



# IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

*...providing factual information about immigration and immigrants in America*

*For Immediate Release*

## IMMIGRANTS INTEGRAL TO SOCIAL SECURITY'S FUTURE

**May 14, 2009**

**Washington D.C.** - [Reports](#) released by the Social Security and Medicare Boards of Trustees this week have re-focused [public attention](#) on the deteriorating financial condition of the nation's main health and retirement programs. These reports underscore not only the severity of the current recession, but also the demographic crisis confronting the nation as the native-born population ages. The coming wave of retiring Baby Boomers reminds us of the increasingly important role that immigrants play in the U.S. economy as taxpayers, workers, consumers, and homebuyers.

In an [IPC report](#), demographer Dowell Myers of the University of Southern California has succinctly analyzed this looming demographic crisis and the role that immigration can play in overcoming it:

- Over the next 20 years, the number of senior citizens relative to the number of working-age Americans will increase by 67 percent.
- This means that more and more retirees “will transition from being net taxpayers to net recipients of health and pension benefits, and they will be supported by a smaller workforce that is struggling to meet its own needs.”
- These “mass retirements” will not only strain the Social Security and Medicare programs, but will also drive labor-force growth “perilously low—perhaps below zero in many states—which will depress economic growth as a whole.”
- Moreover, “seniors are also net home sellers, and accordingly, there will be 67 percent more people in the selling ages relative to the younger adults who are likely to be buyers. Thus the mass sell-off launched by aging homeowners poses a great hazard for all home sellers and their home values in the two decades ahead.”

The aging of the native-born population will leave the U.S. economy short on workers and taxpayers just when more workers and taxpayers are needed to support the increasing number of retiring Baby Boomers. Immigrants can help fill this gap. And, as the IPC points out in a recent [compilation](#) of economic data, sensible immigration reform would maximize the economic contributions of immigrants, which will shore up not only Social Security and Medicare, but the U.S. tax base and the U.S. workforce as well.

### **For More Facts and Data See:**

- [Thinking Ahead About Our Immigrant Future](#) (IPC Special Report) January 2008
- [The Economics of Immigration Reform](#) (IPC Fact Check) April 2008

*For press inquiries contact Wendy Sefsaf at 202-507-7524 or [wsefsaf@ailf.org](mailto:wsefsaf@ailf.org).*

---

**THE IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER**

1331 G STREET, NW • WASHINGTON, DC 20005 • TEL: (202) 507-7500 • FAX: (202) 742-5619

[www.immigrationpolicy.org](http://www.immigrationpolicy.org)