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IMMIGRANT CHILDREN FALLING BEHIND:

IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HASKINS: Good morning, everybody. My name is Ron Haskins. I'm a senior fellow here at Brookings and along with Belle Sawhill, run an organization called the Center on Children and Families. And as you can tell by today's issuance of our journal, we have very Catholic organizations, we're very interested in lots of different topics that influence children and families.

One of the things that we do is we publish, along with Princeton, we publish "The Future of Children" which is a journal that comes out twice a year, and every time a journal comes out we write a policy brief and we have an event like this to release the journal to the public. And for this journal issue, of course, and the reason many of you are here, is because we are focusing on immigrant children, and there's a lot of good reason to do so as this event unfolds you will see pretty clearly.

The two things that are -- I just want to mention right in the beginning -- Marta will talk about these in more detail, but we are in -- we were, at least until the recession, in the midst of the first or second greatest wave of immigration the country's ever had. For over two decades we averaged a million legal immigrants a year and we, during many of those years, most of those years, we probably had as many as a half a million undocumented immigrants as well. So, we have a tremendous number of immigrants, and then from that it follows that a really shocking percentage of America's children are either first -- they're

either immigrants themselves or they're children of immigrants. So, it's really -- this is a huge issue for the nation and it's something that we ought to pay a lot more attention to especially here in Washington, where as far as I can tell, we've made approximately zero progress in the last decade on this issue. I'm serious. And it's really -- I think it's an indictment of our political system that we cannot come together and -- especially since parts of the solution are, I think -- are or potentially are bipartisan. So, there's a lot to talk about.

We are actually going to focus our discussion here on the DREAM Act. There are lots of other things we could have selected, but Marta and I really thought the DREAM Act is important. As all of you probably know, it recently didn't even come to a final vote in the Senate, so a lot of people would say we're dead, but our miserable little attempt is to keep it alive because we think it's so important, so we're going to focus the discussion on the DREAM Act.

So, here is our plan for this morning. First, Marta's going to give a summary of the journal itself, not just the DREAM Act, but the entire journal, and give you an idea of what's in the journal, and we have copies available. And then when Marta finishes, I'm going to give a brief summary of the policy brief that focuses on the policies that we think are most important, one of which is the DREAM Act, and then we're going to have a panel discussion focused on the DREAM Act. We'll have opening statements by the panelists, I'll ask them some questions, and then we'll

turn it over to the audience and the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions of the panelists, and I've asked Marta to stay so she'll be on the panel as well even though she won't make an opening statement on the panel, and then of course the final part is the question and answer with the audience.

So, Marta. Wait, I get to introduce you. You should be getting quite nervous right now, Marta, because this is my chance to pay her back for a year and a half of -- Marta is a distinguished scholar in every sense of the term. She's a professor of demographics and sociology at Princeton and she's been at several other universities including Chicago -- only the best universities -- even though I have to say I'm from Michigan, my entire family went to University of Michigan, and I'm very sorry to tell you that Marta went to Michigan State, but she's recovered quite nicely, I think.

The one thing I want to say -- you have a lot of information about her and the other panelists too in your information, so we specialize in short introductions. I do want to mention just one thing, and that is that she chaired the National Academy of Science panel on Hispanics. I have noticed over the years, anybody who serves on a National Academy panel, let alone chairs the panel, is really -- has reached a point in their career where they're very distinguished and as indicated by their selection, because it reflects that their colleagues think that their work is important, and that Marta chaired the panel, I think, tells a lot about her

career.

I have to say that it was a wonderful experience working on this volume. I learned a lot. Marta's a true expert on this issue and I'm kind of a dilettante. I've written about immigration before but I certainly am nothing like the kind of expert Marta is, and I learned one thing for sure and that is Marta has the highest standards of anybody that I've worked with except Belle Sawhill and she and Belle are in a dead heat for the highest standards. And you, if you want to work with Marta, you better be ready to meet her standards or have your life insurance paid up. Marta.

(Applause.)

MS. TIENDA: Thank you very much. I have to say that I learned more from Ron than he's admitting. This was really a two-way street, and had never edited one of these volumes. I've done a whole bunch of other kinds of things, but we may differ in many -- in some details of philosophy, of approaches, but we never differed on quality, standards of evidence, and what the evidence suggests in terms of public policy, and I think that's really why we're here today.

I'm going to talk about half of the slides. You have more than I actually am going to discuss because of time. I'm programmed for 50 minutes or an hour and 15, and we have 15, so I will work within those constraints, but you're free to ask me about any of the other slides that you have in your packet.

In 2010, about 75 million U.S. residents were under the age

of 18, which is an historic high for the nation and we consider these children, children and youth, but that is because the population now, it's a historic high in absolute numbers because the population of the U.S. is much higher now, but in relative terms, children and youth comprise about a quarter of the total population today, which is well below the historic high of 36 percent when the baby boom ended in 1964.

Were it not for immigration, and in particular, the fertility of immigrant women, children would be an even smaller share of the U.S. population today. It is the dynamic of growth, it is the reason that the United States, the UK, Canada, and Australia, the four large Anglophone, immigrant receiving nations, are not declining in population like France and Italy and Spain and Japan. Instead immigrant children, which includes the foreign-born, small share, and the children of immigrants, the second generation, are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population today.

So, today, nearly a quarter of all the children -- just looking at the child population, all the persons under 18 years of age, one quarter have an immigrant background that is that either they were foreign born or their parents are foreign born, and the vast majority of children with immigrant parents, in fact, 84 percent of them, were actually born in the U.S., which means that they are entitled to the full privileges of citizenship. And although the share of children with immigrant backgrounds has been rising since the resurgence of mass migration in the mid 1970s, the

current share of children with immigrant backgrounds also is not historically unprecedented.

At the turn of the 20th Century, about 29 percent of children had immigrant backgrounds. But what does this mean to say that the share of children with immigrant backgrounds has changed over time? Is it a historic high, is it not the historic high? Well, I'm a demographer, but I can tell you that demography is not destiny. What these demographic trends portend for the future of immigrant children, and I would submit, for the future of our country, depends on their access to a quality education and economic opportunities that inhere from the educational attainment, and this is the theme that actually unifies this volume.

So, what is new? Unlike the past, immigrant youth today confront several circumstances that have direct implications for their integration prospects, for their future economic mobility, and, I would submit, for the productivity of our nation as we compete with China and India and other countries that are competing with us on the global scene. And first, immigrant youth are coming of age in an aging society. I'll have a bit more to say about this so I'll just stop there. Second, immigrant youth are coming of age against the backdrop of an historically unprecedented geographic disbursal. Their parents have settled in the last decade and a half, two decades, in places where few immigrants had previously lived, and that in the main, lack the social integration infrastructure that we have developed over many, many decades in places

like New York, in Chicago, and Miami, and Los Angeles. And that means that these new destinations lack many of the institutional arrangements that are conducive to social and economic integration of immigrants putting them on the fast track, or at least putting them on equal footing with the native population. For youth, the institutions that are particularly salient, are the schools, again, the education theme.

Third, today's immigrant youth are far more diverse in regional origins and socioeconomic status than in the past, and many face vulnerabilities because of their legal status. Although 80 percent of youth with immigrant backgrounds are U.S. born, Jeff Passel estimates that 6 percent lack legal documents, and an additional 24 percent reside in households where one or both parents are unauthorized to live in the United States. This heightens their vulnerability to their economic -- even if they are U.S. citizens.

And fourth, during the last quarter of the 20th Century, social and economic inequality rose in the United States. We actually witnessed a pulling apart of our society among economic, social, and geographic lines, and this is evident in the large and growing disparities in the quality of the schools and the quality of education we offer different segments of our population, including our native born population. Large majorities of immigrant youth are attending some of the worst performing schools in the country.

And finally, immigrant youth are coming of age in a period of

fiscal retrenchment, and we've had fiscal retrenchments before, and one of the lessons we learn is that economic downturns toll hard on the poor and they toll hard on children, but this fiscal retrenchment promises to intensify in the coming years and it will probably result in thwarted integration prospects for many immigrant youth.

The headwinds of population aging call for prudent investment in future generations, both to attenuate the rising burden of old age dependency and make sure that we have the economic and tax revenues to support the dependency of the elderly, which was different from the baby boom period when the dependency of this country was mainly from the youth, so we've had this transition from child dependency to old age dependency and then what are those ratios relative to the working age population is what we need to think about if we're devising policy that is future oriented.

The impending retirement of the baby boom generation will alter the balance between working age and dependents, not only by age, but also by ethnic lines. Just a decade ago in 2000, over half of the U.S. population was in the working ages -- the prime working ages from 25 to 64, and the white population at that time outnumbered blacks and Hispanics by a ratio of 3.5:1. By 2030, that's just two decades from now, the children that we're talking about are currently in the schools, they're going to be the workers in 2030. At that time only 48 percent of the total population will be in their working ages. The ratio of the

black/Hispanic/minority workers will drop to approximately 2.2:1.

So there's this modest -- the change in the age imbalance among school aged children affords a potential demographic dividend, which is another theme that we talk about, that's a way of thinking about investment in the future. If you look at the bottom row of the column where the age structure for the year 2000, you'll see that the zero to four group is already -- in the year 2000, has already begun to shrink. That means that fertility has already -- was already declining then so that the potential to invest in future generations to offset the age imbalance has already begun to shrink. That window of opportunity is going to close, it's going to continue to close, and it's not only happening here, but also in the countries that have been sending immigrants to our country, because they too are experiencing declines in fertility.

SO, this demographic dividend potential is going to shrink in the future and in those states that are going through immigration, that opportunity is going to fade unless we continue to invest in education. So, this -- I call it -- it's not a minority -- it's not a boom, like a baby boom, that we had between 1948 and 1964, but there's a boomlet, if you will. It can only be realized into a demographic dividend if we invest in education.

So, South Korea did this. They had high fertility. They put huge investment in education, and they catapulted themselves to an industrial status. We ignore this opportunity at our peril.

The articles that have been assembled in the immigrant

volume -- immigrant children volume -- summarize what we know. They were not intended to be original pieces of scholarship, although there are original analyses, but their charge was to summarize what we know about living arrangements, educational attainments, physical wellbeing, and social and economic integration of immigrant youth.

Education is the master theme that unites the volume. And in a recent interview about New Jersey's under investment in higher education, New Jersey former governor Tom Kean, argued for protection education in the current efforts at fiscal retrenchment, and I quote, "Education is linked to every other problem and unless you improve it, you'll never get jobs or the tax structure you need. You can't solve other problems without the education piece."

