

Immigration to the U.S.: An Overview for Discussion

What should the League do?

May, 2009

Introduction:

This publication will acquaint members with current national, state, and local immigration issues so that we may respond to immigration concerns that come before us. Action must be consistent with the immigration position adopted in 2008 by the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS). For a local league to act using a national position, it needs the approval of the national organization. Action by a local league at the state level requires approval of the state organization as well.

The LWVUS position, which is quoted in part below and concluded on page 16, focuses on the causes and consequences of current immigration to the U.S. This is reflected in the selection of discussion material that follows in topical sections. Each section is headed by one or more discussion questions. For some sections it will be appropriate to consider whether we feel that the League at any level should take action in education and/or advocacy.

LWVUS position on immigration:

1. The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

2. The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

3. To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

4. In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

5. The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Part I: What causes large scale immigration? How has the foreign born population of the U.S. changed over the last century?

Immigration occurs throughout the world as people in great numbers flee armed conflict, poverty, and persecution to look for jobs, security, health care, education, and opportunity. These motives have brought the current immigrant population of the U.S. to approximately 38 million or 12% of the total population of 300 million. The U.S. is the western country with the highest percentage of foreign born, both citizen and non citizen, within its borders.¹

Historically the percentage of the U.S. population that is foreign born has fluctuated between a high of 15% in 1890 to a low of 4.7% in 1970. Most immigrants in this time period came from Europe. Since 1970 the percentage of immigrants in the population has risen due to large scale immigration from Latin America and Asia.²

What has changed in recent decades is the immigrants' countries of origin and the fact that a substantial number are unauthorized. Currently, of the foreign born in the U.S., about one third are citizens, one third are authorized immigrants, and one third are unauthorized immigrants. There are 11 to 12 million people in each category.³ The implications of this change are discussed in the next section.

Part II: What are the projections for change in the U.S. population in the coming decades? What role does immigration play in the change?

A report from the Pew Research Center describing U.S. population projections is quoted below⁴.

• If current trends continue, the population of the United States will rise to 438 million in 2050, from 296 million in 2005, and 82% of the increase will be due to immigrants arriving from 2005 to 2050 and their U.S. born descendants, according to new projections developed by the Pew Research Center. Of the 117 million people added to the population during this period due to the effect of new immigration, 67 million will be the immigrants themselves and 50 million will be their U.S. born children or grandchildren.

• Among the other key population projections:

Nearly one in five Americans (19%) will be an immigrant in 2050, compared with one in eight (12%) in 2005. By 2025, the immigrant, or foreign born, share of the population will surpass the peak during the last great wave of immigration a century ago.

The major role of immigration in national growth builds on the pattern of recent decades, during which immigrants and their U.S. born children and grandchildren accounted for most population increase. Immigration's importance increased as the average number of births to U.S. born women dropped sharply before leveling off.

The Latino population, already the nation's largest minority group, will triple in size and will account for most of the nation's population growth from 2005 through 2050. Hispanics will make up 29% of the U.S. population in 2050, compared with 14% in 2005.

Births in the United States will play a growing role in Hispanic and Asian population growth; as a result, a smaller proportion of both groups will be foreign-born in 2050 than is the case now.

The non Hispanic white population will increase more slowly than other racial and ethnic groups; whites will become a minority (47%) by 2050.

The nation's elderly population will more than double in size from 2005 through 2050, as the baby boom generation enters the traditional retirement years. The number of working age Americans and children will grow more slowly than the elderly population, and will shrink as a share of the total population.

• The Center's projections are based on detailed assumptions about births, deaths and immigration levels--the three key components of population change. All these assumptions are built on recent trends. But it is important to note that these trends can change....Nonetheless, projections offer a starting point for understanding and analyzing the parameters of future demographic change.

