

Fight to Unite Initiative

Implementation Overview and Cost Analysis

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Fight to Unite Initiative

Introduction

The Fight to Unite Initiative (FTUI) is a comprehensive plan to defend the United States against both natural and economic catastrophes. With climate change being the primary threat to the future and security of the United States^{1,2}, it is imperative that we band together beyond partisan lines and fight to ensure the security and prosperity of future generations.

The FTUI manages the immediate threat of poverty and homelessness, job loss and retraining, automation, transitioning to green industries, and several other issues that are holding us back as a country while also combatting the threat of climate change and related disasters. For decades, taxpayers have subsidized industries to keep prices low to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars. Industries such as oil and coal have knowingly caused billions of dollars in environmental damage and lied about their effects³, while since 2008, 10 farming entities have received over \$182 million in subsidies over a 10-year period⁴. Meanwhile, over 500,000 Americans are homeless every night on our streets⁵ and another 500,000 Americans will file for bankruptcy over medical bills this year⁶. These numbers do not take into account the \$700 billion taxpayer bailout to banking institutions⁷ in 2008 that spits in the face of capitalism, or the trillions of dollars spent for the Iraq war^{8,9}.

For every threat that our country has faced in our history, we have risen to those challenges and faced it head-on. In 1956, President Eisenhower signed a law to use the equivalent of \$250 billion (adjusted for inflation) in defense funds to build a national highway system¹⁰. The FTUI will be the next step in the evolution of the United States using defense funds to combat the climate crisis and wealth inequality issues that can no longer be brushed aside.

Implementation

Overview

The FTUI will require the cooperation of every department in the government and will use our current military as a blueprint for deployment. Everyone that enrolls in the program will sign up for a minimum 4-year term. During this term, every person will receive housing, job training, meals, medical care, vacation time, and a salary. Job training will be assigned by a combination of preference and aptitude. A majority of positions will be in needed trades requiring at least two years of education/training such as electricians, plumbers, medical assistants, carpenters, health aides, etc. Positions that require more training or education will also be available in the program but will increase the total time of enrollment (e.g., software developers, accountants, engineers, or other jobs that require more training). After the education/training period of at least two years has been completed, enrollees will serve by applying their learned skillset for an additional period of two years. Enrollees will be trained in a classroom

setting as required and by creating and improving infrastructure. The FTUI will be as self-sustaining as possible, but will require coordination with private companies and local municipalities to streamline programs and ensure success.

The FTUI assumes that the US moves to a system of universal health care and free or discounted public education. While those are not requirements for the FTUI implementation, they will reduce the strain of implementation. Not every person will want to provide service after education/training, nor will they want to move at the same pace or have be deployed to different locations. The FTUI is not meant to be a program to just give people healthcare, housing, or food. The FTUI is meant to be an option for people who, even with discounted or free education, may still not have the means for the additional costs of rent and expenses.

Application Process

The FTUI will require that enrollees fill out an application and take an initial aptitude test. Initially, enrollees will be limited as the FTUI program's capacity will be unable to support several million enrollees without scaling. It will be important to provide realistic training paths and financial information to all prospective enrollees so they are able to commit without reservation. Aptitude testing during application will help ensure all enrollees are able to commit with confidence in a profession they will succeed at. As the FTUI initiative grows, applicants will have an increasingly varied choice in available training paths.

Basic Education

There will be a core amount of education required before skills training. Developing well-rounded enrollees requires more than job training. Every enrollee must have a basic knowledge base including US history and civics. Additional core education requirements will be determined by a multi-department consensus to ensure all enrollees have the knowledge and skills to perform as successful members of society.

Initially, the FTUI will need to hire skilled educators and tradespersons for both classroom and hands-on training. Private companies may also be contracted to provide education and training services initially. As the FTUI matures, careers will be available for persons that have completed their service, similar to our current military career path. Positions will be opened for teachers, managers, engineers, and many other careers to help maintain the strength of the FTUI. While this will reduce the necessity of private companies, it will not replace it.

