

FAQ: What is cost of illegal immigration to Colorado taxpayers?

Q. How many illegal aliens are there in Colorado?

A. There is no annual update of Census Bureau estimates by state, but a 2010 Center for Immigration Studies report estimated the number at 166,000. That number grew by 34% between 2000 and 2010.¹

Q. What are the costs of public services provided to illegal aliens?

A. A 2010 study by the Federation for American Immigration Reform estimated Colorado's total net cost to taxpayers at \$1,388,700,000 annually in state and federal tax dollars.²

Q. What are the main components of that cost estimate?

A. That study examined the cost of public services in three areas, education, health, and law enforcement:

EDUCATION COSTS (P-12):	\$967.2 million	
HEALTH:	\$251.6 million	
LAW ENFORCEMENT	\$146.9 million	
OTHER / GENERAL	\$ 84.8 million	Total Taxpayer Costs: \$1,450,500,000 annually

Q. But they also pay taxes, which offset those costs - right?

A. Illegal aliens pay sales and excise taxes like everyone else, but few pay significant income taxes. The FAIR study estimates that the total taxes paid by illegal aliens in Colorado at \$61.8 million. That leaves a net annual cost to Colorado taxpayers of \$1,388,700,000.

Q. The federal government reimburses Colorado for some of those costs, like the cost of incarcerating criminal aliens in jails and prisons. Right?

A. The State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) administered by the US Dept. of Justice reimburses each state for some of the costs of incarceration of criminal aliens. However, several studies, including a 2006 report by the Colorado Dept. of Corrections, showed that the reimbursement is only ten cents on the dollar. Since 2009, the Obama administration has been trying to abolish that reimbursement funding.

Q. What is the annual per-household cost for Colorado taxpayers?

A. With a state population of 5.3 million and 1.9 million households, the net cost of \$1,388,700,000 is a burden on the average household of over \$730 annually.

Q. Hasn't the number of illegal aliens crossing the border been declining recently?

A. The number of official, reported apprehensions on the southwest border reached its zenith at 1.8 million in the year 2000 and declined to 516,000 in 2010. However, with Obama's "DACA" amnesty and the continual talk of an impending general amnesty since 2011, that number has been increasing. In 2013 the number surpassed 600,000. In 2012, over 2,000 were apprehended from countries identified as having terrorist cells.

Q. The cost of relocating children who enter the country illegally is being covered by federal grants, right?

A. That federal money will cover only the initial costs, not the long-term costs. As they are placed with families and attain permanent legal status, their educational, health care and welfare costs will be borne by Colorado taxpayers.

1. "Immigrants in the United States, 2010: A Profile of America's Foreign-Born Population", Center for Immigration Studies (2010), <http://cis.org/2012-profile-of-americas-foreign-born-population#state>

2. All taxpayer cost data is from the report: "The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on U.S. Taxpayers (2010)", FAIR, <http://www.fairus.org/publications/the-fiscal-burden-of-illegal-immigration-on-u-s-taxpayers>