Part III: Have U.S. trade policies and agreements contributed to immigration flows to this country? Consider the examples of NAFTA and CAFTA.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is considered by many to be a significant cause of Mexican migration to the United States. NAFTA, an agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico, took effect in 1994. The agreement was partially in response to a report presented to the U. S. Congress in 1990 that concluded that the primary motivation for Mexican immigration to this country was economic. Further, to slow or halt the flow of immigrants, the report recommended "promoting greater economic integration between the migrant sending countries and the United States through free trade." ⁵

In other words, it was believed that NAFTA would increase prosperity and employment in Mexico to such an extent that Mexicans would no longer feel the need to cross the

border into the U.S. Contrary to these predictions, between 2000 and 2005 Mexico lost a million and a half jobs, mostly in the countryside. Since 1994, six million Mexicans have moved to the U.S.⁶

In 2004 NAFTA's supporters pointed to a "decade of success" in all three countries and cited statistics of the increased exports and investments flow, increased total trade, progress on environmental and labor issues, and other benefits.⁷ Proponents and even some critics agree that the U. S. job losses to Mexico were not as significant as feared. However, the increased foreign investment in Mexico and the job growth in the export sector were not sufficient to speed Mexican economic growth and job creation.⁸

NAFTA has had a significant impact on Mexico's manufacturing and agriculture. On the manufacturing front, most U. S. investment in factories in Mexico was clustered on the U. S.-Mexico border due to lack of infrastructure elsewhere. Mexican manufacturers went out of business when they lost the tariff protections on many products, and less expensive and higher quality goods flowed into the country.⁹ Economist Robert Blecker estimated that manufacturing employment in Mexico declined from 4.1 million in 2000 to 3.5 million in 2004.¹⁰

On the agricultural front, the Mexican government reduced tariffs on U.S. grown corn even faster than NAFTA required. Less expensive corn (supported by U.S. farm subsidies) flooded the Mexican market. The proponents of NAFTA envisioned Mexican farmers, assisted by foreign investment, switching from growing corn to growing strawberries and vegetables for export to the United States, but the transition did not occur.¹¹ By one estimate, two million Mexican farmers lost their livelihood.¹²

According to human-rights activist Ted Lewis, "NAFTA's promise of prosperity has been a mirage for millions of Mexicans... Increased income disparity and poverty in post-NAFTA years correlated with a sharp rise in immigration, especially from the Mexican countryside."¹³ However, economist J. Bradford DeLong believes that without NAFTA the migration would have been even greater because there would not have been as much foreign investment in the north of the Mexico."¹⁴

The Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) dates from 2005 and is not yet fully implemented so there are no results to report. Professor Michael Dreiling of the University of Oregon anticipates that CAFTA will have impacts in Central America similar to those of NAFTA in Mexico.¹⁵

Paragraphs #1 and #3 of the LWVUS immigration position are relevant to the information in this section.

Part IV: Immigration and the U.S. economy:

To what extent is the U.S. economy dependent on immigrant labor?

With the decline in the birthrate in the U.S. and the aging of the population, the growth in the economy from 1990 through 2004 became increasingly dependent upon the work of new immigrants. During these years 50% to 60% of the new jobs created went to immigrants. The labor of recent immigrants in both low and high skilled positions has allowed the American economy to grow.¹⁶

Between 1980 and 2000 the educational level of U.S. citizens rose significantly, and fewer citizens sought low skilled jobs. At the same time the economy became increasingly service oriented, and certain industries such as meatpacking were deunionized. As a result, businesses offering low skilled, service oriented jobs, which often require little knowledge of English, came to depend heavily on immigrant labor.

During these decades, even while the educational level rose among citizens, there has been more demand for professionals skilled in scientific pursuits, engineering, and other technical fields than citizens can supply. Immigrants have filled these positions, too.

The presence of immigrants in the labor force has had broad positive economic results for many because it has brought lower prices for food, housing, and some services as well as a rise in the volume of U.S. exports due to their low price. On the other hand, the low wages paid to immigrants have contributed to the current income inequality in our society.

Are immigrants taking jobs from citizens?

Most of the undocumented immigrants who work are employed in low skilled jobs. Their presence has been felt the most by low income citizens, including minorities, who have seen a decline in their wages and working conditions, according to Professor Daniel Tichenor of the University of Oregon.¹⁷ This intensifies employment problems for vulnerable groups of citizens. There is broad consensus among economists, however, that this effect has been modest.¹⁸ But if the current economic decline continues for an extended period, more citizens may be willing to accept low skilled jobs, and thus there could be previously unseen competition between citizens and non-citizens for such jobs.

Professor Tichenor believes further that the current economic decline may not prompt large numbers of undocumented immigrants to return to their countries unless it becomes very bad or endures for a long time. Leaving the U.S. and returning are so

difficult for the undocumented, he thinks, that they would rather take a chance on staying.

Do immigrants pay their way?