This volume provides the empirical basis for investing in education. First, the problems of educational underachievement are preventable by investing in early education of all youth, so we can target within universalism, but the educational requirements are going to benefit the whole country, not only immigrant youth. Karoly and Gonzalez's chapter demonstrates that immigrant youth, and especially if they live in poor families, benefit tremendously from quality preschool because it reduces disparities in numeracy and literacy and school readiness when they begin their formal schooling careers.

This is an investment that this nation can ill afford to dispense with given the current demography.

Second, and in tandem with increased participation of immigrant youth in preschool programs is mastery of English in the early grades. This is essential and it is possible. We can't let Australia and China outdo us in teaching children English. Calderon and her colleagues argue that the current debates about what is the best approach to English language instruction, only serve to deflect attention from the core ingredient for success. Quality instruction and effective schools. Quality instruction and effective schools. It's not about bilingual or not bilingual or quasi-lingual or ELL or non-ELL, immersion, it's not about that. It's about quality instruction in context that is not segregating our kids into special programs where we're teaching them really low levels of English, but rather pushing them above the curve and learning English in subject context. We know what works to produce success among ELL's, but the question is whether there is the political will to do the right thing.

And third, the physical and emotional wellbeing of youth requires access to healthcare, which like education, is an investment in human capital. It's the third prong of the human capital investment, to reduce the inequities that we see in educational attainment, and in particular, Perreira and Ornelas warn that stemming the obesity crisis can reap huge savings in the future by averting the deleterious and costly consequences of obesity today. But that means that we have to take a future orientation and not look in the rearview mirror, and not be so present oriented.

So, the challenges for youth policy in an aging society, I think, are something we need to reckon with and put our priorities on the table.

In the current climate of fiscal retrenchment, it is urgent that policy discussions about immigrant youth use the language of investments rather than expenditures. Just like Wall Street. The language of investments, of compounded interest, of higher dividends, by investing today for tomorrow's future.

Schools and health clinics cost money, but they are the core institutions for generating human capital. Like the financial markets, the more we invest today, the bigger the returns tomorrow, and we're going to need them as our population continues to age and we reach that new equilibrium in the age structure.

But the headwinds of population aging pose a formidable challenge, one that Sam Preston presaged in his 1984 address to the Population Association of America, namely this implicit or this explicit competition for resources between the young and the old. In the current budget crises, this budget is manifested in the slashed state budgets which face huge reductions in education funding -- education funding, what is wrong with this picture? -- and the political grandstanding to leave Medicare and Social Security alone.

As Ron and I point out in the introduction to the volume, programs that support youth are always more vulnerable during times of

economic contraction. This seems quite wrongheaded, as if our policies are looking through the rearview mirror rather than the windshield. That states must balance their budgets while the federal government can borrow and carry a debt, only exacerbates the inequality in funding for youth and elderly programs. Children don't vote either, so maybe what we need is the functional equivalent of AARP for youth. All youth, rich or poor, and native and immigrant.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. HASKINS: So, I start out by revealing my incompetence right from the beginning. If I even touch one of these things the PowerPoint disappears. It's a miracle. I don't know how that could happen.

Right, so I want to focus just on our policy brief and our policy brief focuses on some of the same issues that were highlighted by Marta.

Let me begin this way. Marta's already said this and I mentioned it in the introduction, but if you see a picture of it, maybe it'll stick even more. Think about that almost a quarter of our kids, 23 percent of the kids in the United States, are either first -- they're either immigrants themselves or they're children of immigrants, mostly the children of immigrants, which means that they're citizens, but that still leaves a very sizable group, many of whom have parents who are here who are not

documented that are in the United States illegally, and that has real implications for their development, and we're going to talk about that subsequently. And this projection to 2050 shows that this trend has not ended by any means. By 2050, 33 percent of the kids will be non-citizens. I have a feeling that the recession might have had an impact on that, but that's still the current projection.

So, the point of this slide is, if immigrant kids have a problem, the nation has a problem. The nation has a serious problem if there are problems with immigrant kids. So, let's talk about their educational attainment. This compares first-generation and second-generation immigrant with native born, for less than high school, high school, bachelors degree, and then the last slide, the last segment, is just for Hispanics. So, what you can see here, it's kind of interesting, it's a little complex, but the big problem is -- one of two big problems, I would say, is that less than high school, immigrants are really over represented, especially first-generation immigrants. They do not complete high school so they're undereducated. There's very interesting data from the Census Bureau on their wages that follows the same trend that the wages of first-generation and second-generation immigrants have been declining since 1940, according to Borjas, who has a chapter in this volume. So, this is a serious problem, that we have a group of immigrant children that are seriously deprived because they have so little education, and as Marta made the point, this has real implications for the American economy, and

not least, for the trust funds of Social Security and Medicare.

If you look at bachelor's degree, it's kind of interesting. We do see a very high percentage of first and second-generation immigrants who have a bachelor's degree, and what this suggests -- this is the complexity I was referring to -- is that our population of immigrants is really somewhat bimodal. So, we have a lot of highly educated, highly qualified immigrants, and they do very well in the United States, and, in fact, on average many of them as a group do better than white -- people with white, European backgrounds.

So, it is somewhat of a complex problem, but the most important fact, at least for my thinking, is the high percentage that don't even complete high school. That's a real problem. And if you look at the bachelor's degrees for Hispanics only, you narrow it down another step, it isn't just a segment of immigrants, but it tends to be Hispanic immigrants, and especially, of the Hispanics, especially immigrants from Mexico who have the worst education.

They are starting to catch up but they're still far behind, and if you look at the bachelor's degree for Hispanics and compare those with the bachelor's degree in the previous set of bar graphs, you can see that Hispanics really have a difficult time with achieving a post-secondary education, all the more reason for our focus on the DREAM Act.

And here I just listed -- and these are documented thoroughly in the volume -- all the measures of education by which

Hispanics are behind as compared with almost any other group in the United States except blacks. And in fact the problem in Latino education is so serious, in this wonderful recent book by Gandar and Contrettos, you can see the quote here that they are predicting that if we don't do something about Hispanic education, we're going to have a permanent underclass in the United States, and we already have one fairly permanent underclass, it's not going to help us to have two.

So, we conclude in the policy brief, and there's strong implications of this in the volume, we make this point specifically in the introduction to the volume, that there are three effective policies that we think that would address education. First, more preschool education. Very strong data that high-quality preschool will have impacts on children. This is a much more difficult policy problem than you might think because -- at least in my opinion, I've been writing about this for two to three decades now -- that Head Start is not doing the job. If you compare the results from Head Start with high-quality programs, everybody knows about Abcedarian and Perry preschool, but more recently state finance programs, they do much better, and those kids are much better prepared for school than kids who have been in Head Start, so this is a difficult problem, but we need to solve it and we need to make sure that kids who are qualified, low-income kids, kids from low-income families, especially immigrants, are able to get high-quality preschool program.

Second, they need much better -- and Marta made this point

very clearly -- English language instruction. There's a long chapter in the volume that analyzes all this stuff and comes to the conclusion, as Marta said, that the quality of the instruction is the key thing. And as often happens in the United States, we get distracted by arguments that everybody gets emotional about. We even have votes in California about whether we're going to have English language immersion or we're going to have dual language programs, and the real -- meanwhile, the real issue is the quality of the instruction is what really counts, regardless of the specifics of the program. It's high-quality instruction, and there are very strong hints that it has to be a school wide effort, that it isn't just in the classroom, but in the lunchroom, during sports, during other extracurricular activities, the focus on language by all the teachers in the school is an important part of making sure that kids get good English language.

And then, finally, pass the DREAM Act.

So, if we did that, what are we talking about? What would the DREAM Act do? First, the current law, many of these kids who were brought here illegally by their parents, that they are subject to deportation, just like their parents are, that they cannot legally work in the United States, and that they cannot legally receive benefits to support their college education. So, we have a large number, over a million kids in the United States, who are here illegally and if they go to college, really, they're asking for trouble because they could expose themselves to being

found that they're here, that they're not documented, they're here illegally and they could be deported.

So, this is -- when we're trying to increase their education and focus their young minds on education and a career, this is a serious distraction and there are many, many, in fact, books and movies and so forth that show the conflicts that these kids have and how difficult it makes their life to be here illegally.

So, the DREAM Act first provides a conditional legal status that would permit work and going to school, so it would remove the threat of kids being deported, and then they have six years to apply for legal permanent residency and then eventually citizenship, and in the meantime they have to complete two years of college or serve in the military for at least two years or complete trade school for two years, and even before that they have to meet several conditions, they have to have a high school diploma or GED, they have to be enrolled in college or a trade school, and they have to be in the U.S. for five years. And there are some other requirements like they have to be of good moral character, and so forth.

So, the DREAM Act, on its face, seems like a reasonable thing. There was a lot of bipartisan agreement at one time but now that bipartisan agreement has evaporated and there's a very strong and interesting debate. My own view is that there are very strong arguments on both sides and we want to rehearse those arguments for this group this morning and let you decide. We have very strong proponents of both

views on both sides.

Oh, look at this. What a nice chart that is. I was going to conclude with this wonderful chart. I just want to conclude by saying that this chart, if you can see it -- what happened? -- the Brookings equipment is defective. Hit it again? Okay. I just hit it three or four times, didn't work. Amazing.

So, let me tell you what this chart shows. It is one of the most interesting charts in 30 years work in this area that I have seen, and I guess you're going to have to read all the things that I've written about this now. You're going to have to buy my books and so forth. This chart shows that in the United States, if you look at parents and divide them into five groups, called quintiles, and then see what happens to their kids as adults, so this is longitudinal research, it's done Panel Study of Income Dynamics, University of Michigan, and what you find is that if the kids from the bottom quintile, from the bottom 20 percent, do not go to college, they are -- about over 40 percent of them wind up in the bottom quintile, exactly like their parents were. If they go to college, the chances of being in the bottom quintile are cut by more than half and not only that, their chances of making it to the top quintile are increased by a factor of four. Now, think of this, an intervention program that would increase by four times -- in this case from 5 percent to 19 percent, the percentage of kids from the very bottom who make it all the way to the top.

So, that is why college is such a crucial thing in the United

States, and that's why this debate over the DREAM Act is extremely important.

So, let's get the panel up here and let's have a lively debate of which I'm sure we will. And please come up here. We'll resume in one second.

Good. Excellent. So, our distinguished panel -- as many of you know who come to Brookings events, we don't give long introductions because it wastes time and we'd rather argue with people, so let me just tell you who's on the panel. And I think you'll be able to figure out about within 15 or 20 seconds after they open their mouth what their views on this issue are.

