

Advance stories

Craig Daily Press

Group studies immigration

By Brandon Johanssen

Wednesday, December 28, 2005

As the debate about illegal immigration heats up, a Denver think tank is set to release a study about its scope and effects.

The Bell Policy Center, a liberal nonprofit, will release a report Thursday that assesses the economic effects of immigrants, immigrant demographics and political proposals aimed at slowing illegal immigration.

Heather McGregor, a spokeswoman for the center said the report, which is based on existing research, is aimed at laying out the facts about immigration in preparation for what she expects to be an emotional debate about the issue.

"Clearly, it's a big issue in Colorado, and we expect it to be a big issue in 2006," she said.

The center conducted the study because a ballot initiative is expected next year that would restrict governments from providing non-emergency services to illegal immigrants.

The amendment to the constitution would allow citizens to sue the state and local governments for providing non-emergency services to people in the country illegally.

William Herron of Evergreen and his group, Defend Colorado Now, is pushing the initiative.

Herron tried to get the initiative on the 2005 ballot, but legal challenges by opposition groups blocked it.

Herron did not return calls for comment Tuesday.

The Bell Policy Center opposes Herron's legislation. The study it will release Thursday will explain the group's stance on the issue, McGregor said.

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<http://www.craigdailypress.com/section/archive/story/20029>

Colorado Springs Gazette

December 29, 2005

Restricting services for illegals opposed

By Perry Swanson

Colorado voters should reject efforts to deny government services to illegal immigrants, the Bell Policy Center will argue at the state Capitol today.

The center is a think tank based in Denver that produces influential reports on public policy. It says taking government services away from illegal immigrants would cause unneeded suffering without improving national security.

Center leaders plan to explain their opposition to a proposed ballot initiative to ban illegal immigrants from receiving most government services. They'll also issue a report on the makeup of immigrants in Colorado and the United States.

The report will examine legal and illegal immigrant populations, even though the ballot measure focuses only on people in the country without permission.

"You certainly can't isolate undocumented immigrants and pretend that there aren't certain issues associated with legal immigrants, such as language in the public schools," center spokeswoman Heather McGregor said.

Evergreen resident Bill Herron is advancing the ballot initiative with his organization, Defend Colorado Now. The group plans to start next month collecting the 67,829 signatures needed to place the issue on November's ballot.

The measure would change the Colorado Constitution to say illegal immigrants may receive only government services required by federal law or in an emergency such as a traffic wreck. That leaves out much of what governments do for residents — everything from library checkouts to water service.

Most government agencies do not require proof someone is in the country legally before they provide services.

A volunteer for the campaign, Fred Elbel, said Wednesday that the group was gearing up to collect signatures and unaware the Bell Policy Center had announced opposition before the measure is approved for the ballot.

The center is planning extensive research on immigration during 2006, McGregor said, covering the economic, political and social effects of people moving to the United States.

Data on illegal immigrants are sketchy. The U.S. Census Bureau attempts to count everyone who lives in the country but it does not distinguish between legal and illegal immigrants. The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, also does not attempt to

count illegal immigrants.

The Pew Hispanic Center, a Washington-based research group, estimates the number of illegal immigrants nationwide at 10.3 million, or 29 percent of all immigrants. Most of those immigrants came from Mexico, and most arrived here since 1990, the center said. In Colorado, the Pew Hispanic Center estimates the number of illegal immigrants at 200,000 to 250,000.

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Comments from Gazette readers:

Restricting services for illegals opposed

I'll be supporting the "Defend Colorado Now" initiative. If a person is in this country illegally, and is draining away services my taxes pay for and they most likely don't pay for, then it's wrong. It's bad enough when government (local and federal) drains away my hard earned paycheck with taxes, initiatives, mill levies, etc., but I also have to support someone who doesn't pay taxes and had to resort to entering our country illegally, it's not right. Don't get me wrong, emergency services as mentioned in this article should be provided, that's the humane thing to do (we do it abroad all the time), but all the other services – NO!