Most adult immigrants work or are students. Those who are authorized and work pay federal and state taxes. Many of the unauthorized also pay these taxes because they use false ID numbers or false Social Security numbers and deductions are made from their paychecks. Unless they gain legal status, they will never receive Social Security or Medicare benefits. As property owners or renters virtually all adult immigrants pay property taxes as well as other state and local taxes.

The costs posed by immigrants to a state government or local community are in education and health care, and often these costs are not fully reimbursed by the state or local taxes that immigrants pay. Immigrant children often need special instruction in English and other subjects until they can follow standard classroom instruction. Immigrants who are poor lack medical insurance. Their health care, like that of uninsured citizens, poses a cost to a local community.

Paragraphs #1 and #5 of the LWVUS immigration position are relevant to the information in this section. Refer also to the *Administration and Enforcement* section of the position on page 16.

Part V: How critical is legality? What legislative initiatives are underway to address the issue?

American society is governed by law and offers social and economic opportunities for its citizens and authorized immigrants. The substantial unauthorized population of 11 million creates an underclass that cannot participate in normal civic life and does not have adequate access to standard social services. How does this large undocumented population influence our society? Noted below are several areas of concern and summaries of recently introduced federal legislation to address two of them. Should the League at any level take an active interest in the progress of this legislation?

Undocumented immigrant children may attend public school through 12th grade but in many states, including Oregon, their access to higher education is limited. In Oregon such students may not enter public colleges or universities as “residents” no matter how long they have lived in the state and thus are liable for the higher fees of “nonresidents.”¹⁹ This elevated cost is likely to block their access to higher education. If they reveal their undocumented status, they may be subject to deportation. Others in this situation will have difficulty in pursuing military service or employment.

To resolve this predicament, in March, 2009, the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) was reintroduced in both the House and Senate, having failed to pass in both in 2006 and 2007. This proposed legislation addresses the situation of unauthorized immigrant minors who were brought to the U.S. by their families before the age of 16 and have lived here for at least five consecutive years. If they are of good moral character, have graduated from high school, and plan to enter college or the military, they may be granted legal status and the possibility of earning citizenship.²⁰

Following the stipulations of the federal "Real ID Act" of 2005 states are required to verify citizenship or legal status of applicants for a driver's license. Therefore unauthorized immigrants can no longer obtain a driver's license in most states, including Oregon. This means that there may be a substantial number of unlicensed drivers on our roads unfamiliar with driving regulations and probably uninsured.

To change this situation, in February, 2009, Senators Akaka of Hawaii and Sununu of New Hampshire introduced the Identity Security and Enhancement Act, S. 717, to repeal the Real ID Act and replace it with regulations less burdensome to states, including allowing flexible standards for issuing drivers' licenses.²¹ A similar bill has been introduced in the House.

In many cases immigrant families include both authorized and unauthorized members. Often, documented adults have spouses or children in the U.S. who are undocumented because of the many years required for visa applications to be processed. The mixed status complicates family life not only because it implies different levels of access to social services but also because it means that some members of a family may be liable for deportation, possibly leaving others behind. Fear of this outcome affects family life.

The large undocumented population feeds a market for illegal documents and places a substantial burden on employers who depend on low cost labor and are required to verify the legal status of their employees. Periodic raids by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) reveal the vulnerable situation of both unauthorized immigrants, who may be arrested for using illegal documents, and their employers, who may be fined. The incarceration or deportation of those arrested may strand their family members or otherwise place them in difficult circumstances.

The existence of a large undocumented population creates public skepticism about the ability of the government to secure its borders and keep track of individuals who enter the U.S. legally only to overstay their visas. These concerns have led to increased security along U.S. borders at the cost of billions.

Paragraphs #1, #2, #4 and #5 of the LWVUS immigration position are relevant to the information in this section.

Part VI: The foreign born of Oregon:

The discussion turns now to the state and local levels. Please continue to refer to the LWVUS immigration position as you discuss the situation of immigrants in these settings.

What are the population trends in Oregon?

A U.S. Census Bureau estimate places Oregon's 2007 population at approximately 3,700,000.²² Two different sources place the percentage of foreign born in Oregon's population between 2005 and 2007 at 9% to 10%.²³ Is Oregon following the trends anticipated in the Pew Report?

