

these numbers, and they conclude that the cost over the next 10 years to the taxpayers of this country—not including enforcement, fences, border patrol, all that stuff; just the cost from legalizing those who are here illegally—will be over \$30 billion.

Now, with my amendment I offered to delay the earned-income tax credit payments to illegal immigrants who are here, and to delay it until at least they became a legal permanent resident, we would reduce that to maybe \$25 billion. That passed by a narrow margin, which I was pleased to have passed, but all the rest of the benefits are there, so we are looking at perhaps a \$25 billion net drain on the U.S. Treasury, according to the Congressional Budget Office. They admit it will be much greater in the future.

In the outyears, the costs will increase because the way the bill is written, certain benefits are not made available initially to those who are given legal status, but their benefits will increase in the years to come. How much will those increases be? When asked if it would be a substantial increase in the future, the Congressional Budget Office—which did not score beyond the 10 years—said certainly, absolutely, it would be a substantial increase.

One institution has looked at this figure: the Heritage Foundation. The Heritage Foundation's senior fellow, Robert Rector, has spent months on this very issue. He used the best available statistics in calculating the costs to the American Government—State, Federal, and local treasuries—of amnesty. It is a picture that I think, as responsible legislators, as representatives of our own constituents, we have to think about, we have to acknowledge. The number he came up with is so large that many people have just tried to dismiss it without any thought. But Robert Rector is one of the foremost experts in this country on welfare and social programs. He was the architect of the welfare reform President Clinton vetoed two or three times and finally signed and took credit for for the rest of his tenure. How wonderful it was. It did work exceedingly well. Mr. Rector's analysis cannot be lightly dismissed. He concludes that the cost to Federal, State, and local governments from just retirement of the 12 million to their death would be \$2.6 trillion.

It is clear any short-term benefit—whatever the exact number is out there, whatever the exact number is—any short-term benefit provided to American businesses who would enjoy these low-skilled workers would be more than offset by the lifetime costs of tax credits, welfare, food stamps, Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare that will be picked up by the American public—the taxpayers.

Mr. Rector said: "This is a fiscal disaster."

Finally, I believe this legislation, because it will not reduce illegal immi-

gration and will double—only a 13-percent reduction—and will double legal immigration, will put even more stress than we currently have on working middle-class Americans. It will have a tendency to pull down wages of American workers. That is their asset: their labor. But workers are more than a mere asset; they are human beings. They are created with inalienable rights, according to our Declaration, and they are citizens who are the ultimate shareholders of America. Citizenship carries responsibilities for them and for us. We pay taxes. We serve in the military to the point of giving our lives for our country.

I have talked to a lot of mamas and fathers in the last several years who have had their sons—middle-class Americans who are serving our country in Iraq and Afghanistan who have lost their lives in service to our country.

We have an obligation to obey the law. We accept court rulings even if they are silly and absurd. That is what we do. We grumble, but we follow what the court says. We obey laws passed by this Congress, whether we like them or not, whether they make sense or not. That is the responsibility of citizenship in this Nation we have inherited.

Those of us now in Congress I submit have an obligation to those dutiful citizens who serve every day doing the right thing. We owe them something. One thing we owe them is consistent and fair application and enforcement of the law. Another is to make sure those who do the right thing are rewarded or allowed to prosper and those who do not are disadvantaged. This is the definition of a morally ordered society. We are a community of people, voluntarily bound together in many ways. It is the uniqueness of America. It is our strength. But do not ever doubt that that moral order, that proper balance, can be eroded if we are irresponsible in this body. It can even be lost.

Labor is more than barrels of oil, tons of iron ore, bales of cotton, or kilowatts of electricity. Our workers are our citizens, created beings of infinite worth. They have every right to expect, to demand, that their elected representatives protect their interests, their country's legitimate national interests, not just what might be seen as an immediate benefit to that abstraction we might refer to as "the economy."

So I believe in immigration. I support immigration. I do not want to end it. I support an effective temporary worker program. But let's tell the truth about immigration and wages in this country. The elites are doing very well in this boom period, corporations are making record profits, but what about our citizens of this Republic who are less skilled? What have their wages done?

We have had a series of witnesses, including Dr. Chiswick from the University of Illinois. We had Professor Borjas of the Kennedy School at Harvard. We had Alan Tonnel at a Senate

hearing. We had a hearing and all of them testified and all of them agreed that large numbers of immigrants are, in fact, reducing wages of American citizens.

I left this Senate Chamber Friday after talking about this issue, and I mentioned wages. I went out, and right on the corner there was a gentleman with a homemade cardboard sign. He had white hair and gray in his beard.

I said: Well, what brings you here?

He said: Well, I wanted to come up and have my say about this immigration bill. He told me he was a master carpenter and that he was from Melbourne, FL, and that in the 1990s he made \$75,000 a year. He said he can hardly stay in business today because of the large flow of immigrant workers that has pulled down his ability to have the kind of income he would like.

Now, some may think that is too much money for a carpenter. I don't, not if he works hard and not if he is good. Don't think there are not millions of Americans who have given their lives to developing a skill and a craft and that, in the blink of an eye, can be made less valuable by an unwise, ineffective, inappropriate immigration policy.

So there is a lot we need to think about as we debate this bill. I am absolutely convinced it will not do what it promises, and what it will do may be adverse to our country. I am very worried about it. There is no reason whatsoever in the face of overwhelming public opposition that we should be bringing it up, and there is no reason whatsoever that the majority leader should be utilizing this clay pigeon procedure which, apparently, he will execute tomorrow, that will allow us to vote only on the amendments he chooses and to craft this procedure for handling this bill to minimize to the *n*th degree the amount of time we have available to debate it. I think that is a mistake. I object to that and urge my colleagues to vote tomorrow not to proceed to the legislation.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, before making my closing procedural remarks and turning the floor over to the Senator from Indiana, I would like to use morning business for a brief moment to respond to the Senator from Alabama.

Our views on the immigration issue are much different. I happen to believe