–Tony Dal Lago 12/29/05 05:41:21 AM

Restricting services for illegals opposed It does not matter where you come from, or who you are. If you come to another society illegally you are placing a burden on that society, no matter your history or culture. Maybe you will benefit from the process, but you are doing it at the expense of others. America welcomes all immigrants, but you are not an immigrant if you come here illegally. More people have crossed our borders illegally in the past twenty years than anytime in America's history. Again its not who you are, or the culture you represent, its the numbers. And in this case the number of poor, uneducated and criminal element. If we do not halt this type of mass immigration, we will cease to exist as a nation to provide the freedoms and oppertunity for a better life for all in America. We are seeing those warning signs now, but no one is heeding them. The costs to Colorado to provide services to the illegal is financially debilitating to the state. To ignore those costs and the effects mass illegal immigration has on our state is irresponsible at best. John Campbell

–John Campbell 12/29/05 08:09:30 AM

I don't think that these illegals should be allowed any help from our government. They don't contribute in any way and they are a burden on our society. We already have enough lazy individuals that won't work and we (taxpayers) are supporting them, so lets not add to the list. If illegals want to be over here in our wonderful land of the free then they need to do what they can to become a citizen and pay taxes. It gets really frustrating when I as a single very hard working mother cannot qualify for any assistance because I actually have a job but these illegals can come and sit on the behinds and collect what they need to survive.

–Emma 12/29/05 08:29:41 AM

I don't understand – what's the point in even discussing a topic that we all know will never be resolved to benefit American born citizens?!? Immigrants will always come to this country – and this county will always take care of them. Here's a story for you to think about – I was 18 years old when I moved to Sacramento, CA – I worked a part time job and was a full time student. I had no medical benefits. I got really sick, and had to be

rushed to the ER – turns out I had a serious UTI that affected my right kidney and I had to be hospitalized. When I was released I attempted to get some sort of state medical assistance – 10 years later I still remember the words the lady at the state office told me – "If you don't have any kids or you aren't an immigrant – you don't qualify" I will never support immigrants coming into this country let alone pay for their medical benefits with my hard earned paycheck while they're working for cash under the table. It's bad enough that I have to support our own people who live off of the state welfare system and do nothing to get ahead in life!! Immigrants need to go back home – and what upsets me – is that if their country is SO bad – why do they come here and then not learn the English language??

-Alani 12/29/05 09:43:03 AM

Why should we even be considering continuing aid for illegals??? They are breaking the law—why are they not being treated accordingly? Instead, we want to offer these illegals our resources and our dollars—I don't think so! If someone has gone through all the hoops to be here legally, I welcome them, as they will be contributing to their new society. But if they are here illegally, not only should be denying them 100% of services, we should be deporting them! Keep American services for Americans!

-Kelly M. 12/29/05 12:33:05 PM

This is the biggest pack of drivell ever heard in my life, again we hear about the poor illegals, The message I get is clear: lets take care of the illegals and us foot the cost and we go broke doing it, I know i am good and tired of paying for illegals in our schools and in our country, we are all paying higher taxes every year. Yea now it is in Colorado but it will branch out like a virus across the country. Guess we need to throw self preservation aside and tell our children and American workers they don't need jobs, the poor illegals need ours jobs more than we do. RIGHT!!!!

-Keith 12/29/05 03:41:27 PM

Next-day coverage

Rocky Mountain News

Cutting off illegals could cost

Think tank says barring services wouldn't save funds

By Ann Imse

December 30, 2005

The Bell Policy Center said Thursday that a proposed ballot initiative barring illegal immigrants from receiving non-emergency state services would cost Colorado more than it would save.

The Denver-based think tank based its evaluation on a report last year by the Legislative Council, a group composed of 18 legislators, on a failed bill with similar provisions.

The report said the bill would have cost roughly nine times more than it would have saved in the first year.

But the sponsor of the bill said the Legislative Council's estimate "was way, way off."

Rep. Dave Schultheis, R-Colorado Springs, said following a Bell Policy Center news conference Thursday that its report grossly underestimated the savings at \$460,000 a year.

He predicted the savings would be "tens of millions of dollars."

The Legislative Council report cited savings in only one of 17 state departments. It listed costs in five.

In making its cost argument Thursday, Bell officials condemned an initiative that is expected to be on the November 2006 ballot. The proposed amendment to the state constitution is being promoted by a group called Defend Colorado Now, which did not return calls Thursday. Petition signatures are not yet being collected.

Bell officials said the initiative's cost-cutting effect would be less than expected because it would not touch the two most expensive services provided to illegal immigrants: K-12 education and emergency medical care. Both are required by federal law for all persons in the U.S.