A profile of the approximately 400,000 foreign born in Oregon is that about half are citizens or authorized and half are unauthorized. Latinos coming from several countries are the largest immigrant group but include a substantial number of native Americans who are not Spanish speakers. An estimated 70% to 80% of the adult Latino immigrants have come to Oregon since 1998.²⁴ Many of this group are believed to be unauthorized. In 2008 approximately 70,000 to 80,000 unauthorized immigrants were employed in the state.²⁵

While the high Latino immigration follows a trend identified in the Pew Report, Oregon's immigrant population includes thousands that have come as political, religious, or environmental refugees from Eastern Europe, the former USSR, Southeast Asia, and Africa.²⁶ An example of the varied background of immigrants can be seen in a study that compared the number and place of origin of the foreign born living in Portland, Salem, and Medford.

Between 1980 and 2000 the immigrant population of each city rose dramatically. In Medford from very few to 5,000; in Salem from 10,000 to 23,000; in Portland from 45,000 to 145,000. In the year 2000, Latino immigrants represented approximately 65% of the foreign born in Medford and Salem. But Portland's distribution of immigrants by country of origin was broader, with Asians representing 36%, Latinos 34%, and Europeans 21%.²⁷

New immigrants to Oregon are now dispersed almost equally between urban and rural areas resulting in a steep rise in the rural immigrant population. Statewide data show that in 21 of 36 Oregon counties, including Lane County, the immigrant population more than doubled between 1990 and 2000. Junction City's population, for instance, was 2% Latino in 1980 and 8.3% in 2000. This figure is expected to double by 2010.²⁸

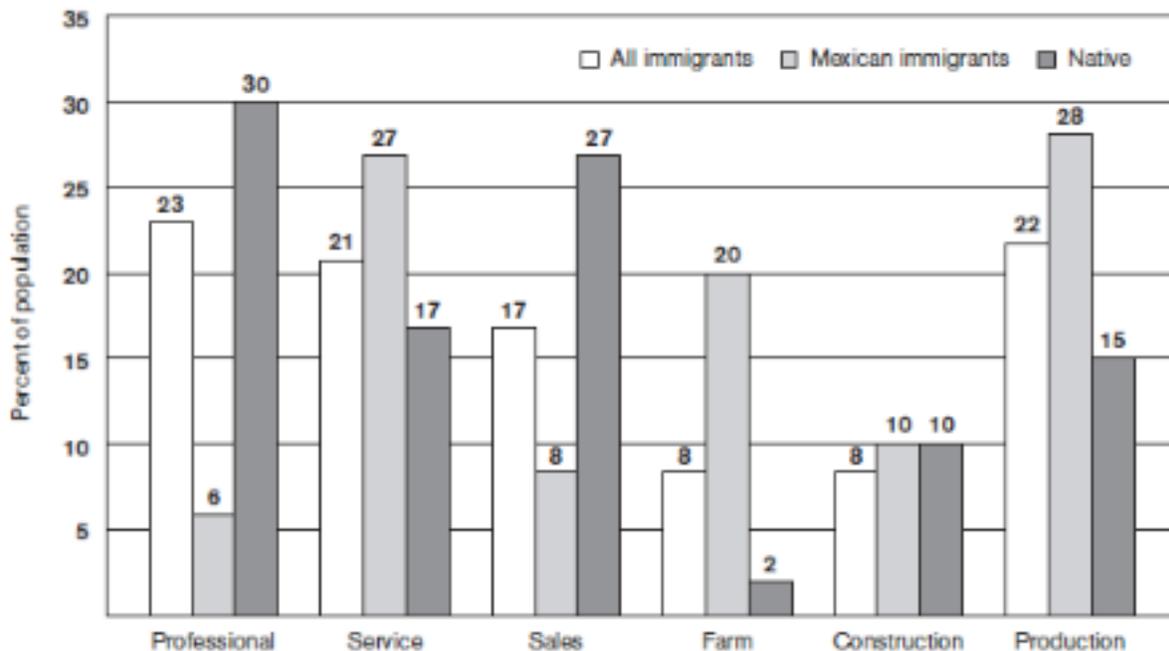
In 2005 Latino children made up about 15% of the state’s population under age 18 but accounted for 20% of the newborns. At the current growth rate, they will account for 28% of the public school population in 2020.²⁹ All of these trends follow the predictions of the Pew Report.

What is the role of immigrants in Oregon’s economy?

