Why Helping Public Schools in U.S. Communities Impacted by Irregular Immigration is Good Politics Michael Maxey¹

Vice President Joe Biden is proposing a \$4 billion <u>Central American</u> social, economic and governance initiative to address the root causes of out migration from the Northern Triangle.² This initiative is part of comprehensive immigration reform that would also restore asylum procedures allowing immigrants to stay in the United States while their cases are adjudicated. While there are many that welcome a return to a fair and just review of asylum claims, the fact that there are now over 1.2 million pending claims and long delays in the adjudication process could provide an incentive for renewed out migration from the Northern Triangle.

According to the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Refugee Resettlement, over 76,000 children apprehended alone at the border since 2016 have been placed in U.S. communities as Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC). The majority of these children are from the Northern Triangle and a change in U.S. immigration procedures could potentially provide an incentive for more children to be sent North for reunification with their families, and to escape the murderous situation back home where recruitment to gangs is often a choice between life and death. So, they attempt to come here, as a "safer" refuge. There are many costs and benefits of this migration but one aspect – an estimated \$1.2 billion cost of public-school education -- could especially impact elderly, retired, fixed-income home owners.



While not directly related, real estate taxes generally support local public-school costs and as public education costs increase there may be an increase in real estate taxes. Fixed-income seniors have already been hard hit by real estate tax increases in the primary destination counties for Unaccompanied Alien Children. A greater increase in these immigrants could significantly increase public school costs and potentially result in real estate tax increases.

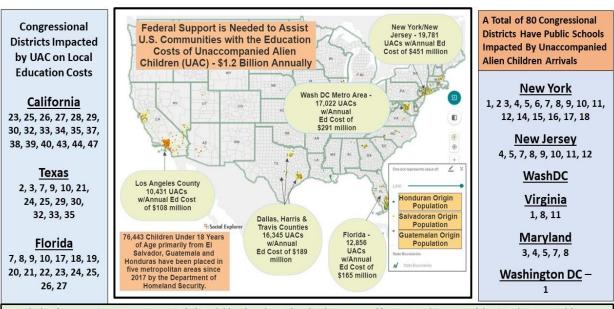
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² See https://joebiden.com/centralamerica/.

To offset this impact on U.S. communities in which these children and their families reside, there should be a \$4 billion initiative to help public schools with the education costs of Unaccompanied Alien Children. This would provide support for our communities that are bearing the burden of irregular immigration and should lessen the need for real estate tax increases that could hit senior citizens the hardest. According to the AARP, 71 percent of over-65 seniors voted in 2016 election – finding ways to prevent hardship for these voters should be every politician's priority.³

In analyzing where Unaccompanied Alien Children have been placed over the last four years, there are five major areas of the country that are impacted: California, Texas, Florida, Washington DC Metro Area, and New York/New Jersey. A breakdown by county identifies which school systems have been affected. Increased costs were calculated by determining the number of Unaccompanied Alien Children placed there multiplied by the average yearly cost of public education. The map below highlights the 80 Congressional Districts that are impacted in some degree by increased education costs. Of these 80 Congressional Districts, 62 are currently held by a Democratic incumbent.



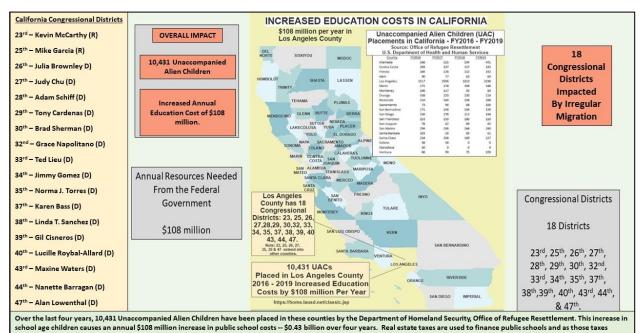
Over the last four years, 76,443 Unaccompanied Alien Children have been placed in the counties of five metropolitan areas of the United States in California, Texas, Florida, Washington DC Metro Area (VA-DC-MD), and New York/New Jersey. The Department of Homeland Security, Office of Refugee Resettlement, has managed the placement process. All of these children are under 18 years of age and by local law are required to be enrolled in public schools. This increase in school age children raises annual public education by at least \$1.2 billion. Over four years this amounts to almost \$5 billion. Real estate taxes finance public schools and as those taxes increase, fixed income, elderly home-owners bear the burden. Since the elderly vote at a disproportionately higher level than other demographics, the issue of increased irregular migration and higher public education costs could be an important issue in Congressional races in the future.