One of the goals of the FTUI is to ensure security for all of the US. By integrating a stable education and training program, we will provide a successful workforce for our country. There will be more than enough training projects to make sure that work will not be taken from existing companies. The FTUI will be supplemental, with infrastructure improvements focused on areas in order of urgency. This concept is elaborated on throughout this document.

Logistics

Many “bases” will need to be built across the United States. Initially, housing and training facilities will be built or repurposed near metropolitan areas as well as rural America. Private companies will be contracted to start the building process with plans to hire individuals or organizations to continue enrollee training. After initial housing has been constructed, companies or individuals already proficient in their fields will be hired to teach enrollees how to build more buildings for continued initiative expansion.

Living quarters will not be the only types of buildings that require construction. Classrooms, childcare, warehousing, machine shops, and many other types of buildings will need to be erected as well. Full time and experienced tradespersons and engineers will be required to manage the process either as contractors or federal employees.

With major investments necessary in renewable energy throughout the nation (see green energy section), the FTUI can direct new job opportunities to existing communities with struggling job markets.”. The FTUI will build facilities in these struggling communities that focus on transitioning job loss into renewable energy production. Green energy production will be installed in these communities while providing enrollee training opportunities and ongoing maintenance positions. Enrollees who own homes when joining the FTUI will be eligible for partial or full mortgage deferments during the time of their service.

Example 1:

Steve is 29 years old, single, has no dependents, rents an apartment, does not have a high school diploma, and has worked for a company for 12 years in their warehouse. The company Steve works for undergoes financial difficulties and Steve is laid off. Steve decides to join the FTUI and moves into supplied housing so he can receive his GED. Upon meeting his educational requirements, Steve will take an aptitude test. Steve has always liked working with his hands, and after reviewing the results of his aptitude test he decides to learn plumbing as his trade.

Steve moves to FTUI housing in Pittsburgh where he joins the plumbing training program. He is taught plumbing in a FTUI apprenticeship (with an emphasis on education through service in FTUI projects). Steve will be stationed throughout his service time in the FTUI in different cities depending on training and project needs.

After Steve has completed training, he will continue to serve the FTUI initiative for two years. During this service, he may continue working on projects for the FTUI, or he may work with private companies in a leased manner (see leasing section). At the end of his enrollment commitment Steve is released from the FTUI and provided assistance finding employment, may potentially be offered employment from the company he worked with on lease, or could be hired to continue working with the FTUI (during which he can educate new FTUI-enrollees).

Example 2:

James is 18 years old, single, has no dependents, and recently graduated high school. James decides to join the FTUI and moves into supplied housing. After taking an aptitude test, James decides to learn engineering.

James is moved to Oregon State University where he is enrolled in an engineering education program. The FTUI and public universities nationwide work together to create full-time year-round education programs for enrollees. During his education, James still receives the benefits of housing, salary, meals, and healthcare.

After James has completed his education, he will continue to serve the FTUI for two years. During this service he may continue working on projects for the FTUI, or he may work with private companies in a leased manner (see leasing section). It is expected that engineers will be in high demand for leasing in the development of green technologies. Civil engineers will be in high demand in infrastructure repair projects at the FTUI. At the end of his enrollment commitment, James is released from the FTUI with assistance finding employment, may potentially be offered employment from the company he worked with on lease or could be hired to continue working with the FTUI.

Example 3:

Lauren is 32 years old, a single mother of two children (four and six years old), has a high school diploma, works a job that does not challenge her, and rents an apartment. Lauren joins the FTUI and takes an aptitude test. Having always enjoyed and excelled in math, Lauren decides that accounting will be a good job for her.

Lauren is enrolled in a local university-affiliated year-round FTUI accounting program and provided housing for her and her children. She also receives the same FTUI benefits: salary, meals, and healthcare. Lauren's children are enrolled in the FTUI childcare program so she can work studying accounting during the day and spend time with her family at night. As Lauren's children are old enough for school, they are also enrolled in local public schools.

