



The



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Rising Costs of Tolerating Illegal Aliens

Why Health Care Is So Costly

While Americans without health insurance struggle with the problem of how to pay for medical care, many Mexicans don't have that problem. They just ride in a Mexican ambulance across the border to a hospital in Arizona, New Mexico, California or Texas, and get free medical treatment. The costs are currently paid by a combination of socking the taxpayers in those four border states plus inflating prices for patients who pay their own bills, insurance companies and Medicaid.

This ridiculous situation is caused by a combination of U.S. officials allowing Mexican cars to cross our border plus the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act, which mandates that U.S. hospitals with emergency-room services treat anyone who shows up for care including illegal aliens. This unfunded mandate was legislated by a Congress that closed its eyes to the costs.

We are not just talking about Mexicans who may have had an accident close to the border. We are talking about Mexicans with serious health problems who are deliberately sent to the United States after Mexican hospitals discover they can't pay for services and have no insurance.

Senators John McCain and John Kyl have proposed a solution for this dilemma: lighten the tax burden on their own state while shifting it to U.S. taxpayers nationwide. How parochial! They introduced a bill to hit the U.S. taxpayers for \$200 million for medical treatment of illegal aliens.

A study made by the U.S.-Mexico Border Counties Coalition, an American lobbying group, found that U.S. hospitals in border states provide at least \$200 million a year in uncompensated emergency care to illegal aliens. In the four border states, 77 hospitals now face a medical emergency.

Uncompensated care to illegal aliens in Arizona cost the Cochise County Health Department 30% of its annual budget, the Copper Queen Hospital in Bisbee \$200,000 out of a net operating income of \$300,000, the

University Medical Center in Tucson \$10 million, and the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Tucson \$1 million in only the first quarter of last year. The Southeast Arizona Medical Center in Douglas is on the verge of bankruptcy. Some emergency rooms and prenatal units have closed because they can't afford to stay open.

Arizona hospitals have offered donated medical equipment and ambulances to Mexican medical facilities, but Mexican customs officials have not permitted much of it to enter Mexico. They apparently prefer to send their sick to U.S. hospitals rather than care for them in Mexico. Other costs of dumping Mexicans on U.S. hospitals include transporting the seriously ill by helicopter from small border hospitals to Tucson or Phoenix. This cost ranges from \$7,000 to \$20,000 a trip.

In San Antonio, University Health System officials have proposed a statewide quarter-cent sales tax to help hospitals pay for uninsured persons who show up at the door. During the last three years, Houston's Harris County Hospital District spent \$330 million to treat and immunize illegal aliens, an amount estimated to be at least 20% of the indigent caseload.

In California, where the state budget crunch is forcing reductions in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program, observers warn of an approaching catastrophe in the health-care system. Almost one in five Californians lacks health insurance, yet the law requires hospitals to continue to serve illegal aliens free.

These costs are especially onerous because hospitals are struggling with falling Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates and rising medical malpractice premiums, and most states are struggling with revenue shortfalls. Hospitals are often hit with providing follow-up care when an uninsured patient remains bedridden for months.

It's not just the border states. The Florida Hospital Association reported that illegal aliens amassed unpaid bills of \$40.5 million last year. Uninsured illegal alien Saul Diaz, after an auto accident, spent a year in a Gwinnett Medical Center hospital, racking up an unpaid

bill of \$1 million. Another illegal alien repeatedly stabbed himself in the stomach, and it cost Gwinnett three months of care and \$390,000 to restore him to health.

All this is in addition to the many illegal aliens who are injured in highway accidents when the trucks they are jammed into like sardines are driven recklessly by uninsured Mexican drivers trying to evade police. Such accidents have occurred as far away as Utah and Iowa.

U.S. taxpayers are also taken for chumps when food stamps are given to illegal aliens. Coming from countries that have no respect for a rule of law, they don't understand that selling food stamps is a crime. Food-stamp fraud among illegal aliens came to light in 1996 when Ohio authorities discovered that a Jordanian man and his uncle had deposited \$24 million in purchased food stamps in the bank accounts associated with their chain of food and video stores. A ring of Somali asylum seekers netted \$40,000 in food stamp fraud.

When are Americans going to wake up to the price we are paying because our government won't stop the invasion of illegal aliens?

U.S. Social Security for Mexicans?