In the year 2008, an estimated 11% of the state’s labor force of 1.7 million was made up of immigrants, both authorized and unauthorized, and at all skill levels.³⁰ Some detailed statistical information is available for the employment of immigrants in Oregon for the year 2000 and is shown in the chart below.³¹ Mexicans are the largest group, so their experience is shown separately.

In 2000, 65% of the immigrant population as a whole was about evenly represented in the professional, service, and production sectors of the economy. However, the heavy dependence of the Oregon economy upon immigrant labor in service, farm, and production work is evident for immigrants represent over 50% of those employed despite their relatively small numbers. Moreover, a full 75% of the Latino immigrants are employed in these sectors, where little to no formal education or knowledge of English may be required. It is likely, therefore, that this is where a substantial number of unauthorized immigrants is working.

Occupational Distribution for All Immigrants, Mexican Immigrants, and Natives, Oregon, 2000



Other data from the same source show that the income level for immigrants improves dramatically as their educational level rises. Those who do best in the labor market have a good command of English, have spent several years in the U.S., and are authorized.

Do undocumented immigrants in Oregon pay their way?

An Oregon Center for Public Policy's study for 2005 provides a partial answer. The authors estimated that in that year there were 125,000 to 175,000 unauthorized immigrants in Oregon and that the total annual income of those employed was between \$1.8 and \$2.5 billion. Of this sum a substantial portion was spent in the state on goods, services, and taxes. These employees also paid federal taxes. Estimates for their annual tax payments are shown below:³²

- \$65 to \$90 million paid in state income taxes, property taxes, and excise taxes such as gas and cigarette taxes;
- \$56 to \$79 million paid in Social Security taxes matched by employers;
- \$13 to \$18 million paid in Medicare taxes matched by employers.

Similar information for employed authorized immigrants was not available but it is reasonable to assume that their income at least matches that of the unauthorized population.

The primary state expenditure for immigrants is for the education of children who do not know English. For each ELL (English Language Learner) student the state provides to local school districts 150% of the standard per student support. In 2007 there were approximately 62,000 students in Oregon enrolled in ELL programs. In that year, state, and federal allocations that were channeled through the state, were \$2,800 per ELL student above the standard support level for a total of approximately \$174 million.³³

Part VII: How did the Portland city government respond to the growth of the city's immigrant population?

In the fall of 2006, at the urging of the mayor, Portland's city council passed a resolution creating a task force to identify barriers and find workable solutions to allow immigrants and refugees to participate more actively in Portland's city life.³⁴

Portland State University cooperated by enrolling students in a course called "Politics of Immigration" to work with the Center for Intercultural Organizing. The PSU students

used surveys collected by volunteers, focus groups, and public forums as well as community dialogue to ascertain the views of over 1,000 members of the target population.

The Portland Task Force for Immigrant and Refugee Community Inclusion was organized with 15 of Portland's immigrant and refugee community leaders born in Africa, Asia, Central and South America and Europe and representatives of the Portland Office of Community Development and Police Bureau. The ultimately twenty person task force was formed as a direct result of the Portland City Council's commitment to the greater inclusion of immigrants and refugees in Portland's city life and the work of the PSU students.

Four recommendations by this Task Force:

1. Create an Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs with multiethnic staff to serve as a bridge to city government.
2. Establish a multicultural center for meetings of immigrants and refugees.
3. Create a leadership academy to train members of the target community to serve on advisory committees and boards.
4. Appoint a human resources person in the mayor's office to be the liaison with the target community.

The Task Force determined that the barriers to inclusion in Portland city life were:

1. Language and cultural barriers
2. Fear
3. Immediate needs for food, housing and health care
4. Employment issues
5. Lack of awareness or understanding of available resources
6. Fragmentation of service providers
7. Portland's legacy of discrimination.

Some results:

1. It was determined that the city should make an effort to provide multilingual translations for some activities.
2. The Police Department offers a crime prevention class at no charge.
3. A "211" program to dial for interpreter services was created.
4. Jobs are now advertised in multiethnic newspapers and at the cultural center.

Funding came initially from the mayor's office, and then from grants from the following organizations: Mackenzie River Gathering, Social Justice Fund West, Collins Foundation, and Common Cause Fund.

Part VIII: The foreign born of Lane County:

What are the population trends and the community response?