After Lauren has completed her education, she will continue to serve the FTUI for two years. During this time, she works for the IRS performing audits and processing tax returns. At the end of her enrollment commitment, Lauren is released from the FTUI and provided assistance finding employment. It is possible that the IRS will offer Lauren a job as well.

Example 4:

Justin is 45 years old, married, has 3 children (12, 14, and 15 years old), has an associate's degree, owns a home, and works for a coal mining company that is downsizing as the US transitions to green energy. Justin's husband works at the local grocery store but does not make enough money to support a family of 5. Knowing his position at the coal company will soon be cut, Justin joins the FTUI.

Justin does not want to move his family as his children are nearly finished with their education. While given limited options in training, Justin decides to stay local and learn to install and maintain solar panels. While he may be deployed for periods of work or training, Justin will be able to maintain his primary residence under partial loan deferment. Justin will still receive a salary and food stipend in addition.

Justin finishes his training in solar panel installation and maintenance, and will apply this training while serving the FTUI for two years. Most of this time will be spent installing and maintaining solar panels near his community, with additional deployment as needed. At the end of his enrollment commitment, Justin is released from the FTUI with assistance finding employment. It is possible he will be offered a job to continue working on solar projects near his community.

Trades Development

Trades will be a major part of the FTUI. Jobs in the field of construction, plumbing, carpentry, and electric will continue to be in high demand. Demands for trades such as electricians are expected to grow at above-average rates in the next ten years¹¹. The same high growth rate is projected with plumbers¹² and carpenters¹³.

Training for these fields will not be in short supply. Construction of buildings will be used for training in all aspects of building. Electricians will be taught to wire new buildings, with other tradespersons trained in their respective fields as well. Using the military blueprint, enrollees can be stationed in an area to perform their duty and receive training, then be transported to another site to complete their duty and receive more training.

Training can also be deployed for infrastructure improvements or rebuilding. Millions of Americans are living in communities that lack clean drinking water¹⁴. Thousands of water service lines have lead in them all over the country¹⁵ and are in need of replacement. More than \$100 million in taxpayer funding is already being spent to repair infrastructure in Flint, Michigan¹⁶. Expanding services across the country to areas in need will not only save American lives but provide valuable training to plumbers that are in high demand.

The same tactic can be used for electricians. There will be a major investment (refer to green energy section) in electricity across the country. New construction will need to be wired, as well as new wind farms, solar installations, energy storage facilities, and many other projects. It took 11 months to restore power to Puerto Rico¹⁷ after Hurricane Maria with a goal of 95% of the population restored after 3 months¹⁸. Hurricane Harvey had 95% power restored in less than 2 weeks¹⁹. With a concentrated group of electricians under constant deployment, we could have significantly reduced the number of Americans without power after Hurricane Maria over a shorter period while providing valuable training.

America has over 80 years of repairs backlogged on bridges that are rated “structurally deficient.”²⁰ That doesn’t include new infrastructure needed due to population growth or other repairs needed on what already exists. Structurally deficient bridges and infrastructure are a public safety risk: in April, 2019, a Tennessee bridge collapsed over an I-24 ramp. In the same vein as Eisenhower’s interstate highway bill, we can train and have dedicated workforces fixing damaged infrastructure before lives are taken due to our neglect.

The trades of home health aides and nursing/medical assistants are woefully underserved²¹. By 2024 we are expected to have a shortage of over 450,000 workers in the medical aide field²². A majority of home health aides are paid by taxpayers²³ via Medicare. Additional workers in this field will most likely be paid by the government as well so this field should not add too many costs to the FTUI (refer to costs section). There are over 60,000 long-term care service providers registered in America²⁴, and staffing

issues make up a large percentage of complaints²⁵. As staffing for this trade gets much harder it will open up a lot of opportunities for training and employment of enrollees to be done by private companies (refer to leasing section).