Social Security, the so-called "third rail" of American politics, has just become more incendiary. The Bush Administration is proposing a change that is even more controversial than offering younger workers the opportunity to invest a small percentage of their Social Security taxes. Everybody knows that Social Security is facing a massive shortfall in a few years when the baby-boom generation starts to retire. Higher taxes, reduced benefits, or allowing some measure of privatization are the alternatives that need to be worked out by bipartisan consensus.

The Bush Administration has just thrown a monkey wrench into a harmonious solution. A deal is in the works to add to the bulging Social Security rolls many thousands of Mexicans who are working in the United States, both legally and illegally.

This idea would be very costly to U.S. taxpayers. It's bad politics, it undermines the rule of law, and it invites a new wave of illegals to come across our border in search of taxpayer benefits.

Vicente Fox's success as Mexico's President is threatened by his country's terrible poverty. So he has a very ambitious plan to deal with it: export his poverty to the United States. Fox encourages poor and desperate Mexicans to risk all kinds of hardships to cross the U.S. border illegally, often paying their life savings to a criminal "coyote," making a deal to transport illegal drugs, or enduring life-threatening thirst in the Arizona desert.. Fox even toyed with a plan to give them Survival Kits to ease their pain.

If the illegal aliens manage to elude U.S. border guards and escape death on the highway in crowded vans or trucks driven by inexperienced drivers, many manage to land in various locations far away from Mexico, such as

Colorado, Iowa or Georgia. They can then hope to get hired by a U.S. employer willing to close his eyes to how they got so far from home.

Nevertheless, the illegals are told by Fox and other Mexican officials to "think Mexican" first and send as much as they can scrape out of their pitiful paychecks back to relatives in Mexico. According to a Pew Hispanic Center and Inter-American Development Bank report, Mexicans in the United States will send \$13 billion this year to relatives in Mexico.

As soon as George W. Bush was elected president, Vicente Fox started pressuring him to legitimize the status of the some ten million illegal aliens who are in the United States, plus give amnesty to many illegals by reviving a loophole in immigration law called 245(i). Those plans were sailing briskly until 9/11, the day that the American people woke up to the dangers of open borders. Fox was forced to move to an incrementalist strategy.

The Social Security Administration has begun discussions with Mexico about an agreement to allow Mexicans to receive U.S. Social Security benefits. One plan is to allow Mexicans, who were not employed in the U.S. long enough to collect U.S. Social Security benefits, to count the time they worked in Mexico as part of their mandatory 10 years or 40 quarters.

The more expensive plan is to provide benefits to the estimated 5 million Mexicans who are working illegally in the United States after having supplied fake Social Security numbers to their employers. "Our actuaries are working on the numbers," said Social Security spokesman Jim Courtney. Already there is talk of an addition to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City to handle 37,000 claims anticipated in the first year.

Acquiescing in Vicente Fox's demands would put hundreds of thousands of Mexicans onto the rolls of the U.S. Social Security system just as the first wave of baby boomers starts getting retirement checks. If the State Department has its way, up to \$345 billion could be siphoned from the Social Security "trust fund" over the next two decades, mostly to people who worked in the United States illegally. This doesn't even count the cost of making them eligible for Social Security disability, a program already plagued by fraud.

The Bush Administration claims that these plans would promote "totalization" of U.S. and Mexican retirement systems and develop a positive relationship between the two countries. Totalization is the bureaucratic code word for this \$345 billion ripoff of U.S. taxpayers.

If foreigners work legally in the United States and pay Social Security taxes, they are entitled to receive the benefits they earned. But U.S. taxpayers should say "no" to Mexico's attempt to shift its social welfare burdens onto the U.S. taxpayers. Offering Social Security benefits to people who knowingly violate U.S. immigration laws would create a powerful new incentive for more illegals to enter the United States.

Stealth Amnesty Is Still ‘Sheer Lunacy’

Last year’s failed attempt to get Congress to grant amnesty to millions of illegal aliens has morphed into stealth amnesty. This devious plan is hidden behind a little card that looks like a California driver’s license and goes by a strange foreign name: **matricula consular**.

Mexican President Vicente Fox has instructed his 47 consulates in the United States to issue these identification cards to Mexicans living illegally in this country, and they are lining up by the thousands to pay \$29 to get one. More than a million were issued in 2002, and over a million older matriculas issued prior to 9/11 are still in circulation.