In Lane County in 2000, 4.9% of the population was foreign born. Of this group 36% were Latino, 31% Asian, 21% European, and 15% from other areas.³⁵ Recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that in 2007 Latinos accounted for 6.1% or 21,000 of the county's total population of 344,000.³⁶ These numbers are consistent with others that indicate a recent rise in Lane County's immigrant population in general and its Latino population in particular.

The fall, 2008, enrollment figures for ELL instruction in the six largest school districts in Lane County show a total of 1,550 students representing about 4% of the student population. Half of the ELL enrollment is in the Springfield public schools. The primary maternal language of Lane County's ELL students is Spanish.

The international students at the University of Oregon come from throughout the world and are authorized, have medical insurance, and stay for a limited time. Their children attend local schools. In 2006 there were 1,602 such university students of whom 60% were from Asia. The numbers are about the same at this time.³⁷

In the fall of 2008, Lane Community College enrolled 500 students in ELL classes and had a waiting list. In addition, local private schools offer instruction in English. This enrollment suggests a substantial interest in learning English in Lane County's adult population, and the waiting list suggests that more classes may be needed.

Many Lane County voluntary organizations have long been active in serving local immigrants. Centro Latino Americano, local churches, and the Catholic Community Services of Lane County, for instance, provide and/or secure food, medication, financial support, and housing for this population.

In Eugene concerns about immigrants or the immigrant population are addressed by the city's Human Rights Program. A goal of the city's Human Rights Commission is "ensuring that human rights are a central part of every City program." The commission is currently advising the city government on ways that human rights standards and principles can be integrated into its overall operations.³⁸

The information in this section, even though limited, shows that population trends in Lane County are consistent with the Pew Center's predictions.

What level of health care is available for uninsured immigrants?

The basic information is covered by LWVLC Everymember Material, "Health Care for

Low Income Children in Lane County,” April, 2008, and “Latino Neighbors,” March, 2002. An earlier LWVOR publication, “Farmworkers in Oregon,” fall, 2000, also addresses this subject. These publications, to which links are available on the LWVLC website, discuss both low income and uninsured patients including the immigrant population of concern. The immigration committee’s recent survey summarized below will update this information.³⁹

After this survey was completed a news release from the Oregon senators on 3/31/09 revealed that Lane County will receive \$442,000 in federal stimulus funds for low income health clinics in Eugene and Springfield . This will improve the access to health care for the target population.

None of the service providers keeps information regarding the immigration status of its clients. Nor are overall numbers of those served available. A general impression is that the community of uninsured people in Lane County is under served especially regarding preventive medical care.

- **Language:** Many clinics have Spanish-speaking staff.
- **Insurance:** Most clinics help people sign up for the Oregon Health Plan, but this requires a driver’s license and a birth certificate, which immigrants may not have.
- **Funding:** Federally funded clinics have to ascertain citizenship to treat people. Many clinics operate on a mixture of government grants and private donations, and all are dependent on serving a core of people with insurance. RiverStone Clinic in Springfield has had to reduce the proportion of uninsured clients that it can afford to serve to about 50% of the total patient load.
- **Resources for immigrants:** Oregon Health Plan (OHP) includes state-funded medical assistance.

Citizen Alien Waived Emergency Medical (CAWEM) is a grant managed by the State of Oregon. To qualify, a person must meet all of the eligibility requirements for another medical assistance program except the citizen/immigrant status and the social security number. Clients are only eligible for emergency medical care including childbirth. Diagnostic services and ongoing medical treatment, including prenatal and postnatal care, are not covered. The individual must be a resident of Oregon planning to remain in the state. There is no minimum amount of time a person must live in Oregon to be a resident.

State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) serves uninsured

children and pregnant women, but they may face a five year waiting period before they are eligible for coverage. This act was renewed on 2/4/09 and extended to an additional 4 million children.

• **Principal clinics or organizations accepting underinsured or uninsured patients:**

Public health services of Lane County:

Volunteers in Medicine

White Bird Medical and Dental Clinics

School based health centers: at three Eugene high schools and others elsewhere in Lane County.

Federally qualified health centers:

The RiverStone Clinic in Springfield

Churchill High School Clinic

Peace Health's Clinics: Healthy Tomorrows

LCC Health Clinic

Part IX: What kinds of experiences do unauthorized residents of Lane County have?

This story is based on the experience of a member of the immigration study committee. The names have been changed to protect privacy.