Other, more technical, medical fields are already in shortage and expected to be exploding in growth in the next decade²⁶. Assuming America moves to a system of universal healthcare, we will need medical professionals to help service the 27.5 million people who do not currently have health insurance²⁷. Even if the FTUI is implemented without universal healthcare, there will be millions of Americans enrolled in the program that will need healthcare services.

Every day the world is getting more and more automated. Jobs that used to be done by humans are now done by robots, kiosks, or software. Transitioning into a green energy grid will require building even more machines. The BLS projections have solar and wind technicians as the fastest-growing occupations over the next decade²⁶ by a large margin. Repair and service technicians of all types are going to need to be trained to manage demand. When a fast-food chain creates a self-serve automated kiosk jobs will be lost at the order counter, but new jobs will be created to repair the machines. As robots start flipping the hamburgers, jobs will need to be created to maintain the devices. As more wind turbines are put up, more people will need to service them and maintain their operations. The FTUI will be able to train people in the technical skills required to fix equipment of all varieties and help adjust to the automated world.

The years of a high school education allowing you to achieve the American dream are behind us; it is now necessary to complete further training whether in college or, as is often overlooked, as a skilled tradesperson. The above-listed trades are just some of the many trades that need developing and will not be automated anytime soon. More training opportunities in trades not listed will be available. While trades pay well over time, lower pay during apprenticeships can make it harder to afford a minimum quality of life. The FTUI gives everyone a chance to get training and experience while not having to stress about finances.

Professional Development

The FTUI will also have a professional development program for jobs that require more education or training. The FTUI will work with public universities to create education programs for enrollees. These programs will be full-time and year-round to reduce total education time rather than the typical spending several months of the year out of school during summer. Enrollees will still get benefits of housing, meals, medical care, vacation, and a salary. Enrollees will still be required to serve in their field for 2 years after completing their education.

As stated in the Trades Development section, the healthcare field is already growing rapidly with skilled medical workers in even higher demand with the passage of universal health care. This includes not only the fast-growing fields of physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, medical assistants, and phlebotomists²⁶ but mental health professionals as well. Over 40% of Americans saw cost or lack of insurance as the main barrier to receiving mental health care²⁸. Veterans endure a suicide rate nearly double that of civilians²⁹. The US already needs to invest in more mental health professionals and better access, with mental health access a pillar of universal health care the demand will increase rapidly. After

training, the 2 years of required service will be able to ensure an accessible option for mental health services for all Americans.

Every day we rely more and more on computers and their software. Software development is one of the fastest-growing occupations and hundreds of thousands more will be needed in the next 10 years²⁶. In the last decade, websites and programs have changed drastically and will always need updating. New programs will need to be written just to manage the FTUI and universal health care, and maintenance will always be needed for those as well. There will not be a shortage of software development in America's future.

While the IRS will not grow at the same pace as software development or healthcare, it is something we need to invest in. Since 2013, full-time IRS positions have decreased by 15.5%³⁰ over 20,000 employees. The IRS has a return on investment of nearly \$300 taken in for every dollar spent³¹. For the highest-income taxpayers, audit rates have been cut in half, while overall audits have dropped about 30%³². Even Steven Mnuchin has called for the IRS to receive more funding³³. While accounting enrollment is at an all-time high³⁴, IRS employment continues to fall. The FTUI training accountants and auditors and having them serve at the IRS will bolster IRS audit capabilities and provide a direct channel for future IRS hires. The ability to collect the correct amount of tax revenues will not only help pay for the FTUI, but it will strengthen America as a whole.

The FTUI will not only prioritize education in adults, but it will help provide better education for all ages. After education and training, teachers can serve in areas where there are teacher shortages, or teach classes to enrollees. One of the great opportunities of the FTUI will also be in early childhood education. The FTUI will train many enrollees in child development and education and be able to provide childcare services to families both enrolled and not enrolled in the FTUI. Childcare services will be available to parents all over the nation at no cost. A nationwide childcare system can be implemented off the back of the FTUI to ensure everyone has access to quality childcare.