Since no one except an illegal alien would want or need a matricula consular, there must be some reason other than identification for the Mexicans’ eagerness to acquire them. Indeed, there is. The matricula consular is a let’s-pretend I.D. designed to be used to access U.S. privileges and benefits to which aliens are not entitled. It’s Vicente Fox’s plan to circumvent U.S. federal immigration laws by lobbying state and local authorities to grant amnesty in incremental steps.

Simultaneously with the issuing of the matricula consular, Mexican consuls have been aggressively lobbying state and local governments and institutions to accept the card as though it were an American-issued I.D. As a result, 13 states are now accepting matriculas for the purpose of giving driver’s licenses to illegal aliens.

Once an illegal alien gets a driver’s license, he no longer needs his matricula consular. Eighteen of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 carried a driver’s license, presumably their key to boarding the killer planes.

Starting with Wells Fargo and Bank of America, 74 banks now accept matriculas for the purpose of opening a bank account. No doubt the banks are eyeing the profits from remittance fees on the \$13 billion a year that Mexicans who are employed in the United States send back to Mexico each year.

According to shocking information discovered by the Center for Immigration Studies, the U.S. Treasury Department winked at this practice in a sly footnote to its report to Congress (10-22-02) on implementation of the USA PATRIOT Act (which was supposed to guard against identity fraud). Footnote #17 stated, “The proposed regulations do not discourage bank acceptance of the ‘matricula consular’ identity card that is being issued by the Mexican government to immigrants.”

At least 800 police departments or cities from Los Angeles to Houston to Georgia to Chicago are now accepting the matricula consular. The card can serve to conceal criminal activity because it makes the police less likely to run background checks, take fingerprints, deport, or search for fraudulent documents.

A dozen House members sent a letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell on January 7 stating that the matriculas are issued by the governments of Mexico and some other Latin American countries for “the express purpose of

evading U.S. law.” Their letter also charges that “the active lobbying of local and state governments by consuls of foreign countries is a breach of international protocol.”

Colorado Governor Bill Owens sent a letter to the Consulate General of Mexico asking the Mexican lobbyists to register as foreign agents. After all, U.S. citizens who lobby for a foreign government are required to register.

In her first newsworthy action since becoming House Minority Leader, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) got the federal building in San Francisco to accept the matricula consular as valid identification to enter the building for purposes formerly reserved to people carrying American-issued I.D. But within a week, on January 21, the General Services Administration (GSA) suspended recognition of matriculas pending an investigation.

The U.S. institutions that accept the matricula consular do so on the assumption that it really does identify the bearer, but there is no assurance of that. The consulates don’t authenticate the documents presented by the Mexicans, don’t do background checks, and have no database network to reject duplicate matriculas to the same person.

The matricula consular facilitates illegal entry and residence in the United States and serves as a coverup for this and other crimes. It is a federal crime under Section 274 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to encourage an illegal alien to remain illegally in the United States. If our immigration authorities want to locate illegal aliens in the United States, all they have to do is drive a bus up to the lines of people standing outside of the Mexican consulates.

A backlash has set in against this racket of pretending that the matricula consular is a lottery ticket redeemable in benefits available to U.S. citizens. New York City, New York State, and some cities in Michigan, Florida and Arizona have voted not to honor the card. Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-CO) has introduced legislation to deal with the fast growing deceptions caused by use of the matricula consular.

Our Border Open to Crime and Drugs

Smuggling illegal drugs into the United States has been a big money-making scheme for many years, but the industry of smuggling people may be getting even more profitable than marijuana or cocaine. Fees range from \$1,000 for Mexicans to \$4,000 for Central Americans and up to \$50,000 for Chinese or Middle Easterners.

The 18-wheeler is the smuggler’s vehicle of choice. A loaded 18-wheeler can be worth \$100,000 to \$200,000. The business deal calls for a down payment before the ride starts. After crossing the border, the smugglers often hold the vulnerable aliens until family or friends pay a hefty ransom. Migrant smugglers, called coyotes, sometimes steal their competitors’ clients. Kidnapping of illegal border crossers has also become a profitable side business.

In one of the largest operations, smugglers were

indicted for bringing in at least 11 tractor-trailer loads of aliens between 1999 and 2002, receiving about \$1,500 for each alien. Drugs, prostitutes and money were used to entice the drivers into using their 18-wheelers to haul the human cargo. Their last trip was deadly. The aliens were loaded into the trailer with little water and no food. In the intense heat, many suffered hallucinations and lost consciousness and two died.

