

The Story of Idaho Labor Markets: An Economic Analysis of Foreign-Born Contributions

- Foreign-born labor market disruptions **in agriculture, construction, and hospitality & dining** could cause substantial economic damage to these industries, especially in the short run.
- Estimated labor market disruptions in these key industries could **reduce Idaho's gross state product between 4% and 5%, similar in scope to the "Great Recession" of 2007-2009**, Idaho's worst post-World War II recession.
- Reductions in industry output will lead to **losses in Idaho tax revenues of \$397.8 million**, including:
 - Lost Sales & Excise Taxes – \$183.2 million
 - Lost Property Taxes – \$112.6 million
 - Lost Income Taxes – \$101.9 million
- **A total job loss of 55,818** will result from losing 28,725 foreign-born workers. The initial loss of foreign-born workers will result in an estimated 27,093 fewer U.S.-born Idaho residents across affected industries and their supply chains.
- Direct **loss of Gross State Product could reach \$5.1 billion** with a loss of \$2.9 billion in wages and benefits.
- Interruptions in construction could exacerbate the Idaho housing crisis. Idaho is becoming a high-cost-of-living state:
 - Nominal median **housing prices have increased 168%** (2014-2025)
 - Idaho ranks 13th in the nation in terms of the highest "typical" single-family housing price (\$462,014)
 - Idaho was ranked the **7th least affordable state** for home ownership
 - About 67% of Idaho households are priced out of the market for a median-priced home
- Damage to agriculture, Idaho's economic backbone, would be pronounced:
 - \$3 billion in total gross state product losses in agriculture, with \$1.6 billion in losses from the dairy industry alone
 - Agricultural job losses would total 27,729, with the dairy industry experiencing 14,930 of those losses
- Accommodation & food service employment **increased from 57,288 jobs in 2014 to 80,294 jobs in 2024**, a 40% increase, helping to fuel Idaho's expanding tourism economy. These industries are heavily dependent on foreign-born labor.
- Idaho's unemployment rate is 3.7%. Not only is the Idaho economy at full employment, but there are currently roughly 44,000 unfilled jobs (according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- Losses in employment and associated productivity will **reduce transactions by \$12.3 billion**, encompassing:
 - Reduced Gross State Product (GSP) of \$5.1 billion
 - Reduced wages, salaries, and benefits of \$2.9 billion