The legislative report cited by Bell put the cost of enforcing a ban on state services to illegal immigrants at \$4.3 million the first year and \$2.6 million the second year. The cost largely would be to check and record identifications before services are provided.

Neither last year's bill nor this year's initiative specify services that would be barred. But the legislative report suggests the list might include welfare, non-emergency medical care, higher education, rehabilitation services, vehicle registration, public safety services, court and probation services, and various licenses.

Illegal immigrants rarely apply for services that require identifying themselves, said Bell's president, Wade Buchanan. "This population is not accessing the benefits you think," he said.

"We know what it's going to cost. What we can't find are the savings to taxpayers to justify those costs," he said.

But Buchanan conceded that counting illegal immigrants and calculating the benefits they use is tough.

Schultheis agreed.

"The reason why you can't get good numbers is because nobody will keep track of how many are here," he said.

Buchanan said Bell did ask to review the Legislative Council's detailed file used to calculate the cost and savings estimates for last year's bill. But the council loaned out the file within the Capitol and has been unable to retrieve it.

Schultheis said he does not intend to reintroduce his bill because he expects the initiative to make November's ballot. That means the Legislative Council will not be reconsidering its estimate of the costs and savings of his bill this year. Such estimates are not made for initiatives, Schultheis said.

Buchanan said Bell will continue to pursue the financial questions.

"We intend to be a truth squad" in the upcoming debate, he said.

"Immigration is a serious challenge," he added. "We do not have a policy that matches workers with jobs. We do not have a policy that makes the borders safe."

He said any solution must include efforts to improve opportunities for migrants in their home countries to reduce their need to come to the United States.

Denying benefits to illegal immigrants

The state Legislative Council last year estimated the cost and savings of denying benefits to illegal immigrants as part of its evaluation of a proposed measure.

- **Cost:** \$4.3 million
- **Savings:** \$460,000
- **Net cost:** \$3.8 million

Source: Legislative Council fiscal note on HB 05-1271

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http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN_15_4350764,00.html

The Denver Post

Immigration costs spark debate Initiative would limit services

By Chris Frates

A proposed Colorado ballot initiative to limit government services for undocumented immigrants would cost taxpayers more to implement than it would save, according to a report released Thursday by a liberal think tank.

The report's release was an early salvo in what is shaping up to be a contentious fight next year over the state's role in immigration policy.

"This report shows quite clearly that immigration and immigrants, both legal and illegal, make a positive contribution to our society, make a positive contribution to our economy, that the proposed ballot measure really misses the mark in terms of solving any problem," said Wade Buchanan, president of the Bell Policy Center.

The report compared the proposed initiative – which would prevent illegal immigrants from using all non-emergency services except those mandated by the federal government – to similar legislation proposed this year by Republican state Rep. David Schultheis of Colorado Springs.

State departments predicted that Schultheis' proposal would cost them \$4.3 million in 2005-06 and save them about \$460,000, a net cost of \$3.9 million.

Schultheis said the fiscal analysis was "bogus."

"When various departments or agencies within the government do not want to see something happen because it upsets their way of doing things, they have a strong tendency to want to build up a fiscal note to kill the bill," he said.

Fiscal notes, he said, "very rarely show savings. They only show costs to departments."

A supporter of limiting services, Schultheis is not involved with the initiative campaign, he said. But he said a number of related proposals are expected to be introduced when lawmakers return to session next month.

William Herron, who filed the initiative proposal, declined to comment.

Buchanan said that because immigration is not a state issue, "the right solution is to support a comprehensive solution at the federal level."

The primary and secondary education of illegal immigrants and citizen children of undocumented parents is the most expensive service government provides, said Rich Jones, Bell's policy director. But because education is federally mandated, the initiative would not prevent education spending.

"We have this initiative that's going to purport to say we're going to prevent undocumented immigrants from getting government services, but what most of the costs are they're not going to touch," he said. "We think this thing completely misses the mark."

Based on 2004 national averages, Colorado has roughly 63,000 school-age kids who are either undocumented immigrants or are citizens with undocumented parents, Jones said. At a per student cost of about \$6,000, the total cost of educating them was about \$378 million, he said.

But even so, Jones said, "Immigrants pay their way" and are an economic benefit to the country over time.

Schultheis called the education example a "bogus argument."

