The Daily Dish

Immigration and Economic Growth

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Yesterday President Trump sat down with 20 U.S. CEOs who are members of his Strategy and Policy Forum to discuss moving forward on infrastructure and tax reform measures. Last week Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao told a group of CEOs that the President's infrastructure proposal could make its way to Congress as early as next month. President Trump previously told the New York Times that it could end up being attached to a tax reform bill to help both pass through Congress.

On Monday Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai moved to permanently kill a 2013 proposal relaxing the FCC's regulations on inflight cellphone use. Pai stated that he believed that allowing cellphone calls on planes was not in the "public interest" and therefore he called to have the proposal removed from consideration. The proposal had been introduced by former FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler and would have removed the FCC ban on inflight cellphone use leaving it up to individual airlines to decide whether or not to allow for it.

Eakinomics: Immigration and Economic Growth

Nearly 1,500 economists, including six winners of the Nobel Prize in Economics and covering the spectrum of political preferences, signed a letter to President Trump and the leadership of the House and Senate attesting to the economic benefits of immigration. (I organized the letter along with the folks at New American Economy.) The letter makes the very straightforward points:

- Immigration brings entrepreneurs who start new businesses that hire American workers.
- Immigration brings young workers who help offset the large-scale retirement of baby boomers.
- Immigration brings diverse skill sets that keep our workforce flexible, help companies

grow, and increase the productivity of American workers.

- Immigrants are far more likely to work in innovative, job-creating fields such as science, technology, engineering, and math that create life-improving products and drive economic growth.

In short, immigration is — on balance, as there are admittedly costs as well as benefits — a central contributor to American economic dynamism. Moreover, it has remained so even as the character of immigration has changed over the centuries (hat tip to the Wall Street Journal for this fantastic graphic), with the most recent period dominated by Latinos.

The old joke is that if you laid all the economists end-to-end, they would not reach a conclusion. Immigration may be the exception that proves this rule.