

Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

One Baldwin Street • Montpelier, VT 05633-5701 • (802) 828-2295 • Fax: (802) 828-2483

FISCAL NOTE

Date: August 31, 2020

Prepared by: Nolan Langweil

An act relating to the Coronavirus Relief Assistance for Immigrants *Administration Proposal*

The proposal would establish a Coronavirus Relief Assistance Program for immigrants. To be eligible for the program, one must certify that they:

- are a resident of Vermont; and
- are ineligible to receive an economic impact payment under the federal CARES Act due to reasons of immigration status.

Under the program each eligible adult would receive \$1,200.00 and \$500.00 for each eligible child. While it is not known how many people could be impacted by this program, data provided from multiple sources suggest approximately 3,500 to 4,000 adults and up to 1,000 children could receive benefits from this program. This includes approximately:

- 3,000 undocumented adults.¹
 - Of which approximately 1,250 work in Vermont's dairy industry.²
- 500 citizens and legal permanent residents (who are green card holders) who file taxes with undocumented spouses.³
- 0-500 immigrants with lawful status but do not have social security numbers.
 - Examples include student visa holders, asylum applicants awaiting work authorizations, spouses and/or dependents who have been petitioned by citizens, etc.
- 500-1,000 children.⁴
- Note: These estimates are consistent with a 2016 report from Pew Research Center that estimated that there were "fewer than 5,000" undocumented people in Vermont.⁵

Estimated Fiscal Impact = \$4,450,000 to \$5,300,000

Note: The Governor's FY2021 budget restatement proposes appropriating \$2 million of general funds for this program. This is less than half of the appropriation that will likely be needed to fully fund the program as proposed.

¹ Data extrapolated from [The Contributions of New Americans in Vermont](#), by the New American Economy (2016).

² Estimates by researchers at the University of Vermont (UVM), UVM Extension Program, and Migrant Justice.

³ [American Immigration Council](#)

⁴ Data from multiple sources including Migrant Justice, U.S. Census Data, Pew Research Center, UVM, UVM Ext.

⁵ [U.S. unauthorized immigrant population estimates by state, 2016](#). Pew Research Center

Further Considerations:

- Take-up: Just as there is uncertainty as to the number of people in Vermont that could be eligible for this benefit, it is also hard to estimate what the take-up rate of the program would be. Much will depend on how the program is administered, the complexity of the application process, outreach, and how much trust the intended beneficiaries have for the state and/or the administering entity.
- Other Administration Costs: to the extent the program partners with private entities to assist with administration, there could be additional administrative costs.