First we have Mark Krikorian who's the executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies. Audrey Singer who's a senior fellow at Brookings in our Metropolitan Program. Jena McNeill, who's a senior policy analyst in Homeland Security at the Heritage Foundation. And Josh Bernstein, who's the director of immigration of the SEIU. And we're going to talk in that order, Krikorian, then Singer, then McNeill, then Bernstein.

MR. KRIKORIAN: Thank you, Ron. I'm obviously kind of intended to be the skunk at the garden party here, so I'll fulfill my role.

It seems to me the first question you have to ask is, what is the point of the DREAM Act, as it exists today? Ostensibly, it was to legalize certain illegal immigrant children. In fact, it was a marketing gimmick. The point of the DREAM Act, and you can see this from looking

at the absurdly convoluted nature of the thing -- the point of the DREAM Act was to use it as a marketing tool for a broader amnesty. To put it colloquially, here's Johnny, he's been here since he was three weeks old. He's now a valedictorian in high school. His chief goal in life is to get his college degree, join the Marine Corps, and kill terrorists in Afghanistan. Therefore all 11 million illegal aliens should get legal status. That was the point -- that's why the DREAM Act was constructed.

I was on a panel a couple years ago when the new Administration had just come in, just a block from here, with Esther Olavarria, who was Kennedy's immigration person and then head of policy for DHS, and Frank Sharry, whom anybody who follows immigration knows is one of the top lobbyists on the issue, and they were asked specifically, would any piecemeal measures like ag jobs or the DREAM Act move in this -- what was then -- a new Congress and new Administration. Both of them said, categorically, under no circumstances would that happen. That they were great pieces of legislation, but they would be folded into the comprehensive bill. The DREAM Act was a marketing gimmick.

Now, if the point is to legalize the status of certain illegal immigrant kids who are, as the advocates of the DREAM Act sometimes put it, Americans in all but paperwork, in other words their identity has been formed here, they're psychologically Americans because they've lived here since before they were aware of the world around them. That's

actually, I think, a germ of a good idea. I'm personally -- and I'm not speaking here on behalf of anybody or I have no constituency, I'm just sort of a bloviating talking head, but that actually strikes me as a defensible proposition. But there are several problems with the actual DREAM Act as it exists that interfere with that.

First, it applies to kids up to their 16th birthday. That's absurd. By the time you're 16 years old, even though you're not an adult, your identity has substantially been formed. I have a 15-year-old son. If he and I snuck into Mexico to live, which, by the way, is a lot harder to do because they enforce their immigration laws, and he became a Mexican citizen eventually, he would still psychologically remain an American. He was cooked by the time he was 15 years old.

So, the first point that any DREAM Act 2.0 would have to lower the age of initial arrival into the United States. The Roman Catholic Church pegs the age of seven as the age of reason. That makes sense as a cutoff. Maybe ten. I don't have a magic number, but it needs to be a lot lower than 16 and the point there being is that kids grow up here and are psychologically formed as Americans.

The second point, the reason we have a DREAM Act is because our immigration enforcement was so feckless and incompetent that all kinds of parents felt -- not only got in here illegally, but felt it was plausible to bring their young children here as well. So, any DREAM Act 2.0 would have to have at least some kind of enforcement provisions to try

to prevent future problems like this, prevent illegal immigrant parents from inflicting this on their children in the future, and at the very least, such a thing would have to include mandatory use of E-Verify. That's not a magic bullet. This is the online verification system for new hires to try to reduce the pull -- the magnetic pull of jobs. It's not a silver bullet, it's not going to solve everything, but it is sort of the one, big, most important change that needs to get made.

Thirdly, the point of the DREAM Act -- the way the DREAM Act is often presented is that the kids shouldn't pay for the offenses of their parents -- the crimes, the multiple felonies of their parents, because almost all illegal immigrants have committed multiple, federal, criminal felonies, and there's something to that, and the flip side is that if the children who have been brought up as Americans are as -- like I said, the advocates put it, Americans in all but paperwork and they benefit in some way, the parents -- the adults who did this to these children must never benefit in the future from this status, and there's a whole -- I mean, there are ways you can sort of talk about that, but I mean, at the very least, parents should be barred -- the parents of these kids should be barred permanently from ever receiving any immigration benefit in the future, ever.

And then fourth, and this is actually something that might surprise people, when you look at the DREAM Act, it is larded with these gimmicks because it's just a gimmick, it's a marketing tool, and getting rid

of those gimmicks, it seems to me, is an essential element of coming up with a DREAM Act 2.0, and one of the most ridiculous gimmicks is this idea that in order to qualify, these kids, even if they've lived here since they were two months old, are American in every respect psychologically and otherwise, still have to finish two years of college or trade school or two years of military service. That's ridiculous. If there's a case to be made for kids who have grown up here and are American psychologically, then why should we require them to have to go to two years of college? I mean, let's be honest, not everybody's college material, and the idea that -- and when you add the military side of it -- the military is only going to be able to take a tiny number of people, so this is not going to be a solution for more than a handful, if the DREAM Act were to be passed the way it is.

And so like I said, if the point is to fix the legal status of -- sort of tie up loose ends of our mistaken lack of priority in enforcement that allowed this situation to develop, then whether those kids actually get into college or go to a community college or are admitted to the military, which, by the way, turns down -- gives IQ tests to people, and the bottom 40 percent have basically no chance of being admitted to the military.

So, we're basically telling a very large share of people who would qualify under a kind of moral argument from the DREAM Act that we're not going to legalize you because you're unfit for college or trade school. I think that's kind of ridiculous. So, I would wipe out those gimmicks and end up with a bill that's, in a policy sense, much more

defensible, but also in a political sense, I think, is more defensible because the numbers are dramatically smaller and it includes elements that would address the fact that this really is an amnesty and would try to deal with that, both through enforcement by trying to limit future families like this, and by essentially a kind of penalty for the adults who did know what they were doing and inflicted these problems on their children by making sure they never benefit in the future. Thanks.

MR. HASKINS: Good. Thank you very much. Audrey.

MS. SINGER: Thanks. I am not going to respond directly to Mark because I spent all this time preparing my prepared remarks, so I'll save that for later, but I want to first congratulate Ron and Marta for editing a volume with such solid contributions. Much evidence, much of it summarized in the pieces in this journal volume of the Future of Children, point to the future of the U.S. economy and how it's going to rely increasingly on the children of immigrants, and so my basic point today is to talk about the economic realities and, you know, how something like the DREAM Act makes economic sense.

So, I'm going to make three points about today's topic and what we should do about U.S. immigration policy. The first is on demography, it's a little parallel to some of Marta's comments, the second on geography, and the third on immigrant integration.

First, in the volume, Jeff Passel, who's a demographer at the PEW Hispanic Center, describes the changes in the U.S. population with a

focus on changes to child and youth populations and he clearly demonstrates that given the low birth rates among the native born white and black populations, most of the growth of the U.S. labor force over the next 40 years will come from immigrants and their children. This means we need to take this segment of the population and their education and their mobility very seriously. We need to recognize as a society we are going through profound demographic transformations.

We are aging rapidly and we have to replace our labor force. There is no doubt, when you look at the numbers and the trends, that at this moment, not 20 years down the line, not 20 years down the line, not, you know, the next generation, we need to prepare U.S. children and youth, including the children of immigrants, of all statuses, for a U.S. market, one that is facing greater global competition.

And several statistics and trends are worth noting from Passel's analysis. Currently we have the largest number of children ever in the United States, 75 million, but they make up the smallest share of the population ever before, about 24 percent. Of these 75 million, nearly one in four are children of immigrants, so that's those born in the United States plus those born abroad. Eighty-four percent of children of immigrants were actually born in the United States. Most importantly, because of the 20th Century trends in U.S. birth rates, the baby boom, the baby bust, immigration, also people living longer, the ratio of children to seniors is changing dramatically. At the beginning of the 20th Century there were 10

children to every senior. In 20 years, that's 2030, Passel estimates that the ratio is expected to be only 1.2 -- for every 1.2 child there will be one senior. So, this is high drama over the next two decades.

When you look at the demographic composition of the United States as a whole, taking into account age, together with race and ethnicity, there's a generational divide that has implications for the future workforce. Currently children are more likely to be ethnic or racial minorities, 43 percent; adults are more likely to be native born white, 70 percent, and competition for government resources exists between these two groups, especially when you look at seniors and children as two groups that draw on resources. And it's worse during recessionary times.

My Brookings colleague Bill Fry has shown that much of the demographic momentum for the racial and ethnic compositional changes are already in place. The child population under age three is already majority non-white. He shows that even if immigration stopped tomorrow, we will achieve a national minority majority child population by 2050, by 2023, if current immigration trends continue.

So, we should be aware, also, of the heterogeneity of immigrant children. It's not just their country of birth, languages spoken, their nativity status, but also their age at arrival, as Mark has pointed out. There has been a growing trend of youth arriving, particularly from Mexico and Central American countries, without high school education who are not in school now and the majority of them are likely destined for low

skilled, low paying jobs.

As Ron and Marta have shown through this volume, the children of immigrants, particularly those from Mexico and Central America have lower grades, lower high school completion, lower college attainment than most other groups of children and youth, and given that they're the fastest growing group and that children of immigrants are a huge part of the future workforce of this country, and hence the prosperity of this country, there's really no time to waste in getting people prepared to participate in the economy and it makes excellent economic sense.

So, on geography, let me just point out that much of the discussion that we have nationally, and even in this volume on immigration, is sort of at the national level. You know, we talk about the big picture, but immigrants are not evenly distributed across the nation. It's true that nearly half of all immigrant children live in California, Texas, and New York, and half of all of California's children are children of immigrants, and in Arizona, Nevada, Texas, New York and New Jersey, about a third of children there are children of immigrants.

But we've seen a dramatic shift in places immigrants live during the past 20 years when immigrants found opportunities in many more cities and suburbs and rural areas than in the recent past when they were very concentrated in large urban centers such as New York, Chicago, LA, Miami, Houston, and so forth. The speed of the influx in areas that historically have not accommodated large numbers of

immigrants has caused a lot of social and economic stress, and what's happening in new destination areas is important for our understanding of how immigrant integration will play out, and that is now newcomers and long-term residents, together, work to build secure, vibrant communities, I'm talking about local communities. And we are at a very critical juncture given the recession, given anxiety over jobs, housing, and income, and as states and localities are now the main players on immigration policy creation.

This brings me to the third point, immigration and immigrant policy are intertwined and we can see this very clearly in terms of the arguments around the DREAM Act. The policy and the politics are very hard to separate. Is this about immigration policy or is this about policy around immigrants? So, it's about immigration policy, and there I mean policies shaping laws around immigrants, admissions, who's allowed to stay in this country. It raises debates about legal status and the fairness of legalizing people whose parents have broken the law. There are millions of immigrants living in the United States without legal status, many more who are adults. What are the implications for families, particularly those with unauthorized children?