Engineering will be an important part in the FTUI. Civil engineers will help design and maintain infrastructure. Agricultural engineers will be needed to help design farming methods. Architectural engineers will be needed to design housing and training facilities, industrial engineers to plan and implement, etc. Investment in new green technology will also be a large part of the FTUI. Projects will need a lot of investment as will new and skilled people to come up with fresh ideas. Green engineering will be a major benefit for the leasing program as well helping to distribute money to more Americans rather than the top percentage (refer to leasing section for more detail).

The previously mentioned professions will only be a portion of all jobs available in the FTUI. Whether or not an enrollee becomes a tradesperson or professional, the US will end up with a skilled and strong workforce that will strengthen our economy. Education and ingenuity are our best defenses against all threats, and we shall lead by example. We will be able to focus on jobs that propel us into the future and maintain our position as the world's largest and most influential economy while adapting to changes and giving everyone a minimum quality of life.

Projects

The FTUI will have a wide scope with many projects. America has no shortage of infrastructure needs, and with a growing population those will need to be in a constant state of expansion. Housing, power, water, and roads will always be required wherever we inhabit, and it needs to be done sustainably.

Housing First

Everyone in the FTUI will be eligible for housing, this includes for spouses and dependents. In 2020, 3.7 million students are expected to graduate from high school³⁵. By 2028 that number will be closer to 4 million. There are about 12 million unemployed Americans currently^{36,37}. If 20% of high school students and 20% of unemployed Americans enroll in the FTUI, over five years we will need to accommodate housing for 6.2 million people. This would require building housing comparable to 4 Manhattans throughout America. Assuming that an average of two people live in each apartment³⁸ this would require 3.1 million units. Extrapolating from a newly built Portland, Oregon, 284 apartment complex that took 1.4 years to complete³⁹, nearly 11,000 buildings would need to be completed over five years at almost 2,200 projects per year. After initial housing projects were completed, workers could be transitioned into building affordable housing in different municipalities. As it may be unreasonable or unnecessary to build all those units at once, the construction could be spread over a longer-term (the construction of which will offer on-the-job training to enrollees in relevant programs). Due to an ever-increasing population, spreading out construction will offer more opportunities for enrollees to learn, teach, and grow in the future.

Bridge and Transit Repair

The United States has 47,052 bridges that are rated “structurally deficient” as of 2019 and are in need of urgent repairs. At our current rate of repair this would take over 80 years assuming no more bridges needed repair in that time²⁰. Even quadrupling the rate of repair, that would require 20 years of repairing bridges leaving to no shortages in work and training. There are millions of miles of roads nationwide that need repair⁴⁰, and as population increases we will need to build more. As the FTUI facilities are built in more rural areas, roads will need to be constructed to those as well. As population-dense areas expand, more subways and public transportation will need to be built. Overall, there will be no shortage in transit projects for the foreseeable future.

Communications Infrastructure

In 2016 less than half of Americans had landlines telephones in their homes⁴¹. In 2015, 77% of Americans subscribed to internet services⁴², and in 2019 only 10% of adults said they do not use the internet⁴³. As a country, the US is rated 15th for internet speeds globally⁴⁴. Telecom industries have taken over half a trillion dollars from taxpayers over the last 30 years with the promise of upgrading the copper lines of telephones to fiber optic connections⁴⁵. Still, many rural communities do not have access to the same high-speed internet other Americans enjoy. Even in major cities, internet options are still limited for most people. As the world changes everyone deserves access to reasonably priced high-speed internet.

The FTUI would classify internet as a public utility similar to the Communications Act of 1934 and make it available to everyone at a reasonable price. Teams would be deployed nationwide upgrading network infrastructure to ensure all Americans have access to high-speed internet whether they live in cities or rural areas. This would take several years to install nationwide but would require ongoing maintenance indefinitely.

Current Utility Infrastructure

Millions of Americans do not have access to clean drinking water. Communities nationwide suffer from contaminated pipe systems in homes, schools, and many other older buildings. All of these need to be replaced to prevent further health issues in our current and future generations.

