population in the United States is immigration, of both legal and illegal entrants.

We do not know exactly how many Mexicans have entered the country legally during the 1990s, because the INS has not released such information since fiscal year 1998, but the total legal immigration of Mexicans between 1990 and 1998 was 770,474. This number excludes 1,769,908 Mexicans who received green cards during this period as a result of the 1986 IRCA amnesty. Those amnesty recipients were all in the country at the time of the 1990 Census and, therefore, did not contribute to the population increase (except, of course, through new births).

Letter to Chairman George Gekas
July 17, 2001
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With new legal immigration from Mexico at less than one million during the decade, it is clear that the bulk of the increase in the Mexican-origin population over the last decade has entered the country illegally. It should be readily apparent to anyone who shares the concern about the effects of rapid population increase in the United States that a first priority in reducing the rate of increase should be to put an end to the enormous numbers of illegal aliens entering the country and identifying and removing those who are already here. This apparently is not what the Bush Administration is contemplating.

Mexicans are key to the nation's immigration policy and its implementation because Mexico is our most populous neighbor, and the neighboring country that is the major contributor to our illegal immigration problem. We trust that the Subcommittee will have the national interests foremost in its view as it looks at legislation that may come before it, and especially the poorest segment of our society that has unfairly suffered the brunt of recent immigration, especially illegal immigration.

Sincerely,



Dan Stein
Executive Director



July 18, 2001

RECEIVED

JUL 19 2001

The Honorable George Gekas
Chairman, House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims
B370B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Bill Elder, an individual who is a member of the Sierra Club, is testifying before your Subcommittee on the topic of population. In his testimony, he will present information about his own personal views, and those of a number of other individuals with whom he works, on the relationship between population growth and immigration. He also will discuss his view of the Club's historical position on these issues.

The Sierra Club would like to make clear that Mr. Elder's testimony, and the positions he takes, have no connection with the Sierra Club or with official Club policy. They are made on his own behalf and those of any other individuals who have authorized him to speak on their behalf, not of the Club or any sub-entity or portion of the Club.

In 1998 the Club, in a vote of its members, decided it would remain neutral on the question of US immigration policy. That decision is binding on all Club entities. The language of that policy is printed below, and this position, and only this position, represents the views of the Sierra Club on immigration matters:

"The Sierra Club, its entities, and those speaking in its name, will take no position on immigration levels or on policies governing immigration into the United States. The Club remains committed to environmental rights and protections for all within our borders, without discrimination based on immigration status."

Adopted by the Board of Directors, February 24-25, 1996

"The Sierra Club affirms the decision of the Board of Directors to take NO position on U.S. immigration levels and policies.

"The Sierra Club can more effectively address the root causes of global population problems through its existing comprehensive approach:

"The Sierra Club will build upon its effective efforts to champion the right of all families to maternal and reproductive health care, and the empowerment and equity of women.

"The Sierra Club will continue to address the root causes of migration by encouraging sustainability, economic security, health and nutrition, human rights and environmentally responsible consumption."

Adopted by the Board of Directors, September 20-21, 1997; amended January 13, 1998; adopted by the membership in an election April 25, 1998.

Sincerely yours,

Carl Pope
Executive Director