The number of children living in the United States without legal status who would be eligible for benefits if the DREAM Act were enacted, there's a couple of estimates out there, the Migration Policy Institute has estimated less than two million people would actually be

eligible, but they've estimated potentially only about 38 percent of those would achieve legal residency through the DREAM Act.

So, this raises the question about the rest of immigrants living here without status. The arguments around the DREAM Act are also about immigrant policy, and those are policies shaping the integration of immigrants and their children. Given the demographic realities, it would be shortsighted to only focus on the problems of implementing the DREAM Act and the kinds of things that we're going to talk about more today.

We've already invested in these youth. They have had as much of a choice in their decision to enter the United States illegally as they did to attend American public schools once they were here. Recently it's become popular for business, educational, and political leaders to call for stapling a green card to the diplomas of foreign graduates with advanced degrees from U.S. universities. They argue we should not turn away this talent but we should welcome them to stay in the United States, to keep the U.S. globally competitive. Immigrant youth, those who would be eligible for the DREAM Act, are their younger parallels, and what's different about them is they're largely homegrown. For the same strategic reasons, we should give these students an opportunity to move to the next level, whether it's college education or a military stint. And, yes, we should be concerned about the bigger picture, about overhauling our laws, about enforcement, about admissions policies, but this could be a priority

that we could take action on today. Thanks.

MR. HASKINS: Jena?

MS. MCNEILL: Well, I want to thank the Brookings Institution for having me on the panel today. And I want to thank all of you for being here to talk about an important issue of immigration.

I think immigration is important partly because it's a timely issue. Maryland just passed it's version of the DREAM Act, I think, last week or the week before, and Georgia just passed an Arizona-style immigration law that would ramp up enforcement in that state.

Immigration is also important, though, because the policies that we put in place matter. They matter to our economy, they matter to national security, they matter to social policies, and they affect people, including children, and so it's important that we talk about this today.

I doubt there's anyone in this room who would argue that our immigration system isn't broken. Yet approximately 25 years ago we passed an immigration bill that was supposed to fix a lot of the immigration problems at the time. At that time there were approximately 2.7 million illegal immigrants inside the United States. The legislation gave that population, after completing certain requirements, a path to citizenship. This was supposed to, however, be accompanied by interior enforcement and security mechanisms that were supposed to discourage individuals from breaking U.S. laws and entering illegally in the future.

Now we're in 2011 and we have an illegal immigrant

population of approximately 10.8 million which is down from about 12 million. Why is the system still broken? And, you know, I think part of that is because we never really finished that job of enforcement and border security that we were supposed to do back in 1986. Instead of making it more difficult to come to the U.S. illegally, for many years we made it easier, we kind of turned a blind eye and just allowed people to stay in the U.S. once they got here.

We have also allowed politics to drive our quest for solutions. Immigration -- and I don't just mean politics in terms of disagreements over bills, I mean that political parties have used immigration as a way to win votes and win elections.

I don't think it's in anyone's best interest for us to continue the political games, but it might unfortunately be a reality of the immigration debate. But what is the right solution? And one of those that has been proposed has been the DREAM Act. I won't go into specifics because I think we've kind of covered what the DREAM Act does, but, you know, the DREAM Act has seemingly humanitarian aims. I'll be the first to admit that when we talk about individuals entering the military or getting a better education, I can't help but be intrigued by that. My own father was someone who was a poor guy from Arkansas who basically entered the military to make a better life for his family, so I get that. I understand that. But then when I look at 1986, I have to realize that this is a bad idea, and the reason is, that it takes us right back down that road of more illegal

immigration.

Whether it's a piecemeal amnesty like the DREAM Act or something like a larger earned legalization under a comprehensive bill, it all to me has the impact of encouraging more illegal immigration to the United States.

What is at the heart of the DREAM Act? It's really that people who are here illegally are allowed to stay in the United States. Whenever you do that you send the signal that the U.S. doesn't take its laws seriously and that once you get here you can stay. That was the same message we sent in 1986 and honestly that's what brought us to why we are talking about this today. Why would we set up another generation of people to be in the exact same position or put the country in the exact same position all over again? To me that doesn't solve the problem.

At some point, to me, we have to start to take our laws seriously, and what is my solution? And a lot of people are like, well, okay, give me your solution, because this isn't an easy public policy problem. And I think the politics of immigration have made it so that we keep trying to go down the road of solving the immigration problem through a bit, gigantic, comprehensive bill and I think that that's a mistake. I think that we need to start to address this issue from an incremental aspect, putting enforcement and border security at the forefront instead of talking about the debate in terms of a choice between a mass amnesty or

mass deportation.

I think that by tackling immigration on an incremental basis, we can begin to encourage people to leave the U.S. while also reexamining our legal immigration policies in a way that can help people come to the U.S. in the right way, the way other people have and continue to do.

I think we need to change the calculus in terms of disincentivizing illegal immigration to the United States. You know, there are no easy answers on this, like I sais, and I'm fully aware of the impact that this immigration problem has on legal, on illegal, and native born families inside the United States, but I want the issue to get solved and I don't think the DREAM Act does that. I don't want us to be having this same panel 30 years from now because we set up another generation to come here illegally. Thanks.

MR. HASKINS: I'd be willing to have a panel 30 years from now if I could be assured I'll be here to be on it.

Okay, Josh.

MR. BERNSTEIN: Me too.

MR. HASKINS: Marta didn't say anything. She's a little coy.

MS. TIENDA: I'll be on the beach.

MR. BERNSTEIN: And thanks for inviting me, both of you. In particular I thought that the presentations that you guys did earlier were very, very good. I look forward to seeing the rest of the PowerPoint when

I get back to the office.

And I too, you know, could use all of my time going point by point, especially discussing some of the points that Mark made. There's one, though, that I really feel I need to address which is the concept that the -- the idea that the DREAM Act was a marketing tool at its inception, and as one of the parents of the DREAM Act 12 years ago when it was first conceived, I can tell you categorically, you know, it was -- at that time it was actually before really comprehensive immigration reform had even -- was even on the radar screen and the idea was just to solve a problem, a particular problem of a generation of kids, and the reason that the DREAM Act has continued and has been so -- is alive and why we're talking about it today is because of the passion that these kids themselves elicit in their champions and that's kept the DREAM Act alive as a single entity.

In my short remarks I want to talk about three main benefits of the DREAM Act. There's the fiscal and economic benefits that it brings about, there's some intangible benefits that it will lead to, and then I want to talk a little bit about how it effects immigration policy in a positive way.

Who are we talking about? Just to really focus in, we're talking about the kids. If you've ever been on the border, like in a border area, you might have seen a sign and the sign shows, you know, an individual, you know, running across the street, because it's a warning for people to be careful in their cars, and you see the sign and you see that

individual and you see that person dragging a young child. It's that young child is who we're talking about when we're talking about the DREAM Act. These are kids who have grown up here and who realistically, they're going to be here for the rest of their lives. And what we're talking about is how are they going to be treated during that period. Will they be legal and educated or will they be hunted down and uneducated? That's the question that the DREAM Act poses.

You know, Mark -- I don't know if it was you or one of your colleagues, the Center for Immigration Studies published a paper that said -- that analyzed the costs of the DREAM Act and basically opposed -- it said that -- estimated that maybe a million people would go to college more than -- with the DREAM Act than without the DREAM Act and complained about that as a cost. But to me I think that if you think about the implications of a million immigrants, many of them low income immigrants, being able to go to college and complete college, that's a benefit to us and it's an investment, as Marta was saying.

What are the fiscal benefits? Remember, many of the DREAM Act -- disproportionate in my experience, a number of the DREAM Act students are honor students, class leaders, even valedictorians. There is no question that college education increases their incomes dramatically. A college graduate earns twice as much over -- per year as compared to a high school drop out. College graduates earn, on the average, a million dollars over their lifetimes more than a high school

graduate, and those are graduated. If you graduate from high school you earn more, if you graduate from -- if you have a little bit of college you earn more, if you graduate from college you earn more. Each time there's an income benefit which means that these people will be able to buy more cars, buy more houses, appliances, other merchandise, that's going to -- that obviously leads to growth and prosperity, lower unemployment and increased tax receipts.

What are the fiscal benefits that we can talk about? A typical high school grad working full time pays twice as much in federal income taxes as a high school graduate. Again, the rate for people with a bachelor's degree of incarceration is 1/19th of the rate of a high school graduate, and so there's also a decreased use of public services for people that graduate -- that go to college and graduate.

In 1991 -- I wish it would be an updated study by Rand -- I'm sure the numbers are even more dramatic -- said that a 30-year-old Mexican immigrant woman with a college degree will pay $5,300 more in taxes each year and will receive less than $3,900 in government services -- $3,900 less in government services than a high school dropout with similar characteristics. That's $9,200 every single year for this one typical individual multiplied by however -- if it's a million people, that's an incredible dividend, and that doesn't include the dividend of these kids going from working illegally to working legally. The fiscal benefits, I think, are undoubted.

Educational benefits, remember, higher education is both a private and a public good, so to compete in a knowledge-based economy we need to educate as many as possible of able, qualified and ambitious young people.

We've already talked about the fiscal benefits, but also post-secondary education improves health and nutrition, enhances civic engagement, enhances parental involvement in education, and provides additional tuition revenue for public colleges and universities. It also makes people more hopeful and it has an impact on their children, on their siblings. The benefits are just incalculable and the way to -- and some people argue that the best way to accomplish increased numbers of people going to college is to hold back immigrants, which doesn't make any sense to me. What we want to do is we want to encourage as many people -- you know, those who are marginal and having a hard time who are not immigrants as well as those who are immigrants.

Finally I want to talk about the immigration benefit that comes about because of this because that's something that I have some expertise in. You know, basically what the DREAM Act does is it takes the children, the young people that have grown up here, the people we're talking about, off the battlefield of the immigration wars. It makes immigration policy simpler. It makes it easier to -- because right now, as Ron said, these DREAMers, as they're called, are treated exactly the same as everybody else under the law. The DREAM Act would say, okay,

they -- we'll legalize them and then we can have a hard, much tougher discussion of what to do about adults, what do to about immigration policy, what to do about legal immigration, what to do about immigration enforcement. This is something which is kind of, to me, a no-brainer.

And it also allows, you know, the people who are in charge of our national security, instead of being required to go, as the President said, he said, we can't change -- we can't not go after these kids -- instead of wasting Homeland Security dollars on deporting honor students that everybody agrees should be here, we could take them off of the table and thereby have -- free up more money and resources to do the job that Homeland Security is supposed to do for us.