"The more unfriendly we are ... to people who are here illegally, the less people who are going to come to Colorado, have babies or bring their small children over the border and come to Colorado and use our K-12 education system," he said. "It's about as obvious as the nose on your face."

The Bell report also said a provision of a proposed initiative that would allow people to sue "opens governments up to new litigation liability" that could cost taxpayers money.

Schultheis fired back, "I'm for accountability."

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http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_3355435

The Daily Camera / Associated Press

Immigration ballot plan questioned Opponents say proposal won't solve any problems

**By Steven K. Paulson, Associated Press
December 30, 2005**

DENVER — A ballot proposal that would bar illegal immigrants from receiving government services won't solve any problems and could end up costing taxpayers, opponents said Thursday in the first salvo of a fight that is expected to dominate Colorado next year.

"This is a national problem. It can't be solved at the state level, and any effort to do so is bound to backfire on Colorado taxpayers," said Wade Buchanan, president of the Bell Policy Center, a liberal think tank.

A recent study compiled by the center determined that legal and illegal immigrants add about \$10 billion to the U.S. economy each year. He said most come here to work, not to apply for government services, which is the target of the initiative.

The November 2006 ballot proposal would bar services beyond those required by federal law to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen. It would apply to state agencies and all local governments and special districts. It also would allow citizens to sue state or local governments that refuse to enforce it.

The plan is being pushed by Defend Colorado Now, a group of conservatives formed to fight illegal immigration. A similar proposal failed to make the Colorado ballot two years ago.

Buchanan said the new plan would cost taxpayers more than it saves because agencies would have to check immigration records. He also said it would leave the government open to expensive legal fights.

State Rep. Dave Schultheis, of Colorado Springs, a founding member of the Republican Study Committee of Colorado, which supports the initiative, said opponents are failing to consider the benefits of deterring illegal immigrants from coming to Colorado in the first place and convincing an estimated 250,000 illegal immigrants in Colorado to leave.

"It's time to make Colorado unfriendly to people who are in this country illegally," Schultheis said.

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http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/state_news/article/0,1713,BDC_2419_4351400,00.html

Colorado immigration statistics

**By Associated Press
December 30, 2005**

Colorado immigration statistics, according to The Bell Policy Center, a liberal think tank:

In 2004, 434,938 foreign-born immigrants lived in Colorado, about 10 percent of the overall state population.

About half of the state's immigrants, between 200,000 and 250,000 people, are estimated to be undocumented.

Immigration adds about \$10 billion to the U.S. economy annually.

Most immigrants come to the United States to work. While 83 percent of native-born men work, the rate is 86 percent for documented immigrant men and 90 percent for undocumented immigrant men.

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http://www.dailycamera.com/bdc/state_news/article/0,1713,BDC_2419_4351396,00.html

The Daily Sentinel

Government services should not be cut to illegal immigrants, Bell center says

By ERIK LINCOLN

Special to The Sentinel

A proposed 2006 ballot measure to stop non-emergency government services to illegal immigrants has drawn criticism from a Denver-based think tank.

The ballot measure, which is being proposed by Defend Colorado Now, would require state and local agencies to check the citizenship of people applying for government services.

The Bell Policy Center released a report Thursday on the effects of immigration in Colorado.

According to the report, immigrants pay more in taxes than they consume in government services.

However, state and local government shoulders much of the burden in paying for services to illegal immigrants, particularly those with families, than the federal government, according to the report.

However, federal mandates will still allow illegal immigrants and their families access to K12 education and access to emergency Medicare coverage.

The measure would also allow any Colorado citizen to sue any government agency to ensure compliance.

Bell Policy Center Director of Policy and Research Rich Jones, who co-authored the report, said while there is a need to review immigration policies, cutting government services is not a good idea.

"We think (immigration issues) ought to be dealt with at the federal level and not the state level," Jones said.

According to the Cato Institute, rising demand for low-skill jobs is a driving force behind immigration from Mexico.

The Bell report cited a study by the National Research Council that said the influx of immigrants has "little overall effect on wages paid to native workers." The Bell report said immigration reduced wages 1 percent or 2 percent.

State Rep. Dave Schultheis, R-Colorado Springs, said the wage impacts reported by The Bell were not consistent with a January report by Bear-Stearns that said the impact is 4 percent to 6 percent.

Jones said Bell did use the Bear–Stearns report for other information but decided to use the other figures.

