



# How Citizenship Helps the Economy

Allowing unauthorized immigrants to become citizens brings a whole host of economic benefits, from greater wages for workers, to increased economic growth and tax revenue collected. Citizenship would also help to improve the finances of the Social Security and Medicare systems. And as a part of immigration reform, it would significantly decrease the federal budget deficit. Inaction on immigration reform — including the pathway to citizenship — carries a heavy cost. Here are the economic benefits of citizenship:

**A** Citizenship enables undocumented immigrants to earn significantly more.



Citizenship raises the wages of the undocumented because it:



Provides legal protections



Grants access to better jobs



Promotes investment in education and training

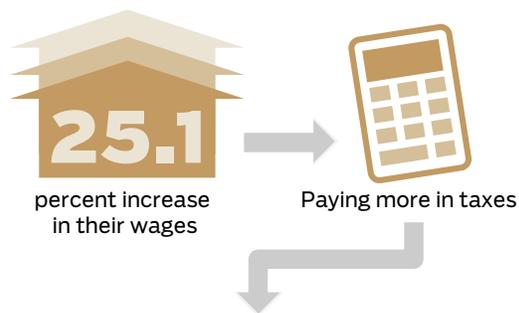


Fosters entrepreneurship

Source: Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford, "The Economic Effects of Granting Legal Status and Citizenship to Undocumented Immigrants" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2013).

**B** Naturalized workers earn higher wages, consume more goods and services, and pay more in taxes, which in turn create economic growth and American jobs.

If we provide legal status to  
**11.7 million**  
undocumented immigrants today and citizenship in five years, it would mean...



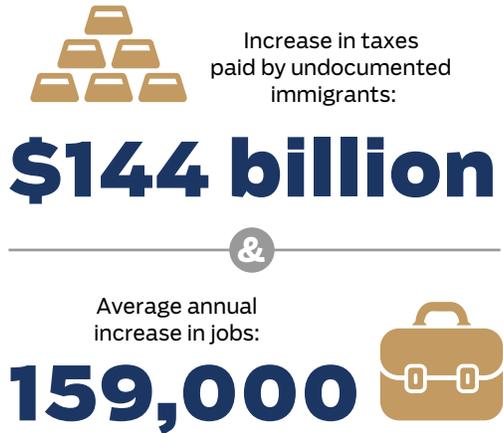
Extra money in the economy would lead to a cumulative increase in GDP over 10 years of

**\$1.1 trillion**

Source: Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford, "The Economic Effects of Granting Legal Status and Citizenship to Undocumented Immigrants" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2013).

**C** Granting citizenship to the unauthorized will bring about significant gains in terms of tax revenue and jobs.

**Economic gains over 10 years**



Source: Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford, "The Economic Effects of Granting Legal Status and Citizenship to Undocumented Immigrants" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2013).

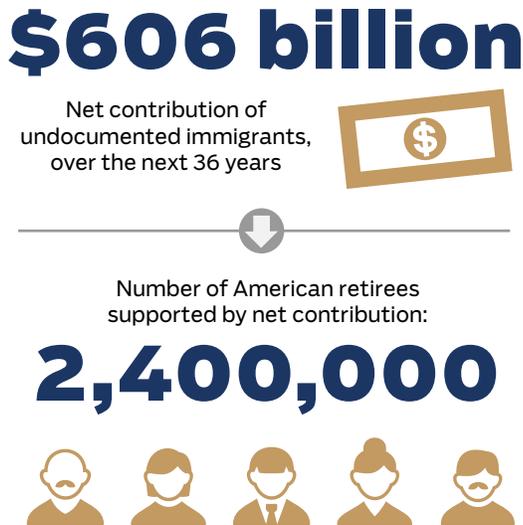
**D** Immigration reform as envisioned by the Senate in S. 744 translates into a significant decrease in the federal budget deficit, with the largest reductions occurring in the same decade that most undocumented immigrants would be eligible for citizenship.

**Reduction in the federal budget deficit due to immigration reform**



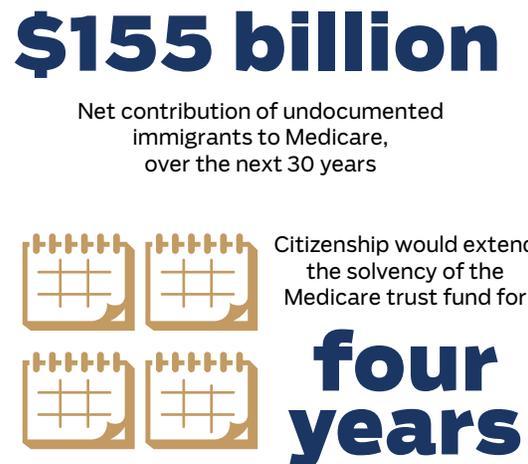
Source: Congressional Budget Office, "Cost Estimate: S.744—Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act" (2013).

**E** Citizenship would allow millions of undocumented immigrants to work on the books and contribute to Social Security.



Source: Adriana Kugler, Robert Lynch, and Patrick Oakford, "Improving Lives, Strengthening Finances: The Benefits of Immigration Reform to Social Security" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2013).

**F** Providing legal status and citizenship to undocumented immigrants would extend the solvency of the Medicare trust fund by four years and provide a net contribution to the trust fund for the next three decades.



Source: Patrick Oakford and Robert Lynch, "How Will Immigration Reform Impact the Medicare Trust Fund?" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2014).