The final thing I want to do is respond a little bit to what Jena said really briefly --

MR. HASKINS: Really briefly.

MR. BERNSTEIN: You know, her basic argument is that it was a slippery -- that there's a slippery slope, you can't do the DREAM Act and then you're going to -- there's going to be -- you're going to be encouraging illegal immigration, et cetera. I just want to say, you know, please, just consider the DREAM Act on its own merits. What happens next, that's what happens next. If it's a good policy, if it's a good law, let's pass it and then we can -- like I said, we can have the fights on other things another day. Thank you.

MR. HASKINS: Okay. Thank you to the panel. I want to

focus on the two most difficult issues here and see if there's any possibility of some agreement, and please, panelists, when you're answering these questions answer both for yourself but also for your understanding of the political system and whether some of these ideas might really fly up there on the Hill or in the Administration.

So, the first one is the idea of divide and conquer. There are pieces of the various comprehensive bills that we've had in recent years that it seems likely there could be some bipartisan agreement. I was really encouraged by Mark's presentation because Mark's perspective here, even though he might have antagonized you a little bit with, you know --

MR. KRIKORIAN: That's my job.

MR. HASKINS: -- it's a trick, but notice that his presentation he kept talking about how to improve the bill. So, the question here is, first, could we -- can you imagine dividing the comprehensive legislation and passing piecemeal things that would improve our immigration system, and if so, could you imagine that the DREAM Act would be somewhere near the top of the things that we did separately and that we could forge a bipartisan agreement? Mark?

MR, KRIKORIAN: The answer is, potentially yes. Clearly the people covered by the DREAM Act, or some of them, anyway, are the most sympathetic group of illegal immigrants. I mean, that's, in a sense, why the lame duck Congress last year, you know, as the clock was

running out decided, well, let's try something, and the DREAM Act was kind of the least implausible thing they could push for. Of course, they had two years to pass it and if they were actually interested in passing it on its own, they could have done it in 2009. In fact, they could have done it in a way -- in more like its current form.

The problem is -- part of the problem is that the -- and we saw this during the lame duck session, the back and forth on the DREAM Act, the DREAM Act's supporters suggestions for kind of modifications or changes were all kind of irrelevant and extraneous, in other words, they didn't deal, it seems to me -- address what the core problem, which is the initial age of admission is too high, for instance, number one, and number two, there's no enforcement elements. In other words, neither one of those was ever even floated as far as I can see. Now, maybe behind closed doors somebody brought it up and it never came out, but neither one of those key issues was ever floated as a potential, you know, part of sort of a compromise DREAM Act and until that happens, it seems to me, there isn't any possibility, but with that kind of flexibility, maybe. I wouldn't say it's impossible at all.

MR. HASKINS: Other members?

MS. SINGER: Sure. I was very encouraged by all of the panelists. I think we're not that far away from each other on the substance of the issue. On the terms of such a policy, on the sequencing we might differ, and I think that's probably the case on the Hill as well. So, if we

think about this in terms of the big picture, there's an issue over who gets what and how to make enforcement and legalization in some form palatable to the other sides.

So, I think there is bipartisan agreement and I think, you know, the side that supports the DREAM Act and broader legalization is worried that passing the DREAM Act means we're done with legalization. I think the side that supports enforcement first or enforcement only would feel like if we passed the DREAM Act first, then we're never going to get around to enforcement.

So, that brings us back to the argument of whether comprehensive reform is the way to go, or whether we can do tandem or piecemeal legislation.

MS. TIENDA: But by default we are doing piecemeal because states are passing their own versions of the DREAM Act and they're doing so because they understand that they have already invested in youth and that there's a talent pool out there -- if these young individuals who have beat the odds, who have faced these headwinds of you don't belong here, and all the tools -- all the circumstances for not succeeding, and they're doing so anyway, those are precisely the people you want to continue to invest in.

So, when you think about -- take an investment perspective rather than, oh, my gosh, let's draw lines about did you come here legally or not, or were you dragged across when you were three or when you

were 12. Does all of that matter? Anybody who beats the odds under those circumstances and out performs individuals who have had all the benefits of citizenship throughout their lives really are -- there's something there that we may not be able to measure but we certainly want to bottle it and capitalize on it.

So, I think that's one thing, and not to decide is to decide, because by not doing anything, whether it's piecemeal or comprehensive, states are taking the law into their own hands and with very mixed and unfortunate results. Some of them are not so salutary, others are. It's also noteworthy that it is precisely in the two states that had anti-affirmative action legislation and referenda, California and Texas, were the first states to actually put in place the DREAM Act provisions, basically in the following terms that none of the panelists have raised, and that is providing in-state tuition, and what does that mean? In-state tuition means that you are treated as if you are a resident. It's about residency and not legal status. So, residency laws have been with us for a long time. The poverty laws of England, we sort of imported them and said, who can get benefits, in what states, how long do you have to live there?

So, if you move from one state to another, you have to establish residency before you can qualify for the benefits of the state that are based on residency and the state constitutions decide what residency means. So, it's only -- the DREAM Act as it initially was put forth and the debates were around who qualifies as a resident, and where legal status

does or doesn't entitle you to the in-state tuition.

So, just reaching to the top in achievement doesn't guaranty that, A, you're going to apply, B, that you're going to be admitted, and if you are, whether you'll be able to attend because you may have to pay outrageous out-of-state tuition rather than in-state tuition. That's how the DREAM Act initially unfolded and the way it's been now put forth and linked with amnesty is simply unbelievable.

So, we are always passing laws that we never enforce. It's not only about immigration, we haven't done a good job at all at immigration, '96 legislation we ignored -- we ignored Barbara Jordon's report that says let's do interior enforcement and remove the magnet, but of course we didn't do that either. So, yes, I agree that we need to do enforcement, that every sovereign nation has the right to decide who they should admit, under what circumstances, from where, but given that, at this point we're talking about our future as a nation, we're talking about having made an investment in young people. We catapulted this country on the backs of immigrants because we brought in immigrants from Europe that had already spent their dependent years abroad and then used them in catapulting us in our industrial revolution, and it seems very appropriate today, looking forward to the way the world is divided and the opportunities to invest, that we can't afford to throw away any investment we already made.

MR. HASKINS: Okay, let's look at a very specific suggest

that Mark --

MR. BERNSTEIN: Can I just saying --

MR. HASKINS: Okay, very quickly. Yeah.

MR. BERNSTEIN: Just -- I do think that we have done piecemeal over the last 20, 25 years. Almost every year there's been an enforcement bill that's passed. We've increased many fold the resources on the border. The laws are much tougher on the interior. There's a lot more deportation. There's a lot of piecemeal enforcement going on. What's not -- what isn't happening is the other side of the ledger, which is -- you know, we talk about humanitarian, but these kind of sensible things that are beneficial to all of us.

MR. HASKINS: So, Mark makes a specific suggestion that we could fix one of the arguments against the bill if we would -- if we limit the age, so the person would have to be here much -- by the time they're seven, say, rather than 18, Mark mentioned seven.

MR. KRIKORIAN: Sixteen.

MR. HASKINS: Can you imagine that that would be a part of a solution and that both sides could agree on some much lower age than 18?

MR. BERNSTEIN: Absolutely not. I'll tell you why, but I understand why, you know, at some age --

MR. HASKINS: Well, we started with an absolutely not, that's --

MR. BERNSTEIN: Sorry. Sorry. We can agree on some things, but Mark and I come from really different -- really different perspectives on immigration generally, but I'm just thinking about, you know, if you're 16 years old and you came under the DREAM Act you would not qualify, if you were 16 years old when you came, so we're talking about people that are 15 years old. Most of the people that I know, the young people that I know that came when they were teenagers, were brought here kicking and screaming, and that's not -- it was not that they themselves chose. They followed their parents.

In terms of the value to us, though, the ones -- many of those teenagers that have come here, sadly, will not be able to qualify under the DREAM Act, will not be able to meet the educational requirements. It's just simply much more difficult -- language and a lot of other obstacles prevent them from graduating from high school and going on to college, and so what you're doing is you're taking the ones who are the most able, that Mark was talking about, and you're saying those are -- that we're going to hold those ones back and we're going to prevent them from legalizing. That doesn't -- to me that doesn't make any sense. We went to -- you know, to me, I would want to increase the age limit because I think that the educational requirements are the things that really are beneficial to us as a society.

MR. HASKINS: Jena, do you agree with that, that there -- the people who oppose DREAM Act now would be somewhat satisfied

with a lower age and would the other side agree to it?

MS. MCNEILL: You know, I don't know. I'm not sure if they would or wouldn't. I think Mark makes some great points about the DREAM Act. I think there are people who support the premise and theory and so I think that there might be room for us to be able to come to an agreement on some things, but I still think when you get to the legalization element, which, at least from the conservative side, I think there's a lot of people who view -- with respect to Josh -- I think there's a lot of people who view it as -- that the reason you wouldn't be willing to lower the age is because it really isn't about DREAM Act in terms of helping these individuals, it's about comprehensive legalization and about broader issues of illegal immigration, not about these children themselves.

So, I think there's a real, I guess, lack of trust on both sides, that both parties are bringing to the table what they say they're bringing. I guess if that makes sense.

MR. KRIKORIAN: I'm delighted to find myself to the left of The Heritage Foundation. That's great.

MR. HASKINS: Wait a minute, wait a minute, everybody's to the left of The Heritage Foundation.

MS. TIENDA: Where's the data --

MR. HASKINS: Do you want to add something to this, Audrey?

MS. SINGER: Me? You talking to me?

MR. HASKINS: You don't have to because I've got another question.

MS. SINGER: No, I will -- let's move on.

MR. HASKINS: Okay, good. So, the other big issue is amnesty and, you know, for people -- I hang out at Brookings where all economists are and economists talk about incentives all the time, and I think you have to grant that if you give amnesty to a group, it could have the effect of encouraging other people to come into the country, okay? At least in this case it's limited to a specific group.

So, why -- is there any possibility that -- or, can you imagine any terms put in the legislation that would indicate the seriousness of, let's say, the left, just for the sake of argument here, the people who support the legislation, that they do not intend to use this as an opening to broaden amnesty and to allow other age groups, that they really would focus it on the kids and it would only apply to kids and they would not use it as an opening for older people?