One Son

Saul and his father, Arturo, entered my ESL class in September of 2004. They were unusual students. Arturo was far and away my best student, and Saul, at 16, was my youngest. I found out that Arturo, who had a green card, had just returned from Mexico with Saul, who was now enrolled at the high school but came to the evening class to improve his English. A double dose of English for a 16 year old was a bit much, but dad insisted on it, and Saul, while a bit reluctant, was good to have in class. He gave everyone any help needed and could make all of us laugh.

After he turned 18 he graduated from both the high school and my class. He had done very well in school. I asked him what he wanted to do now. He wanted to

become a State Highway Patrolman and work to stop the illegal Mexican drug trade that was coming up I 5. He was especially angry at any Mexican whose illegal behavior made the news and turned public opinion against all Mexicans. I knew he would be good at this, since he now spoke English without an accent and was fluent in Spanish as well. In addition, he was tall and good looking, carried himself with confidence, and almost looked the part of a State Patrolman. He planned to enroll at Lane Community College.

Well, Saul has no papers. His father had brought him here illegally. He has no Social Security Number. There was no financial help for him at LCC, nor was his father able to pay his fees. Saul now works for \$8.50 an hour at a small, unsafe, dirty, cold mill. The work is exhausting. The hours are long. The last time I saw him, he felt that he had no way out. He looked older than his age, tired, dirty, and discouraged. He was working 6 or 7 days a week, trying to get ahead and save money. Things are not going well for Saul.

Part X: How can the LWVLC work to implement the LWVUS position on immigration?

This is the time for an open discussion in your unit. One item to consider is whether the LWVLC and/or the LWVOR should collaborate with other organizations in implementing actively the League's position on immigration policy.

Members of the immigration study committee, 2008-2009

Fred Andrews (website), Fran Boehner (experiences of local immigrants), Nonna Haydock (health care and securing the participation of Sister Barbara Haase in the March, 2009, Third Thursday), Pat Hocken (NAFTA), Mary Ann Holser (economic situation of immigrants), Lilla McDonald (health care), Anne Mehl (Portland's task force on immigrants), Dotty Stauber (worldwide immigration), Dorothy Soper, Chair

Our gratitude is extended to three members of last year's committee whose work appears in this publication: Merle Bottge, Karen Ecker, and Barbara Smith.

The LWVUS immigration position concludes with the following three sections:

Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- *Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;*
- *Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;*
- *Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;*
- *Education and training needs of the U.S.;*
- *Educational program opportunities; and*
- *Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.*

Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- *Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;*
- *Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;*
- *Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;*
- *Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;*
- *More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and*
- *Increased personnel at borders.*

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

References:

The bibliography, a listing of useful URLs, and the names of people interviewed for this publication are on the website, www.lwvlc.org.

Further information about the position of LWVUS on immigration and its study materials are on its website, www.lwv.org. Click on “projects” and scroll down to “immigration.”

Endnotes:

¹ <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?id=714#1>, downloaded 2/2/09.

Two major destinations for immigrants are Russia and the United States and it's useful to compare them. Both countries attract immigrants because their economies are large and can provide a substantial number of jobs. There are now an estimated 10 million immigrants in Russia representing approximately 6% of the population, a far smaller percentage than that of the U.S. See “In Hard Times, Migrant Money Flow Stalls,” *The New York Times*, 12/25/08.

² *ibid.*

³ Meissner, Doris, Deborah W. Meyers, Demetrios G. Papademetriou, Michael Fix, *Immigration and America's Future, A New Chapter*, Migration Policy Institute, New York, 2006, p. 20.

⁴ <http://pewhispanic.org/reports/>, downloaded 2/2/09.

⁵ Bacon, David, “Displaced People: NAFTA's Most Important Product,” *NACLA Report on the Americas*, September/October 2008, page 24.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷ Office of the United States Trade Representative, “NAFTA: A Decade of Success,” July 1, 2004, http://www.ustr.gov/Documents_Library/Fact_Sheets/NAFTA_A_Decade_of_Success.html, downloaded February 21, 2009.

⁸ Martin, Philip and Elizabeth Midgley, “Immigration: Shaping and Reshaping America,” *Population Bulletin* (a Publication of the Population Reference Bureau), Volume 61, No.4, December 2006, p. 11, box 2.