“I think it’s a difference in the how the studies are conducted,” Jones said.

“We went with the (National Research Council) numbers partly because we felt comfortable with those.”

Schultheis sponsored a bill during the last legislative term that would have similarly restricted government services to illegal immigrants. The bill was killed in committee.

The Legislative Council estimated Schultheis’ bill would save \$500,000 but would cost the state \$3.9 million.

Schultheis said the Legislative Council’s costs were “ultra-overinflated” and said the bill would save hundreds of millions in the long run.

http://www.gjsentinel.com/news/content/news/stories/2005/12/29/12_30_1bBell_immigration_report.html

The Greeley Tribune

Services initiative 'going to backfire'

Maria Sanchez-Traynor

December 30, 2005

An initiative aimed at denying government services to illegal immigrants would cost more money than it saves, said researchers from the Bell Policy Center.

The center is a Denver think tank that produces reports on public policy. A Bell report released Thursday argues that Colorado voters should reject an initiative that will deny government services to illegal immigrants.

"The ballot measure will cost taxpayers more than it will save them," said Wade Buchanan, president of the center. "It's going to really backfire."

Next month, a group called Defend Colorado Now plans to start collecting the 67,829 signatures it will need to put the initiative on the November 2006 ballot. If passed, the initiative would deny government services to illegal immigrants. The initiative would not restrict services for emergency medical treatment or K-12 education.

The Bell report compiled several immigration studies and said that legal and illegal immigrants contribute \$10 billion to the U.S. economy each year.

The exact costs and benefits of illegal immigration are difficult to pinpoint. Many of the studies cited in the report did not distinguish between illegal and legal immigrants.

Rich Jones, Bell's director of policy and research, said the biggest immigration expense, K-12 education for children of immigrants, would not be addressed by the initiative. Most of those children are U.S. citizens and the state is required by federal law to provide them an education.

In many cases, the parents of these children never try to access government services themselves because they are afraid of being discovered, he said.

"Most of the real costs they aren't even going to touch," said Rich Jones, Bell's director of policy and research. "It completely misses the mark."

Buchanan and Jones both argued that the issue is best left to the federal government.

State Rep. Dave Schultheis of Colorado Springs, a founding member of the Republican Study Committee of Colorado that supports the initiative, said opponents are failing to consider the benefits of deterring illegal immigrants from coming to Colorado and convincing an estimated 250,000 illegal immigrants in Colorado to leave.

"It's time to make Colorado unfriendly to people who are in this country illegally," Schultheis said.

Associated Press contributed to this report.

<http://www.greeleytrib.com/article/20051230/NEWS/112300061>

The Craig Daily Press

Group: Plan won't solve problems

Liberal think tank releases report on illegal immigration

By Brandon Johansson

Friday, December 30, 2005

A proposal to stop illegal immigrants from receiving non-emergency state government services would cause more trouble than it's worth, the president of a Denver think tank said Thursday.

Wade Buchanan, president of the Bell Policy Center, said an initiative to restrict services in Colorado to citizens and legal immigrants won't solve the country's immigration problems.

"This is a national problem. It can't be solved at the state level and any effort to do so is bound to backfire on Colorado taxpayers," Buchanan said in a statement Thursday announcing the release of a Bell Policy study on immigration.

The liberal think tank released the study this week in preparation for what Buchanan said would be a major debate in 2006.

"We want to make sure we at least debate based on facts and not on pre-conceived notions," Buchanan said in an interview.

An anti-illegal immigration group called Defend Colorado Now is pushing an amendment to the state's constitution that would restrict government services for illegal immigrants.

The amendment would allow Colorado residents to sue local governments for providing any non-emergency services not mandated by federal law.

Evergreen resident William Herron, chairman of Defend Colorado Now, submitted a proposal in October to state legislative officials in an attempt to get the initiative on next year's ballot.

Herron on Thursday declined to comment on the initiative.

Buchanan said he hopes the study released Thursday, which is based on existing research, will clear up some myths about illegal immigration.

It's a myth that illegal immigrants come to America to take advantage of welfare and other government programs, Buchanan said.

Most undocumented workers are here to do just that — work, he said.

According to the study, 83 percent of native-born men work, and 86 percent of immigrant men and 90 percent of undocumented men work.