MR. KRIKORIAN: Well, that's kind of my point about enforcement and barring the adults responsible from future benefits. Now, even that might not do it, but at least that's attempting to make clear --

MR. HASKINS: When you say enforcement, clarify that. Do you mean --

MR. KRIKORIAN: I mean, in other words, for future purposes, like I said, at minimum mandatory use of E-Verify for all new

hires. The point being -- and again, you know, that's kind of a -- we've had that deal before. That's what the '86 deal was about, enforcement in exchange for amnesty. So, this may well fail, even on my -- you know, from my perspective, but there are two things. First of all, because it's applying to kids who were psychologically formed as Americans, I think there's maybe a stronger case for the amnesty part, but number two, by adding to that a permanent bar for the parents from ever receiving an immigration benefit, I think potentially, at least, and, you know, I may be wrong on this, but potentially, at least, it attempts to sort of balance out that incentive for future illegal immigration.

MR. HASKINS: Josh, can you live -- oh, go ahead.

MS. MCNEILL: Well, I was just going to say, that's where I would agree with Mark. That's where I think -- the trust factor, and I think that's where you could begin to develop that is if it did have that kind of robust enforcement, which I think, again, was lacking in '86 and that was really the problem. That's why we got where we are now is because we never took that piece of it seriously. We let the amnesty portion or the earned legalization or whatever you would call it, happen, and then we never did anything else. So, you can't get past that trust barrier on both sides if you don't have that enforcement mechanism.

MR. HASKINS: Josh, then Audrey. So, what about stronger enforcement?

MR. BERNSTEIN: So, I think that there's a couple of things.

I mean, we definitely -- and I personally have been supportive of a comprehensive solution for all of our immigration problems which includes increased enforcement and includes a legalization program and also, really importantly, which is the thing which I don't think happened in 1986, revamping the legal immigration system. That's when we're dealing with all of the immigration issues and problems.

When we're dealing with this particular one, I don't think that it's -- I think that -- I just want to say, like, dealing with some of the things that Mark said, you know, there has been so much effort, you know, to try to reassure people that the parents will not benefit or that it will be decades down the line, the legislation that was voted on in the House and Senate was actually changed so that it's ten years before you actually -- the individual will get their -- the DREAM Act student would get their Green Card and even be able to begin the process of starting to be able to live with their parents.

So, I think, you know, there's efforts -- I mean, that type of thing is definitely something that can be looked at, but the idea that you would, you know, put this whole big, you know, really problematic enforcement regime on everybody in order to try and pass the DREAM Act, I think that's disproportionate and it takes away the benefits of the DREAM Act, which is not about enforcement and it's not about immigration, it's about how do we treat these kids that are already here.

MR. HASKINS: Audrey?

MS. SINGER: On the legalization issue, I mean, part of me wants to say, if we had a broader legalization program the issues we're dealing with in the DREAM Act would go away, but that's really far left of -- and I think also the issue of internal enforcement, I completely agree with Jena and others that we totally fell down on the job and we let, you know, employers kind of take over the role there of bringing immigrants to this country, legally or not.

And on admissions, I'm going to leave that to --

MR. HASKINS: Wait, before you leave that I want to make a point and ask the panel about this point. I think there's some agreement that only when we deal with employers and deal with people at the point of employment that we'll really make progress against unauthorized immigration.

MS. SINGER: Absolutely.

MR. HASKINS: And it occurs to me that many employers are Republicans and especially small employers, and there's some reluctance to have a very strong regime where employers -- the most obvious solution would be employers would have to pay fines --

MS. SINGER: Yeah, well, we saw that in the '80s.

MR. HASKINS: -- and that they would really have to pay them. Maybe even collect it by the IRS to give it some teeth. And this is not something that Republicans would necessarily enjoy passing in the House and the Senate.

So, do you think that there's conservative opposition to a tougher enforcement regime that focused on employers?

MS. SINGER: I do think that's what happened in the '80s. We passed the law, it was on the books, we didn't enforce it, there was a lot of pressure --

MS. TIENDA: No, it was designed that way. The I-9 was designed so that it could not be enforced, so that was why they got the bill passed. When it was clear that the employers would not be accountable for the authenticity of the documents, rather than just say, I'll see them, but I don't have to verify them, then it was a deal. So, all of the sudden there was agreement.

So, we have to be serious about enforcement. Barbara Jordon said that in 1996. She was ten years ahead of her time when we started the comprehensive reform. So, we all agree about that part of it, and E-Verify is a start toward that, but if we don't -- if we're not going to do it, then we're always going to have an opportunity to blame the victims, whether they're young or they're old.

I don't know that this focus on the ten year moratorium, or lifetime moratorium on the parents is really appropriate. It seems a bit wrong headed for the following reason. Here are parents who have paid taxes and worked hard in this country, and we're going to say, oh, well, your children were not -- they were victimized by this process, so you have to leave. You can't ever, ever come in this country. At the same time that

we have an immigration system that is quite different from other industrialized countries. We allow -- we have this huge backlog, we allow people to wait in the queue for ten years. They age in place. By the time they come in here, we have 10 percent of our legal admissions -- do the math -- are coming in at ages 55 and over -- 10 percent. They're not going -- if they're coming from the regions of the world that we know they're coming from, they're not likely to learn English, they're not likely to work 40 quarters, they're not likely to earn Social Security, and they're going to be here during the most expensive parts of their lifetime, yet they're legal and they can tax our healthcare system and we can't capitalize on them in the same way that we can with the young children.

So, I think that the comprehensive piece of this, and deciding where we're going to put the punitive damages relative to who has contributed to our economy and allowed us to maintain the rigorous growth, has to also be balanced in coming up with a humane solution, not only from the standpoint of the children, but overall.

What is in the interest of this country going forward rather than just specific interest groups?

MR. KRIKORIAN: I was delighted that Marta supported elimination of the parent category because that seems to be what it is. I mean, I would in fact get rid of the parent section and the --

MS. TIENDA: Brothers and sisters.

MR. KIRKORIA: -- and brothers and sisters. I'd get rid of

parents all together, but my point is here, something you said, Marta, you said the parent category -- under immediate relatives, you said the kids were victimized by the system. No, they weren't. They were victimized by their parents. Bringing your children illegally into another country is a form of abuse. Pure and simple. And these parents are morally culpable for the position these kids are in.

I understand why they were doing it. People do all kinds of bad things and morally wrong things for reasons they imagine to be just, but they have inflicted something on their children that they must bear moral responsibility for, and this is only one tiny bit, it seems to me, of that kind of culpability.

MR. HASKINS: Before we go to the audience -- I don't want to let loose of this until -- I want to hear a more specific answer about the employment and about how we deal with employers.

Marta, you say that there's agreement, there was agreement -- there isn't agreement. We know that we're going to have to have something tough with employers --

MS. TIENDA: I agree with you.

MR. HASKINS: -- that's enforceable. Okay? So, we don't agree. Somebody is stopping that. Everybody sees that. Who is stopping that?

MR. KRIKORIAN: The Chamber of Commerce is stopping it. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce. I don't mean to interrupt you -- let me

say one more thing is that small business is not the problem. The National Federation of Independent Business, the NFIB, which is the small business lobby in Washington, is actually open to E-Verify. It's Tom Donohue at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. That is why this isn't happening, and what that highlights is this isn't a right/left thing. This is an up/down thing. This is big business, big labor, big religion, big media, big academia against the public, and the public being right and left, to some significant degree.

MR. BERNSTEIN: So, can I just --

MR. HASKINS: Yeah, go ahead. Go ahead.

MR. BERNSTEIN: Because the devil is in the details. You know, if we had had the technology and the ability and if we had put in place something like E-Verify at the time of IRCA, that would have been one thing, and that's the type of thing that we talk about in the context of comprehensive immigration reform. The problem is that when you have 11 million people, 8 million in the workforce who are working illegally in this country at this point, and you have -- all of their employers who want to employ them and they all desperately need jobs, if you would impose something like E-Verify unilaterally without a comprehensive -- without legalizing the workforce in the beginning, you set up a situation where basically what you're going to do is churn the workforce, send those jobs underground into, you know, more of a cash economy, in more -- you know, you're kind of churning and you're making it -- and we are fortunate

in this country -- only 9 percent of our economy is underground -- is a part of the underground economy. When you look at countries like Greece and Italy, they have about a quarter of their --

MR. HASKINS: Greece has an economy?

MR. BERNSTEIN: What's left of it. A quarter of their economy is underground economy. You know, they have -- in Italy you can go and you can buy software in the store that has two sets of books, one set for the government and the other set for what you're actually hiring, and that's -- and we are -- luckily we don't have -- we're not at that point, but if you just try to do something like E-Verify unilaterally without also legalizing the workforce, then you'll really push us in that direction.

MR. HASKINS: Okay -- go ahead.

MS. MCNEILL: One way to also address that is to start to look at the legal immigration avenues, not legalization, but legal immigration avenues, through visas, through potentially a temporary worker program. There are a lot of different ways that you can help offset the impact that that would have on employers through robust enforcement.

MR. HASKINS: Yeah. That's a good point. And it should be noted, even Kennedy agreed with changing the criteria for immigration as part of a major deal, so that suggests that you could make progress along these lines.

Audience, let me just caution the audience, we're really interested in questions here and not statements, so please have a short

question, we can get to a lot of people in the audience that way.

Yes, right here in the front. Someone's going to be there in just a second with a microphone. It's always a mistake to give people a microphone in Washington, but we're going to do it anyway.

MR. MCDONALD: My name's Jim McDonald, I'm from Alexandria. But in doing all of this -- to come to resolution -- would it be necessary to overturn -- I think it's Plyler v. Doe, the Texas Supreme Court -- overturn that so this mandatory -- whatever it is -- all of us have to pay for kids in school no matter if they're here legally or not. Would that have to be overturned?

MS. TIENDA: No. What is the connection between -- why would that have to be overturned? The rationale for Plyler v. Doe was clear, and it's about the investment of these children. What is the philosophy on which this country was founded? I don't see why you have to overturn that, because higher education is not mandatory, period. That's a choice, that's an option, an opportunity, whereas compulsory education is part of the law of the land, so because -- that's what make the DREAM Act and the focus on higher education a bit different, because it is an option. It's not mandatory. Plyler v. Doe deals with what is the mandatory law of the land with respect to young children to educate them. I don't think we want to go to a status -- a third world status in the way we treat young children who have no voice or vote.

MR. HASKINS: No, but -- we would not have to change the

Supreme Court decision or pass a law in order to do something like the DREAM Act because it's a different age group, and not necessarily connected with the public schools except in the sense you have to have a high school degree in order to go to most colleges. That isn't necessarily true for junior colleges, but under the terms, the way it's written now, you would have to have a high school degree or GED.

I think there was one -- yeah, right back there.

