

OREGONIANS united against profiling

Public Comments Regarding the Draft Financial Estimate for IP 22
Submitted by Kimberly McCullough, Policy Director, ACLU of Oregon
On behalf of Oregonians United Against Profiling¹
Financial Estimate Committee Hearing
07/24/2018

Secretary of State Richardson and Members of the Financial Estimate Committee:

Oregonians United Against Profiling appreciates the opportunity to provide this committee with comments on the draft financial estimate for IP 22 (“IP 22”), which would throw out Oregon’s “sanctuary” law, which passed more than 30 years ago with broad support from Republicans and Democrats.

We support the current draft estimate approved by this committee on July 17, 2018, which states that the financial impact of this measure is indeterminate.

In reality, IP 22 is likely to cause significant costs to the State of Oregon and our communities in a variety of ways. **These costs are complex, however, and difficult to quantify** in the short timeframe given to this committee.

We anticipate that proponents of the ballot measure might choose to argue here, as they have elsewhere, that mass deportations would save Oregon taxpayers money. In fact, the exact opposite is true. A 2016 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found that immigration has “an overall positive impact on long-run economic growth in the U.S.”² In Oregon specifically, New American Economy reports that immigrants pay \$3.2 billion annually in taxes, including more than \$915 million in state and local taxes.

Undocumented immigrants in Oregon pay more than \$80 million in state and local taxes each year.³

¹ Oregonians United Against Profiling is a coalition of businesses, organizations, law enforcement, faith, labor and community leaders across the state opposed to IP 22. We understand that Oregon is a place that believes in fairness and looking out for our neighbors. No Oregonian, including immigrant Oregonians, should live in fear that doing everyday things like going to work, going to school or reporting crimes to the police could result in harassment or families being torn apart. Coalition members may be viewed at this link: <https://orunited.org/new-index-1/>

² <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/23550/the-economic-and-fiscal-consequences-of-immigration>

³ <https://www.newamericaneconomy.org/locations/oregon/>

We assume that repeal of our state's 30-year-old sanctuary law would increase deportations among Oregon's undocumented immigrant communities. We also assume that repeal would create fear among the state's undocumented immigrants that would hinder their robust economic and social participation. Because, as the committee notes, repeal itself would not require a change to current state and local law enforcement practices, it is difficult to predict the precise magnitude of those effects, but we seek to outline them below.

Loss of economic contributions: Undocumented immigrants make significant economic contributions to the State of Oregon even beyond the tax contributions noted above. Given more time, a full analysis could estimate the size and characteristics of the undocumented immigrant population in Oregon and evaluate a broad range of indicators that speak to their economic contributions, including:

- Employment by industry and occupation, which speaks to the integral role that undocumented immigrants play in specific sectors in Oregon's economy, as well as the potential turnover costs to employers should heavy-handed enforcement remove undocumented workers from the labor force *en masse*;
- Pre-tax wages and salary income, which speak to the contributions that undocumented immigrants make to federal programs such as Social Security and Medicare, as well as the contributions they make to state revenue via state income taxes; and
- Business ownership.

Damage to public schools and students: Undocumented immigrants play a significant role in helping to fund public schools through state income tax contributions. In addition, there is a link between immigration enforcement and absences in public K-12 schools among students whose parents have been detained, deported, or otherwise fear immigration enforcement. These absences directly affect school budgets, as well as the mental health of students and their subsequent academic performance.

To determine the actual cost here, analysis could include a measure of state tax contributions made by undocumented immigrants that are passed on to public schools, analysis of comparable data on absences in schools before and after a large-scale enforcement actions, costs to schools per student per absence, as well as data linking absences to graduation rates and the resulting impact on future workforce health. Again, this data analysis would take significant time beyond what this committee is allocated.

Increased burden on the foster care system and public services: Immigration enforcement actions taken against the parents of U.S. citizen children would cause an increase of children in Oregon's foster care system. The last major study on the topic found that 5,000 children in the U.S. foster care system had a detained or deported parent.⁴ In addition to the moral argument against tearing families apart, a fuller analysis of data on U.S. citizen children who enter the foster care system in this way could reveal the various resulting costs to state and local budgets.

Damage to public safety: Passage of IP 22 would likely divert resources away from local policing—and thereby harm public safety in all of Oregon's communities. There are hard costs associated with the diversion of resources that occurs when local law enforcement agencies are doing the work of federal immigration enforcement, as well as additional resulting costs to our communities when law enforcement diverts its resources away from local priorities.

These costs are compounded by the resulting chilling effect on cooperation with local law enforcement. When police play the role of federal immigration agents, many immigrants are too afraid to report crime, seek help if they have been victimized, and provide information to police that can help solve cases. Simply put, IP 22 would make local law enforcement's job much harder, requiring additional financial investment to avoid damage to public safety. While it is difficult to quantify, similar analysis in other jurisdictions has revealed the depth of these types of costs.⁵

For these reasons, we believe IP22's passage would actually significantly increase the tax burden on state and local governments. However, given the short time frame available for this committee and the complexities of analyzing the true costs of the proposal, we understand and support the recommendation of an "indeterminate" response.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

⁴ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/us-citizen-children-impacted-immigration-enforcement>

⁵ For example, this type of analysis revealed a variety of costs associated with local law enforcement's aggressive immigration enforcement in Maricopa County, available at: <https://bloximages.chicago2.vip.townnews.com/eastvalleytribune.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/3/2f/32f0adf2-2764-11e1-9e0b-001871e3ce6c/4eea674644b74.pdf.pdf>

