

BALLOT PROPOSITION #300

Public Programs; Citizens

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Description

Proposition 300 amends statute to limit participation in the Adult Education and Child Care programs to citizens, legal residents, or other persons lawfully present in the United States. Proposition 300 also prohibits persons who are not citizens, legal residents, or otherwise lawfully present from being entitled to classification as an in-state or in-county resident for university or community college tuition purposes, or from receiving state funded financial assistance. The proposition requires the state agencies administering the programs described above (and the Family Literacy Program) to report twice annually to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee the total number of persons qualifying for these programs, as well as the number of persons deemed ineligible due to their citizenship, residency, or immigration status.

Estimated Impact

The proposition may generate a state savings by limiting participation in certain public programs. The savings can not be determined in advance with certainty.

Analysis

Arizona Department of Education

Proposition 300 limits participation in the Adult Education Program to citizens, legal residents, or other persons lawfully present in the United States. The proposition does not add a citizenship requirement for the Family Literacy Program, as one already exists for the program in A.R.S. §15-191(1)(a), but it does add a reporting requirement.

Adult Education is funded as a discretionary grant program rather than an entitlement program. Its funding level, therefore, does not automatically fluctuate with changes in caseload. Adult Education caseloads potentially could decrease under the proposition, but any decrease in non-citizen caseload would be offset at least in part by increased participation by U.S. citizens and legal residents, as a waiting list currently exists for the program.

Department of Economic Security

The proposition limits the Department of Economic Security (DES) to providing child care services to citizens, legal residents, or other persons lawfully present in the United States. Though child care assistance is an entitlement program, under its currently adopted set of rules and policies, DES requires an applicant for child care services to be a citizen or legal resident, and to verify proof of this status. Unless the new statutory language is interpreted to be a broader prohibition than current rules, this provision would appear to have minimal fiscal impact.

Universities and Community Colleges

Proposition 300 restricts illegal immigrants from being categorized as in-state or in-county residents for tuition purposes and denies them financial aid from higher education institutions. The financial aid prohibition includes tuition waivers, grants, scholarship assistance, or any other form of assistance subsidized by the state.

Currently, both universities and community colleges do not check for legal citizen status when admitting students. In verifying in-state or in-county residency, the universities and community colleges do request a social security number or relevant visa status. It is difficult to determine the number of illegal immigrants currently attending the state's higher education institutions. To the extent that the proposition reduces attendance, there would be a savings as state funding is at least partially based on enrollment.

Local Government Impact

Community college district funding from the state, and from student tuition and fees, is determined by the level of student enrollment. To the extent that Proposition 300 reduces student attendance, there would be a corresponding decrease in the

amount of funding generated by the community college districts from these sources. This lower level of funding could be offset by reduced spending requirements.

7/24/06

This estimate was prepared by Jake Corey (602-926-5491).