MR. NORTH: My name's David North, I'm a Democratic activist in Arlington, Virginia, and a consultant to the Center for Migration Studies. Mine is a demographic question and it relates to the strong emphasis we heard earlier this evening -- earlier today -- this is not on the DREAM Act, this is on some of the basic demographics.

There was a strong stress on how important young people are compared to old people in the labor force and how young immigrants, including illegal immigrants, helped build up this number of young workers, which is regarded by several of the speakers as a very good thing. I wonder whether or not anybody's paying any attention as they do these comparisons, particularly over a period of 40 or 50 years, between the number of youth and the number of old people, to the rising life expectancy and also the rising retirement age and also the -- which could keep going even higher. I'm 82 and work nearly full time and I think that a retirement age of 65 is ridiculous, but then I'm bias because I'm among other things healthy, but I'm wondering whether or not as one does the

numbers, one bears in mind the fact that the life expectancy is growing and the age of retirement is growing. Question.

MR. HASKINS: Audrey?

MS. SINGER: Well, those things are all true. Life expectancy is rising, whether people are staying healthy in their oldest -- the oldest oldest we call them, is another question, and the growth in our healthcare needs and healthcare industry, and if you look at, you know, the over representation already of immigrants in those fields across the skills spectrum, you'll see that they're going to play an increasing role there too.

So, yeah, and the rising age of retirement, talk to Marta about that. She's got some personal thoughts on that because -- didn't she say she was going to be on the beach on 30 years?

MS. TIENDA: I think -- what are -- it's not an either/or situation because I think the way the Social Security system is providing incentives for people to work a little longer, you can qualify at age 62 but if you go to age 65 you get a little bit more. If you go to age 67, you get a little more. So, there's already some economic incentives to prolong work life, the question whether you need to go to 82 is another matter, but -- but the other side -- that does not take away from the importance of investing in young people because you can have -- you know, to produce your Social Security check you can have either nine minimum wage workers or one worker at the average wage, so when you looked at that age structure

in one of my slides, when it's a stationary, stable population, where you're getting a constant growth rate, you want to make sure that the young people or those at working ages are able to support the dependency needs at the lower end and the higher end. And that can only be accomplished by investment so that our workers can be productive and compete on the national -- so, it's not either/or, it's both.

MR. HASKINS: Let me just add one thing here, this is an objective fact so I'm not taking sides on anything, and it's a very important consideration, and that is, as everybody here knows, you pay Social Security, FICA taxes from the first dollar of income, so everybody pays that, but if you make more money, you wind up paying more up to a certain point. But in addition, the bottom 40 percent of taxpayers in the United States pay zero income taxes. In fact, net in the bottom 40 percent, they pay negative income taxes. So, that is where -- to the extent that these kids are educated and get better jobs -- and everybody says there are lots of better jobs available and we even talk about -- we had immigration laws to get more people with higher education because those jobs go unfulfilled in many cases, so if we could educate these kids it would not only affect the direct deposits to Social Security and Medicare, but our whole take in the income tax system, because many of these kids will never pay income taxes at the federal level.

Next question. Yes, right here in front.

SPEAKER: Hi, my name's Anya. I'm with the Peace Center

in the States and we don't actually work on immigration. We do, however, work on education issues so this is going to be easy because we're talking about the real young kids, most of whom are citizens, what, 86 percent, 90 percent. So, I was not at all surprised to see that high quality pre-K is in the top three policies that would improve outcomes for children of immigrants, but really for all children.

So, I think my question is to Ron, is, you know, given the issues that you mentioned with -- around quality, is there a possibility with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, you know, looming and there's some bipartisan agreement that something needs to be done around ESEA sooner rather than later, is there a way to incentivize states and school districts to invest in high quality pre-K to benefit, you know, children of immigrants as well as all other kids?

MR. HASKINS: I will give an unfortunate answer to this question. If I were an advocate I would not say what I'm about to say. We spend something like $26 or 27 billion on preschool programs including daycare, which is by no stretch of the imagination high quality. And I would worry that five years from now we'll spend less. I think it's going to be a tremendous fight just to keep what we have no at both the federal and the state level, so I'm not optimistic at all even though I think there's a very strong case and the Congress, including Republicans, are very sympathetic to the case, we'll be lucky to keep what we have. I hope you don't say that and I hope advocates don't say that. They should always

say they want more, but let's at least try to keep what we have.

All the way in the back. That gentleman back there. I happen to know his name is Frank Fuentes, a great administrator at HHS. I still want to race you, though. You had leg surgery, right?

MR. FUENTES: I thought we were going to keep that part quiet.

I was intrigued by Marta's call for an AARP for youth. We've got the Child Welfare League of America, we have the Children's Defense Fund, and yet, as you just finished saying, spending on children and youth continues to decline.

How would we go about forming an effective organization or voice for these issues because they really are, as has been pointed out -- not just Hispanic kids, but children in general -- the economic and security future of this country?

MS. TIENDA: Well, I think the first step -- look at our funding. If we continue to have this divide where the major support programs for elderly are in the federal domain and those for children are in the state and local domains, then we've got this big disconnect because states have to balance their budgets and come hell or high water, they have to balance their budgets whereas the feds continue to borrow, although that's going to change as well. And all that's going to do is reduce federal subsidies to the state and local programs for children.

We do have a very -- a big patch quilt of programs for

children and youth. What would it take to actually get some leadership on the front? It's probably not something you want to entrust to the federal government because it just becomes more bureaucratized but it seems to me that this is where some nimbleness at the state level where an exemplary program might be able to be put forth to put children first and actually mean it, not just say it, by mobilizing the organizations that serve children rather than having them compartmentalized and being kind of social welfare, rather than social transformation organizations, because when AARP wants something -- when somebody mentions the words Social Security, they are on it. They do ad campaigns -- they are on it, and they're going to continue to protect their interests. They're very highly organized, they have a strong research body and evidence base to make the cases.

So, youth don't vote either and they don't have a say in these decisions that are affecting their lives. We have seen --

MR. HASKINS: And they have a hell of a time paying dues.

MS. TIENDA: Well, I didn't have money to pay dues I was so poor, so I couldn't be in the Girl Scouts or whatever, but it's important -- when we give youth a chance to participate in activities that are going to effect them, they rise to the occasion. They'll do that in everything, in learning, you just keep raising the bar -- the level, and they just keep going higher. It's when we lower the standard that they slither under it. We can't afford to do that and we can do better. We can't let Canada and

Australia and the UK beat us at our own game.

MR. HASKINS: Other people on the panel have a comment on this?

MR. KRIKORIAN: Discounts. The group has to offer discounts for people if you want a youth AARP.

MS. SINGER: And insurance.

MR. HASKINS: All the way in the back there.

SPEAKER: If a child is an undocumented child, graduates from an American school, enrolls in a state where they are eligible for state tuition, is there any vehicle available to them so that they can work legally?

SPEAKER: No.

MS. TIENDA: No. Unfortunately -- there's a book that does biographies of four young women in Colorado called "Just Like Us" and it compares their biographies, two of them have legal status, two of them don't. They were honor students in their classes taking the hardest classes and you'll see that their trajectories -- it's really tragic -- precisely because they couldn't work, because they couldn't get a drivers' license, because they couldn't do many of the little things that we just take for granted are so much brought into sharp relief by this contrast of their biographies as they -- and they did finish college, but they couldn't work even after.

MR. HASKINS: Mark?

MR. KRIKORIAN: There is one place they can work, that's the country where they hold citizenship. So, they can legally work, they just can't legally work in the United States.

SPEAKER: I consider that an insulting answer.

MR. KRIKORIAN: It's -- the question was loaded to begin with. The fact is they can work somewhere and that's their home country.

MS. HASKINS: This is Brookings, you know, we all get along here. Go ahead, Josh.

MR. BERNSTEIN: I just wanted to say --

MR. HASKINS: Say something nice though.

MR. BERNSTEIN: -- that that same dynamic that Marta talked about, you know, plays out in families. You have one sibling who was born here, one who was born a few years earlier, and their trajectories are --

MR. HASKINS: Not here.

MR. BERNSTEIN: -- in another country, and, you know, their trajectories -- I mean, it's very tragic and you talk to the undocumented child and how much they want and they love and they want their younger sibling to do well, but, you know, they also see that their lives are foreclosed in many ways.

The other thing I want to say is that not only can't they work, but if they get found out, like they go and interpret for their aunt in -- who doesn't speak English with the immigration authorities, the immigration

authorities start asking them questions, they actually get put -- or they go on a train in the northern -- in Buffalo or, you know, they actually get put into deportation proceedings and then their communities -- because their communities kind of go crazy and say, we can't deport these kids, and there's a lot of effort and energy that's expended that if the DREAM Act passed would be unnecessary because they would have a future.

MR. HASKINS: Jena?

MS. MCNEILL: Yeah, I was just going to say, you know, even if -- you know, I don't agree with the Federal DREAM Act, but it is a little big disconcerting to think about the fact that some states are now, by enacting DREAM Act legislation, creating people who not only might have loans and financial burdens, but that they can't work after that. Now, I think there's -- the solution is not to legalize them, but I will say it is a concerning factor that when you have states like Maryland who are doing that, what's the next step after college? I mean --

MR. KRIKORIAN: I mean, in a sense what you're doing is inducing people, especially people if sort of the older end of what the DREAM Act would legalize, who really do have realistic options of going back home, because that is where, you know, their identity was formed, we're essentially inducing them by offering in-state tuition to stay here instead and changing their decision makings, I mean, the decisions that they make. And frankly, I mean, I don't know, I find that kind of hard to defend.

MR. HASKINS: Over here on the corner.

MS. ZEITVOGAL: Hi, my name is Karen Zeitvogal. It's a German last name. I work for the French News Agency. I was born in Morocco and I'm a natural born American. I grew up -- I spent almost all my life abroad but I'm pretty sure I'm psychologically an American, but that's not my --

MR. HASKINS: Only you can tell.

MS. ZEITVOGAL: Well, I was told by a French person that I've got the American will, you know, so -- but my question is, I was of the belief in looking at all of you that we're all immigrants, we're all issued from immigrant families. My grandparents came over here for economic reasons. They came in under the quota between two wars, but I agree, you know, the DREAM Act is flawed, but it should -- I don't think we can divide families. We can punish the parents, and I certainly don't think it's abuse to take children with you when you go to another country to get away from violence, like we have in Mexico, which is, I believe, largely caused by us and our drug consumption, or wars that we have in part fueled. So, I just would like you to address, and especially Marta, because you mentioned that at the turn of the 20th Century there was a greater immigrant population than there is now percentage-wise. And is it somebody -- I think it was Ron who said that the college graduates are catapulted to the top of the economic heap, if you like. Is this not like white people who are worried that if we let in people who look different to

us, you know, I'm white as well as you can see, but what they're going to overtake us and they're pushing us out of the majority status anyway, so are we not worried about that?