With the communities identified by county and Congressional Districts, the increase in real estate taxes over the last four years was estimated. The following graphics show each state with a breakdown of the number of Unaccompanied Alien Children, their cost to the public-school system, and how much real estate taxes have increased based on property values multiplied by the current tax rate for real estate. This is a rough approximation but it gives a general sense of what has happened in terms of real estate taxes in these communities. This analysis takes the housing value estimated by Zillow (median house value) for each year and multiplies that times the current tax rate. The impact of California's Proposition 13 was not part of the analysis for assessing increases in real estate taxes in California.⁴

³ https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/government-elections/info-2018/power-role-older-voters.html.

⁴ According to Santa Clara County Tax Accessor <u>website</u>: "Under Prop 13, all real property has established base year values, a restricted rate of increase on assessments of no greater than 2% each year, and a limit on property taxes to 1% of the assessed value."

Los Angeles county in California has had 10,431 Unaccompanied Alien Children placed there since 2016 and 18 Congressional Districts are impacted. Total increased cost for education is \$108 million. The real estate tax on an average home has increased 24 percent over the last five years – going from \$3,995 to \$4,968.

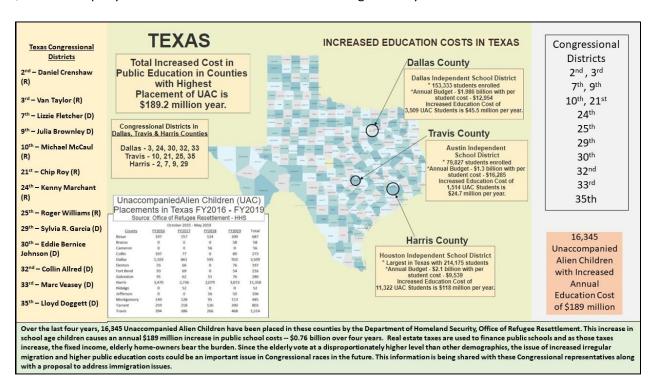


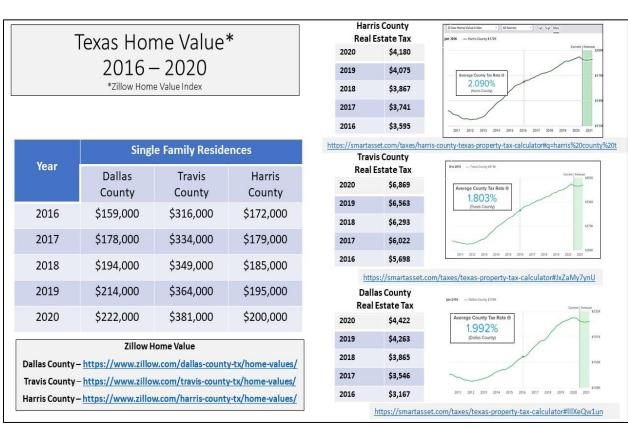
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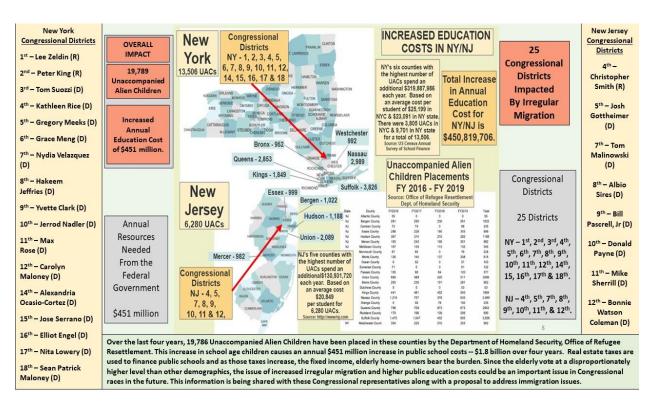
California Home Value* - 2016 - 2020 *Zillow Home Value Index **Single Family Residences** 2020 Avg. Real Jan 2016 — Los Angeles County \$529K Estate Tax - \$4.968 Year verage County Tax Rate 0 \$694K Los Angeles County 0.755% 2019 Avg. Real (Los Angeles County) Estate Tax - \$4 794 2020 \$658,000 2018 Avg. Real Estate Tax - \$4,582 \$575K 2019 \$635,000 2017 Avg. Real Estate Tax - \$4,280 2018 \$607,000 2016 Avg. Real 2017 \$567,000 Estate Tax - \$3,994 2016 \$529,000 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 Zillow Home Value https://www.zillow.com/los-angeles-county-ca/home-values/ https://smartasset.com/taxes/californiaproperty-tax-calculator#zK6HZB99rS