In Brownsville, Texas, three men pleaded guilty to another alien-smuggling ring that transported three truckloads of 30 people a day from Mexico to Houston, where people were hidden in houses until they could be shipped farther north. Western Union receipts showed that the smugglers raked in more than \$5 million for their racket, which went on for years.

A school bus mechanic was arrested in Syracuse on charges he tried to smuggle 15 Chinese nationals across the St. Lawrence River from Canada. The families had paid international smugglers between \$15,000 and \$40,000 for safe passage to the United States.

Iraqi native George Tajirian ran a smuggling ring, charging \$15,000 per head, from all over the world importing more than 1,000 Middle Eastern aliens. Two men from Pakistan and Sri Lanka were arrested in Miami on charges that they smuggled Middle Easterners into the U.S. for \$20,000 each.

Tragic truck and van accidents have been reported all over the United States as the illegals are transported far from the border. In Brownsville, Texas, 73 illegal aliens were found hidden in a tractor-trailer among overripe watermelons to disguise the odor of the people.

After a truck with illegal aliens slammed into a tractor-trailer killing nine people in Iowa, state officials estimated that 1,000 illegal immigrants cross Iowa on I-80 in overloaded vans and trucks every day. In Denison, IA, 11 bodies were found in a railroad car.

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, about 65% of all the cocaine and most of the marijuana that enters this country comes from Mexico.

In just one week last December, San Diego's KFMB Radio reported that U.S. agents caught Mexicans driving a van with 5,989 pounds of marijuana valued at \$2.7 million, a produce truck with 8,596 pounds of marijuana, an SUV overloaded with a 1,000-pound haul of marijuana, a big rig carrying a ton of marijuana, and \$213,000 worth of marijuana coming over a mobile ramp system built to drive vehicles over a fence and directly into the United States.

Border Control in south Texas caught 22 illegal aliens from Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador transporting 1,700 pounds of marijuana worth \$1.25 million. Drug investigators have discovered three tunnels and a fourth under construction at the U.S.-Mexico border at Nogales.

Hundreds of drug traffickers have flooded into North Carolina. In 1995, only 10 Hispanics were in state prisons for drug trafficking convictions, but the number has now

risen to 400. (Charlotte Observer, 12-29-02) Police believe that northwest Georgia has become a drug hub.

It should be no surprise that the combination of clusters of illegal aliens and the persistence of illegal drugs has increased the crime rate. Phoenix police report that 60% of the homicides involve Mexicans mixed up in smuggling both drugs and people. Tucson's crime rate has grown 12 times the national average, and a vehicle is stolen in Arizona every 10 minutes.

City gangs are a big problem in many states, and gangs have invaded the suburbs, too. The worst city gang is thought to be MS-13, a ruthless Salvadoran gang that has spread to at least 28 states including Massachusetts. Gangs from Mexico have been reported burglarizing stopped trains. About a dozen railroad bandits ambushed two FBI agents in New Mexico, kicking and beating them with rocks until they were in critical condition.

The deserts and the national parks have become favorite routes for the entry of illegal aliens. Last year, 200,000 illegal aliens were caught sneaking into our country through the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in southern Arizona, and 700,000 pounds of illegal drugs were intercepted.

National Park Service ranger Kris Eggle was stationed there last August 9. Two armed Mexicans, who had killed four men in a murder spree over drugs, crossed into the Arizona state park. Three border patrol agents including Kris Eggle responded. One fugitive was captured but the other fled, and Kris Eggle, who had been a cross country runner, gave chase. Eggle was shot below his bullet-proof vest and died in an ambulance.

Where is any media or public outrage over this murder by an illegal alien on U.S. territory? Congressman Tom Tancredo called the incident "the latest example of a border gone wild."

One million illegal aliens are now entering our country each year. If a Mexican day laborer can sneak across our border, so can an al Qaeda terrorist. According to a Fox News poll, 79% of Americans support using the military to help secure U.S. borders.

It's not only "sheer lunacy" to give amnesty to illegal aliens, it is also "sheer lunacy" to tolerate the illegal business of smuggling people and drugs into the United States. U.S. citizens are paying a terrible price in costs to our taxpayers, in crime, and in drug addiction. The best way to stop the costs and the tragedies is to close our borders to illegal entry.

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