MS. TIENDA: I'm not worried -- demographically we are the world, we are the most diverse country anywhere, and we have showcased every single president, Republican, Democrat, has heralded how, you know, we are the nation of immigrants and what strength this has added to us and they talk about capitalizing on diversity. This is an opportunity, right now, given our diversity, to actually make good on our lip service.

I'm the daughter of an undocumented immigrant and so I shouldn't be teaching at Princeton University, but I can tell you, I paid a lot of taxes on Monday and I'm very happy to do so precisely because I think that we have to work on our collective being and think of the future generation. So, when I tell Audrey I think I should retire, it's because -- the rest of the sentence was, we need to make room for the next generation. We have all these really bright young college educated PhDs who are looking for a job and why should I stay until I'm 80 when in fact if I move out by 70 at the latest, that will make room -- because the baby boom was big -- for young talent to come in and really keep us fresh, keep our universities dynamic, and that's what deans are all worried about, people just staying around for a long time

So, I think that we can capitalize on our diversity in a very

positive way and not continue to demonize categories that are not productive. At the end of the day, if we just put this in sheer economic terms, about what we want to be as a nation and our leadership in the past, we can lead by example, by actually making good on our promise of inclusion.

MR. HASKINS: Okay, I'm going to take three questions from the audience and then give everyone on the panel a chance to say something and then we're all going to go back to our place of employment.

So, right here. Try to make these questions brief.

SPEAKER: Thanks, Nick (inaudible) from the Delta Policy Group. Just one question. It seems that both sides sort of mix up the sympathy arguments with the U.S. self-interest arguments, and I'm wondering if there's any undocumented kids that everybody could agree we ought to want here. I mean, PhD kids in engineering? I mean, is there any level of kids that we would say, it's in our interest not to send these kids away? Because it seems to me that maybe that would present some --

MR. HASKINS: Next question. Over here.

SPEAKER: I kind of would like to answer that question and ask the panelists, especially Mr. Ron, because I've been here in this country for 12 years, 10 of those years I was an undocumented student.

MR. HASKINS: Will you hold the mic up a little further.

SPEAKER: I was an undocumented student for 10 years of

those 12, and I had the chance to go back to Colombia, that's where I come from, and I feel, you know, that if we send these kids -- all those undocumented students, if we send them back to those countries, especially countries like Colombia that right now are coming up economically, United States is going to be losing.

I came here when I was 16 and I consider myself very, very American in many ways. You know, Republican and very conservative. I have friends --

MR. HASKINS: That's good.

SPEAKER: I have friends that have traveled to Germany, Spain, and everything, and when they come back to this country and they criticize it so much, I just stand between them, their way of thinking and my way of thinking, and I defend this country every single day. So, to say that -- and especially a lot of people in this room are educators, we know very well that the age of reason is seven, that's actually a big lie. To think that seven is the age that we make a decision of where we're going to be living is a big lie because I was 16 and I came here and I consider myself more American than Colombian.

MR. HASKINS: Hand the microphone to the gentleman right next to you. I notice he was -- go ahead. Let's have a quick question now.

SPEAKER: (Inaudible). This is for Josh. Given the situation, is it in our best interest to push for the DREAM Act knowing very

well that the country will lose its stomach for going beyond that? You're only dealing with a few thousand people as opposed to CIR which really brings families -- doesn't divide families but do you really believe that by pushing the DREAM Act through the country will have the guts to deal with CIR?

MR. HASKINS: Okay, there's a lady right here that had her hand up. Go ahead.

SPEAKER: As a former child immigrant myself, I also believe that you can come here later in life and still decide to be an American. I think people decide to be an American. But also given the reality of what's happening, the demographic shift, what are you going -- I don't understand -- I don't see your argument for what you're actually going to do. All you keep saying is you're opposing the DREAM Act but I don't hear what you're actually saying of what to do with all these kids who are here and what -- do we want to create this permanent underclass who never has access?

MR. HASKINS: Okay, panel. Let's start all the way down on the far right.

MS. SINGER: Okay, I guess just thinking about all the comments all together including what's the smallest definition of student that will be acceptable to give residency to, we have to think about the other side, and this speaker from Colombia talked about opportunities in the home country, and in fact in some countries they are increasing, both

because of economic processes at work, but also because of the changing demographics of sending countries. So, Mexico's youth population is declining, they're going to need workers down the line, so there is going to be further competition, but I will say there are limited opportunities for people in their home countries in many respects, but they may be improving.

That's all I'll say.

MR. HASKINS: Jena?

MS. MCNEILL: I'll try to hit a couple points that might address all the questions hopefully. You know, someone -- the young lady asked about fixing the problem, what's the solution, and, you know, I think there's a couple of things that we've talked about but I'll reiterate. I don't think it can be comprehensive, I think it needs to be something that's incremental that doesn't place legalization at the front. I think it has to be something that would place enforcement as part of the first step, because there's never going to be the amount of -- I guess it would be trust or what you would call -- to -- for people like me to feel like that there won't be another problem, again, in 25 years, if we don't have that enforcement piece because why do people come to the United States illegally? They come here because they want a better life for their families. They want to make a living, they want to help, so if you don't limit those economic drivers, which has to be accomplished through worksite enforcement, through interior enforcement, if you don't address that you're never going

to get to the heart of the problem, so you're never going to tell people, hey, you know, you need to not come here illegally.

But I think there's also a couple of other things that would be helpful. You know, my institution, we promote working with other countries like Mexico to have free market reforms that would help to improve the economy of their own country because, you know, we talk about people going home, well, hopefully they would go home to a place that was better than when they left it, and I think that that's also important.

As well as, again, addressing those legal immigration avenues. Right now they don't work for employers, they don't work for the economy very well, and I think we need to look at those as well.

MR. HASKINS: Good. Mark?

MR. KRIKORIAN: Let me address a couple of points. I think the question about losing stomach for a broader amnesty, in fact, is the key political fact that -- the reason that the DREAM Act doesn't already exist. In fact, last year there was actually breaking out into public real conflict between the DREAM activists and the DC-based, so-called comprehensive people because the DREAM activists were saying, look -- to, you know, the forum, the National Immigration Forum and others, were saying, look, you guys have failed year after year and we ain't getting any younger, so we need to move on this. We want to be able to get a job when we graduate.

The comprehensive activists were saying, you're selfish and

we need you to get amnesty for everybody else, basically is what they were saying, and so, I mean, that highlights, really, I think explicitly the fact that the DREAM Act is a vehicle for amnestying everybody, which goes directly to this trust issue. Nobody believes that the pro-legalization advocates just want amnesty for a sympathetic group of kids that are trotted out for the media. Nobody believes it. And so any legislation that is in fact trying to address their problems has to go overboard. The burden of proof is on the advocates of such legislation to try to demonstrate that it's not just the camel's nose under the tent, it's not just a gimmick to politically get amnesty for everybody, that in fact it is targeted to deal specifically with kids who much of the public is, in fact, quite willing to accept amnesty for under certain circumstances.

And the -- you know, the question about what do we do, sort of more broadly, I guess after the DREAM Act or something, what we do is we start enforcing the law across the board and we continue the decline in the illegal population instead of letting it grow every year. It's attrition through enforcement. It works. We've seen it. The decline in the illegal population started before the recession as a result of the sort of half-hearted and grudging enforcement measures that Bush was kind of forced into against his will. And it works. And that's what we need to do.

And my last point is this, and this relates to you, policy has to be made in prose, not poetry. This isn't about Emma Lazarus, this isn't about our grandparents, we're all immigrants, my grandparents were

immigrants, I didn't speak English until I went to Kindergarten, I didn't even know there were old people who spoke without an accent other than on the Waltons, you know, on TV, but our policy has to be made based on what's good for our grandchildren, not on some poetic and gauzy nostalgic conception of what the world was like in 1911 in New York.

MR. HASKINS: Josh, top that.

MR. BERNSTEIN: There's so much there to unpack. Honestly, you know, I'm a little bit confused about what your argument is about the marketing strategy and the camel's nose under the tent. I honestly don't even think -- I don't really think I understand it completely because -- I do understand the point that you are making. There is, you know, I think that most of us who support the DREAM Act also support a comprehensive solution to immigration reform that would solve the problem overall, it's just harder to get there, so the question is, what do you do with the -- you know, with things that are going to make things better in the meantime while you're still hoping and working and trying to have an actual long-term, comprehensive solution.

So, I don't see those -- I see that there could be a strategic or maybe even not even strategic -- tactical conflict in issues there, but really, fundamentally, the question is, you know, we could focus on the DREAM Act as itself, what the impact is of passing the DREAM Act -- if we pass the DREAM Act first, what the impact is politically on passing comprehensive immigration reform, I think that's debatable -- that's the

debate that you saw unfold. You know, some people will think that passing the DREAM Act means -- which I think actually -- that passing the DREAM Act will create a logic where eventually it will make it easier to pass comprehensive immigration reform, but on the other hand you can make an argument, what you were just saying, that passing the DREAM Act will make it harder. I think we should look at the DREAM Act on its merits, and we should look at comprehensive reform on its merits, and I don't understand -- I honestly, literally, don't understand what you're saying, but the other part of if which I think is really critical, the other point that you made -- which I just lost my train of thought, so -- I'm not going to refute that.

MR. HASKINS: We'll come back to you in the last 30 seconds. Marta?

MS. TIENDA: I don't think it's productive to talk about either/or. We know we have a broken system and whether we patch it up in pieces, if that's what's viable, then we do it, if not -- the question is, do we want to incur the opportunity cost of not investing in the people who are already here that we've already invested in? And it's not about Emma Lazarus. I mean, we have a history and we've learned from it and somehow we seem to repeat and not learn from it.

So, we should be able in the country that's as educated as ours, to learn from our mistakes. So, when you think about youth -- we're now talking about the best and brightest, that's the catchphrase in

Washington, let's bring in the best and brightest. We don't have any criteria to find the best and brightest in universities and staple the Green Card. When you have kids who beat the odds and are tried, tested, and true, educated in the United States, already have an embodiment of tax revenues and are going to be productive citizens, let's capitalize on that. That's like straight out of Economics 101. We don't have to get fancy, we just have to do it and do the right thing.

MR. HASKINS: Thank you for such a brief statement. Audience, thank you very much. I've been in many discussions of immigration policy that were, to put it mildly, ugly, and this has been a very constructive discussion, so, I thank all the panelists and thank the audience. See you soon.

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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