Climate change has already demonstrated how vulnerable our power infrastructure is. One privately owned company in California has started multiple forest fires due to lack of maintenance^{46,47}, and to prevent more fires has shut off power for millions of their customers^{48,49}. Not only will we need to build new, green infrastructure, we will also need to repair and maintain our current electric grid. As disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding continue to happen we will also need to provide emergency restoration and repair services to affected communities.

Supporting the Vulnerable

The FTUI will not only be for people already on their feet. With over 500,000 homeless Americans on our streets every night, and thousands more just moments away struggling from mental health and addiction issues, the FTUI will help to rehabilitate our most vulnerable population. Housing first as a policy works^{50,51,52}. Combined with strong mental healthcare and advocacy and a path to success, we can actually take care of a health problem that is largely ignored.

Agriculture

The average age of a farmer in 2012 was 58 and has been rising⁵³. At some point we are going to suffer from a lack of farmers when they have passed on or retired. Agricultural methods need to be taught and skills fostered. As we move from ethanol to green power for cars and other equipment, we will need to stop subsidizing over-production of corn and focus on other sustainable crops. Hemp, for example, can be used for paper or textiles and has many unexplored uses. Soy, rice, wheat, and other crops can be grown to help provide food for enrollees, and excess can be packaged into MRE's for distribution after natural disasters. The federal government has access to vast amounts of land that can be used for agricultural education and transitioned easily. Building additional infrastructure in struggling rural areas will help revitalize industries and communities also.

Green Energy

Investing in the Future

America has invested billions of dollars into oil production and it has caused substantial damage to our planet⁵⁴. One of the reasons we have been so prosperous as a country is by maintaining technological supremacy over the world. We standardized electricity, created the light bulb, revolutionized cars, invented planes, discovered antibiotics, harnessed nuclear power, put men on the moon, and created both computers and the internet. Currently, China is accounting for 45% of the global investment in renewable energy⁵⁵. The US is only accounting for 15% of the global investment despite having 1.5 times their economy^{55,56}. China has realized the cost of pollution as their cities have been covered in smog, preventing citizens from breathing safely. The US needs to be proactive and become the leader in green energy, not only to maintain supremacy but to ensure we have a future where the next generations can prosper.

Power Generation and Storage

The United States uses the second largest quantity of power in the world. In 2018 we consumed 101.3 quadrillion British thermal units (quads) of energy, 11% of which was from renewable energy, and 28% was used for transportation⁵⁷. As the FTUI has no direct way to produce enough electric vehicles to offset transportation energy expenditures, for the purpose of generation we will use 80 quads for a goal.

Facts

- 1 quad = 2.93×10^{11} kWh
- An average onshore wind turbine can produce 6,000,000 kWh per year⁵⁸
- An average offshore wind turbine can produce 12,000,000 kWh per year⁵⁸
- The most powerful wind turbine available can produce 67,000,000 kWh per year⁵⁹
- Currently, we have 58,000 wind turbines spanning our country⁶⁰
- Topaz Solar Farm produces 1,282,336,000 kWh per year⁶¹
- Solar panel efficiency is about 20% in 2019⁶²
- Research has found ways to increase solar panel efficiency to 44.5%⁶³

Using an equal combination of onshore wind turbines, offshore wind turbines, and solar installations it is possible to generate 80 quads of energy annually. In order to offset current power demands, we would need to build:

- 1.34 million onshore wind turbines
- 754,000 offshore wind turbines
- 6,300 Topaz Solar Farm equivalents

The above numbers are what the US would need at today's power efficiency levels. Solar panel efficiency gains were based on research that cost \$25 million⁶³. America has committed to an estimated \$1.5 trillion (before inflation) on F-35 fighter jets⁶⁴. It is not unreasonable to use our defense determination and funds to invest in increasing solar and wind turbine efficiency.