When it comes to costs to government, undocumented immigrants pay more in taxes than they receive in government services, Buchanan said.

Undocumented immigrants who have fake Social Security cards pay into a system from which they will never receive money, Buchanan said.

But although illegal immigration can benefit the federal government, it places disproportionate costs on local governments that must bear the cost of educating immigrant children, Buchanan said.

Buchanan said that although Bell Policy opposes the immigration initiative being pushed by Defend Colorado, his group would not actively campaign against it.

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The Durango Herald

Report: Proposed law not efficient 'Report shows ... that immigrants make a positive contribution'

December 30, 2005

By Joe Hanel

DENVER – A proposed law to deny government services to illegal immigrants would cost more than it saves, according to researchers from The Bell Policy Center, a Denver think tank.

To view the report by The Bell Policy Center on immigration in Colorado, go to www.thebell.org.

A group called Defend Colorado Now is trying to place the question on the November 2006 ballot. A failed bill in the Legislature last year had a similar aim, and Bell's report cited an analysis by the nonpartisan Legislative staff that showed extra paperwork would cost the state \$4.3 million in the first year. The state would save only \$460,000 from denying services – mostly child welfare – to illegal immigrants.

William Herron, leader of the Defend Colorado Now campaign, refused to comment on Bell's report because the center's leaders didn't tell him about it in advance.

"We won't have any comment probably until early January," he said.

Herron also refused to speak in general about his initiative.

"I have no comment," he said. "We'll save it for later."

Bell released a 20-page report Thursday, with the anticipation that the immigration debate will heat up in 2006.

The debate is "heavy on rhetoric, heavy on emotion and, we fear, a little light on facts," said Wade Buchanan, president of the Bell Policy Center.

"This report shows quite clearly that immigrants – legal and illegal – make a positive contribution to our economy and society," Buchanan said.

Bell's report analyzed studies by other groups. Buchanan said the Bell Center will follow up with more detailed reports later.

Illegal immigration brings money in to the federal government, but it imposes a cost on state and local governments, mostly through the school system, according to the report. "What we're dealing with are the children of immigrants who drive a lot of these costs," Buchanan said. "Most of the children of immigrants are U.S. citizens. They are us."

State laws can do very little to address the immigration issue, Buchanan said.

"This is not a state issue. This is a federal issue," he said.

In 2004, 435,000 immigrants lived in Colorado, about a tenth of the state's population. Between 200,000 and 250,000 immigrants are in the state illegally, according to the Bell report.

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http://www.durangoherald.com/asp-bin/article_generation.asp?article_type=news&article_path=/news/05/news051230_5.htm

TheDenverChannel.com
Channel 7 ABC

Think Tank Opposed To Immigration Ballot Measure

POSTED: 6:34 pm MST December 29, 2005

UPDATED: 12:22 pm MST December 30, 2005

DENVER -- A ballot proposal that would bar illegal immigrants from receiving government services won't solve any problems and could end up costing taxpayers, opponents said Thursday in the first salvo of a fight that is expected to dominate Colorado next year.

"This is a national problem. It can't be solved at the state level, and any effort to do so is bound to backfire on Colorado taxpayers," said Wade Buchanan, president of the Bell Policy Center, a liberal think tank.

A recent study compiled by the center determined that legal and illegal immigrants add about \$10 billion to the U.S. economy each year. He said most come here to work, not apply for government services, which is the target of the initiative.

"We do need to take immigration issue seriously. We do not need to do it as an enforcement matter," Buchanan said.

The November 2006 ballot proposal would bar services beyond those required by federal law to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen. It would apply to state agencies and all local governments and special districts. It also would allow citizens to sue state or local governments that refuse to enforce it.

The plan is being pushed by Defend Colorado Now, a group of conservatives formed to fight illegal immigration. A similar proposal failed to make the Colorado ballot two years ago.

Buchanan said the new plan would cost taxpayers more than it saves because agencies would have to check immigration records. He also said it would leave the government open to expensive legal fights.

State Rep. Dave Schultheis of Colorado Springs, a founding member of the Republican Study Committee of Colorado, which supports the initiative, said opponents are failing to consider the benefits of deterring illegal immigrants from coming to Colorado in the first place and convincing an estimated 250,000 illegal immigrants in Colorado to leave.

"It's time to make Colorado unfriendly to people who are in this country illegally," Schultheis said.

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