

# The Answer

SHELTERFORCE

## Q: Do Immigrants "Take Our Jobs"?

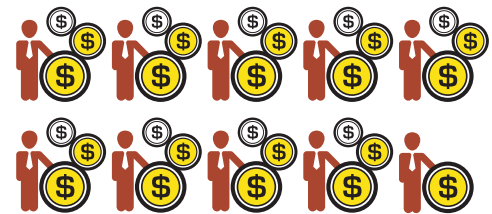
### A: No!

This is a common fear, especially for people who are already struggling to get by. But it's not true. Here are the facts:

The largest wave of documented immigration to the United States since the early 1900s coincided with our lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth.

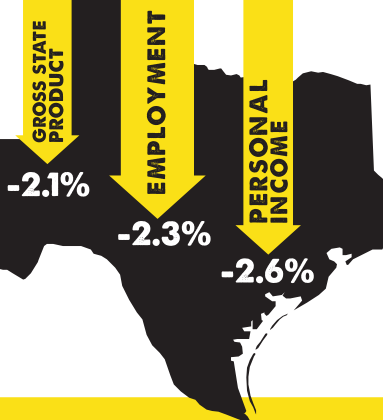
Immigrants create new jobs by forming new businesses, buying homes, spending their incomes on American goods and services, paying taxes, and raising the productivity of U.S. businesses.<sup>1</sup> In fact, between 1990 and 2004, roughly 9 out of 10 native-born workers with at least a high school diploma experienced wage gains because of increased immigration.<sup>2</sup>

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INCREASED IMMIGRATION**



### TEXAS WOULD LOSE WITHOUT UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

According to the Texas Comptroller, eliminating Texas' undocumented population in 2005 would have generated a 2.1 percent decline in the gross state product, a 2.3 percent decline in employment, and a 2.6 percent decline in personal income.<sup>3</sup>



### Immigrants create new businesses that create jobs.

Immigrants have a high rate of entrepreneurship. Half of Silicon Valley start-ups were founded by immigrants—including Yahoo, eBay, and Google. According to the U.S. Census and analysis by the Immigration Policy Center,<sup>4</sup> "in 2002, 1.6 million Hispanic-owned firms provided jobs to 1.5 million employees and generated payroll of \$36.7 billion. The same year, 1.1 million Asian-owned firms provided jobs to 2.1 million employees and generated payroll of \$56 billion."

**The problem with today's economy is not immigrants; the problem is our broken immigration laws that allow big business to exploit workers who lack legal status, driving down wages for all workers.** If every immigrant were required to get into the system, pay their dues, and become U.S. citizens, we could block big business's upper hand, eliminate the two-tiered workforce, and build a united labor movement that raises wages and living standards for all workers.

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1 Richard Vedder, Lowell Gallaway, and Stephen Moore, *Immigration and Unemployment: New Evidence*. Alexis de Tocqueville Institution.

2 Giovanni Peri, *Rethinking the Effects of Immigration on Wages*. October 2006. [www.nhi.org/go/11645](http://www.nhi.org/go/11645)

3 Texas State Comptroller, *Undocumented Immigrants in Texas: A Financial Analysis of the Impact to the State Budget and Economy*. December 2006. [www.nhi.org/go/32035](http://www.nhi.org/go/32035)

4 Immigration Policy Center, *The Economics of Immigration Reform: What Legalization Would Mean for the U.S. Economy*. April 2009. [www.nhi.org/go/35366](http://www.nhi.org/go/35366)

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