The above also does not consider energy storage, as most energy is used at certain times of the day. We would need to use pumped hydroelectric or create a new type of battery. As the country that found a way to harness nuclear energy, we have the capability to find efficient energy storage.

Job Creation

With potential millions of installations of turbines and solar panels, there will be a need for skilled electricians, technicians, installers, and engineers. The oil and gas industry supports 10.3 million jobs, and they will need to be transitioned⁶⁵. There is considerable overlap in skills between the green energy industries and oil and gas industries that will be useful. Offshore oil rigs will have a lot of similarities with offshore wind turbines. Oil drilling and fracking is done in similar environments that solar installations and onshore wind turbines will need to be installed.

Coal mining jobs have nearly halved since 2012⁶⁶. Communities built around coal have been decimated⁶⁷. When a mass exodus of jobs from a dying industry happens, the federal government steps in and provides funding for employment programs⁶⁷. The FTUI will be an effective way to transition Americans into new jobs with new skill sets. What was once a coal or oil town can be turned into a

renewable energy haven. A training facility can be set up locally and workers can be trained in green energy and maintain their community pride.

Immigration

FTUI and a Pathway to Citizenship

The United States of America was built on immigration. People from all over the world traveled perilously in search of a better life.

Every major project in American history has been successful because of immigration. The founding fathers of our country were immigrants or children of immigrants. Our nationwide railroad was built by immigrants. Today, our agricultural industry is based on the back of immigrants with nearly half of farm workers who are not even authorized to work in America⁶⁸. Every successful American owes that success to immigration.

As climate change and worldwide unrest increase, we are seeing a surge of people seeing asylum or opportunity in America⁶⁹. The FTUI can give immigrants and potential immigrants a path to citizenship. In the beginning, they will be taught English, United States history, government structure, and American culture to ensure successful assimilation. They will need to meet the same education standards as all enrollees in the FTUI. After job training, they will be eligible to earn citizenship through service. After a completed two-year term of service enrollees will be given a green card. They will be eligible to continue serving for three more years while continuing to receive the same benefits, and at the end of that term will be granted full citizenship. If after the two-year service they decide to leave the FTUI then they will continue on the standard green card path to citizenship.

Not every refugee or immigrant will need to go through the FTUI to receive citizenship, but it will offer a clear path forward for those who do. At the end of their service, they will have proven themselves to be true Americans who worked hard and have contributed to their new, great country.

Costs and Economics of the FTUI

Budget

Preface

President Trump has requested a \$750 billion defense budget for security in 2020⁷⁰. In 2015 President Obama requested a \$585 billion defense budget for 2016⁷¹. We have been able to increase the military budget by \$150 billion while simultaneously decreasing troop deployment by nearly 20,000⁷² over the same time period. The average cost to maintain an active duty soldier is \$99,000 per year⁷³.

If we were to reprioritize the increased budget from fighting overseas into the FTUI, using 50% for personnel and the remaining for infrastructure projects, we would be able to house, feed, and train over 750,000 Americans leaving \$75 billion for infrastructure improvements.

When we mistakenly authorized the war in Iraq, we ended up authorizing spending at least \$1.9-6.4 trillion^{9,74}. During the financial crisis, we authorized at least \$700 billion to defy Capitalism and rescue a system that was an immediate threat to our country in 2008. With climate change being the largest looming threat to America as described by the Department of Defense, it is reasonable to invest \$500 billion in the FTUI that will directly and positively affect all Americans, as well as the world.

Housing costs

Initially, housing will have a large upfront cost as there may not be a surplus of housing in all areas and new construction will need to be done. Cost estimates will use the 6.2 million enrollees in 11,000 buildings over five years arrived at in the Projects – Housing First section. Projections will be based upon costs of construction of the same 284-unit, 21 story apartment complex in that section, as well as smaller buildings.