⁹ Uchitelle, Louis, “Nafta Should Have Stopped Illegal Immigration, Right?,” *The New York Times*, The Nation section, February 18, 2007.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² Bartlett, Andrew Kang, “Home Economics, Our Neighbors on Rio Grande Boulevard,” *Horizons*, September/October 2008, p. 14.

¹³ Lewis, Ted, “Linking NAFTA and Immigration,” *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, February 29, 2008.

¹⁴ Uchitelle, Louis, “Nafta Should Have Stopped Illegal Immigration, Right?,” *The New York Times*, The Nation section, Feb. 18, 2007.

¹⁵ Professor Michael Dreiling to D. Soper, 1/19/09.

¹⁶ Information in the summary in this section comes from Meissner et al, *op.cit.*, pp. 3-15 and an email from Professor Robert Bussel to D. Soper, 3/24/09.

¹⁷ Interview with Professor Daniel Tichenor by D. Soper, 1/07/09.

¹⁸ Meissner et al, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

¹⁹ <http://admissions.uoregon.edu/transfer/residency>, 2/04/09; Brian Stanley, UO Residency Classification Officer, to D. Soper, 2/6/09.

- ²⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DREAM_Act, downloaded, 4/1/09.
- ²¹ <http://www.aclu.org/safefree/general/28730prs20070228.html>, downloaded, 4/1/09.
- ²² <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41000.html>, downloaded 3/16/09.
- ²³ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41000.html>, downloaded 3/16/09 and Robert Bussel, ed., *Understanding the Immigrant Experience in Oregon, Research, Analysis, and Recommendations from University of Oregon Scholars*, "Executive Summary," p. 9, University of Oregon, 2008.
- ²⁴ *ibid.*
- ²⁵ Bussel, R., ed., op. cit., Michael Aguilera, Bob Bussel, and Lara Skinner, "Work and Employment for Immigrants in Oregon," p. 70.
- ²⁶ Bussel, R., ed., op. cit., Susan W. Hardwick and Justyna Goworowska, "Urban Immigration in Oregon: The City as Context," pp. 33-42.
- ²⁷ *ibid.*, p.36.
- ²⁸ Bussel, R., ed., op. cit., Lynn Stephen, Marcela Mendoza, and Mauricio Magana, "Latin American Immigration in Rural Oregon," pp. 51-52.
- ²⁹ Bussel, R., ed., op.cit., Lynn Stephen, et al, "Latin American Immigration in Rural Oregon," p. 53.
- ³⁰ *ibid.*, "Executive Summary," p. 10 and <http://bluebook.state.or.us/facts/economy/employment.htm>, downloaded 4/14/09.
- ³¹ *ibid.*, Michael Aguilera, Bob Bussel, and Lara Skinner, "Work and Employment for Immigrants in Oregon," p. 73.
- ³² <http://www.ocpp.org/cgi-bin/display.cgi?page=issue070401immig>, downloaded 4/9/09.
- ³³ "Non-native speakers succeeding in English," *The Register-Guard*, 3/6/08, page F3, and an email communication to D. Soper from Abbey Lane, K-12 ELL Coordinator, Eugene 4J public schools.
- ³⁴ Information came from documentation from the City of Portland and interviews by A. Mehl with:
Kayse Jama, Center for Intercultural Organizing Liaison, City of Portland
Maria Lisa Johnson, Human Resources Director, Office of the Mayor, City of Portland
Professor Robert Bussel, Director, Labor Education and Research Center, University of Oregon.
- ³⁵ Southern Oregon Regional Services Institute, <http://www.sou.edu/catalog/00-01/community.htm>.
- ³⁶ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/41039.html>, downloaded 1/16/09.
- ³⁷ "International Student and Scholar Profile," Fall 2006, International Programs, University of Oregon.
- ³⁸ Interview with F. Leyva-Johnson, Community Engagement Manager, City of Eugene by D. Soper.
- ³⁹ N. Haydock interviewed the following people for this survey:
Barbara Arnold, R.N., formerly Patient Services Director, Planned Parenthood
Kiawe Elliot, Community Service, RiverStone Clinic, Springfield
Sister Barbara Haase, Community Access Coordinator, Peace Health
Maxine Proskurowski, R.N., Program Manager, Health Services, Eugene 4J Public Schools.
L. McDonald interviewed Javier Rodriguez, Supervisor, Interpreter Services, PeaceHealth.