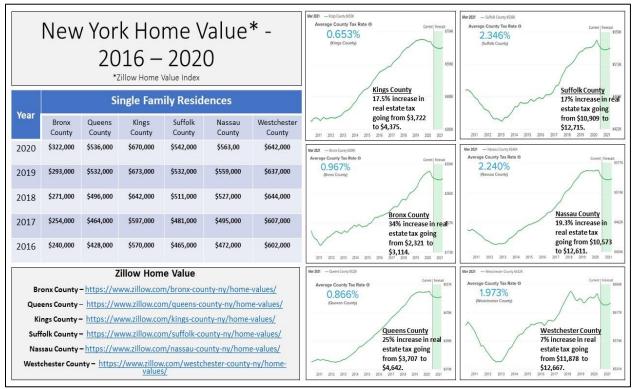
In Texas, three metropolitan areas have been impacted -- Dallas, Harris and Travis counties – with 16,345 Unaccompanied Alien Children placed there since 2016. Total increased cost for education is \$189 million per year. The real estate tax has increased significantly in all three counties.



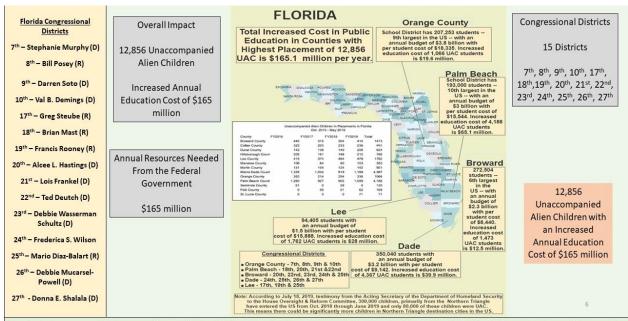


In New York/New Jersey, eleven counties have been impacted – five in New Jersey and six in New York. A total of 19,789 Unaccompanied Alien Children have been placed in these counties since 2016. Total increased cost for education is \$451 million per year. The real estate tax has increased significantly in all eleven counties.





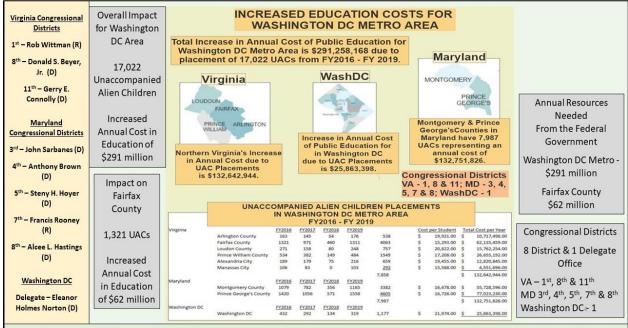
In Florida, five counties have been impacted – Orange, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Lee – with 12,856 Unaccompanied Alien Children placed there since 2016. Total increased cost for education is \$165 million per year. The real estate tax has increased significantly in all five counties.



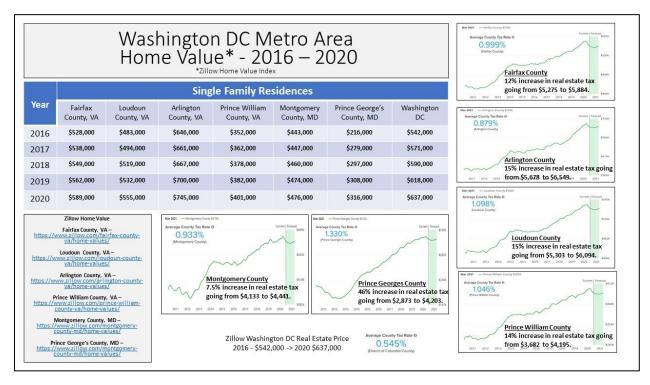
Over the last four years, 12,856 Unaccompanied Alien Children have been placed in these counties by the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Refugee Resettlement. This increase in school age children causes an annual \$165 million increase in public schools and as those taxes increase, the fixed income, elderly home-owners bear the burden. Since the elderly vote at a disproportionately higher level than other demographics, the issue of increased irregular migration and higher public education costs could be an important issue in Congressional races in the future. This information is being shared with these Congressional representatives along with a proposal to address immigration issues.

1.013% Florida Home Value* 1.118% **Orange County** 31% increase in Palm Beach County real estate tax 17.5%% increase in 2016 - 2020going from \$2,087 real estate tax to \$2,735 going from \$2,750 to \$3,332. Palm Beach Orange **Single Family Residences** Year Orange Palm **Broward** Lee Miami-Dade County Beach County County County County 1.120% **Broward County** Miami-Dade County 1.039% 27% increase in real 12% increase in real \$270,000 \$298,000 \$285,000 \$241,000 \$319,000 2020 estate tax going estate tax going from \$2,520 to from \$2,961 to \$3,192. \$3,314. \$263,000 \$291,000 \$278,000 \$240,000 \$315,000 2019 Broward Miami-Dade \$242,000 \$278,000 \$261,000 \$233,000 \$296,000 2018 \$222,000 \$263,000 \$280,000 \$244,000 \$228,000 2017 2016 \$206,000 \$246,000 \$225,000 \$215,000 \$258,000 Lee County 0.974% 12% increase in real estate tax going Zillow Home Value from \$2,094 to Orange County - https://www.zillow.com/orange-county-fl/home-values/ lee Palm Beach County - https://www.zillow.com/palm-beach-county-fl/home-values/ Broward County - https://www.zillow.com/broward-county-fl/home-values/ Lee County - https://www.zillow.com/lee-county-fl/home-values/ Miami - Dade County - https://www.zillow.com/miami-dade-county-fl/home-values/

In the Washington Metropolitan Area, seven counties and DC have been impacted – Arlington, Fairfax, Loudon counties in Virginia and Montgomery and Prince Georges counties in Maryland -- with 17,022 Unaccompanied Alien Children placed there since 2016. Total increased cost for education is \$291 million per year. The real estate tax has increased significantly in all these counties and DC.



Over the last four years, 17,022 Unaccompanied Alien Children have been placed in these counties by the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Refugee Resettlement. This increase in school age children causes an annual \$291 million increase in public school costs - \$1.20 billion over four years. Real estate taxes are used to finance public schools and as those taxes increase, the fixed income, elderly home-owners bear the burden. Since the elderly vote at a disproportionately higher level than other demographics, the issue of increased irregular migration and higher public education costs could be an important issue in Congressional races in the future. This information is being shared with these Congressional representatives along with a proposal to address immigration issues.



The analysis shows that there will be more than a \$1 billion increase annually in education costs for these communities, if real estate taxes continue to increase there could be a political backlash from the elderly demographic against the Democratic position on immigration. With 62 Congressional Districts having a Democratic incumbent out of the 80 districts analyzed, there is a clear need for the Democrats to proactively address the impact of potential increases in migration to US communities by funding and implementing a \$4 billion education support initiative in these school districts or face the loss of close races in future years. Helping public schools in U.S. communities Impacted by irregular immigration is good politics.

Post Script – The recent House of Representatives election in California's 25th district flipped the seat from Democratic to Republican. The post highlighted turnout of the elderly vote as an important factor. Paying attention to issues like support for public education and preventing real estate tax increases are clearly important as the country potentially moves toward more humane immigration policies. See the last comment on right in the post – "Tracking data shows a significant voting gap along generational lines. Roughly 56% of voters 65 and older returned a mail ballot. Just 19% of those younger than 35 did so."