Cost Statements

- 940 square feet average apartment size⁷⁵
- \$284 total construction cost per square foot⁷⁶ initially for 21 story building
 - Buildings that are not as tall can be built for as low as \$90 per square foot⁷⁷
 - After training when enrollees are able to construct buildings without paying private contractor rates, labor costs of 30% of total construction costs⁷⁸ will be removed from construction costs after year 1
- 3.1 million total apartments
 - Assuming that 1/3 of all buildings will be 21 stories, 1/3 will be 10 stories, and 1/3 will be 3 stories
 - Initial cost per square foot of 10 story construction will be \$225
 - Initial cost per square foot of 3 story construction be \$150
- Year 1 will construct 15% of total
- Year 2 will construct 18% of total
- Year 3 will construct 20% of total
- Year 4 will construct 22% of total
- Year 5 will construct 25% of total

Year	Construction cost in billions
1	\$96.0
2	\$34.6
3	\$38.4
4	\$42.3
5	\$48.0

Total construction costs for 3.1 million apartments will add up to \$259 billion. This is less than two years of the defense budget increase between Obama and Trump administrations and will provide housing for over 6 million Americans. It is estimated the United States will need 4.6 million new apartments by 2030 or we will face a serious shortage, so this will remain necessary⁷⁹. Eventually, if buildings are no longer needed they will be able to be rented out to earn revenue or sold off.

Food Costs

Food will need to be prepared for all enrollees. Everyone will also get a salary and may choose to spend their money to prepare their own food. Assuming the cost of food is the same as the USDA Moderate-cost plan, it will cost about \$3.6 billion for every million enrollees⁸⁰. With agricultural training, the cost should decrease moderately. Purchasing in bulk should reduce costs even more.

Healthcare Costs

This number will be drastically different under a universal health care plan. If the current Military Health System numbers were to transfer over directly, it would be \$5 billion for every million enrollees⁸¹.

Salaries

All enrollees would receive comparable active duty E-1 level pay. The E-1 salary in 2019 is \$20,170.80 annually⁸². Like military salaries, the pay will be taxed.

Summary Costs of Basic Benefits

Amortizing housing units over 30 years and adding to the total cost of basic benefits the initial cost will be just under \$32,000 per year, per enrollee. This will leave an additional buffer of \$67,000 for utilities, training, supplies, and management costs before it is equal to current military costs.

Project Costs

Green Energy

The Topaz Solar Farm cost \$2.5 billion to build in 2012⁸³. Currently, onshore wind turbines cost about \$1 million per MW of capacity^{84,85}. Worldwide wind turbines are responsible for 597,000 MW of total capacity, with 100,000 MW in the United States⁸⁶. America will need to increase renewable energy capacity by a multiple of 40,000 times the current worldwide capacity. While the scope of this is entirely possible, major investments will need to be made to increase efficiencies. A minimum of \$300 billion per year should be invested in renewable power installation and research. A committee of scientists and engineers will be formed to distribute grants for research into new technology with a minimum budget of \$10 billion.

Utility and Infrastructure Repair

Replacing all the lead service lines and pipes across the United States is estimated to cost \$275 billion⁸⁷. This assumes that all costs calculated with labor and for profit. Municipalities could decrease their cost by paying a partial amount to the FTUI while labor cost is not a factor as it is included in enrollee benefits. There would be a limit on the total amount of work done per municipality to avoid putting local contracting companies in economic danger.

Electrical grid modernization and optimization would need to be done in tandem with renewable energy installations. Estimates have been made that there is an upwards cost of \$5 trillion to replace our current electrical grid⁸⁸. It is not feasible for replacements to happen quickly, even over a 10-year period. Persistent upgrades while transitioning power sources are possible though while investing \$20 billion per year.

Internet providers have taken over \$500 billion of taxpayer money and not followed up on their agreement to provide high-speed internet to all Americans. Goldman Sachs reported in 2012 that it would be possible to bring fiber internet to all of America for \$140 billion⁸⁹. If that cost was underestimated and the actual cost required a \$50 billion per year investment over 5 years then it

would still only be half of what Americans have been charged. Current telecoms should be charged penalties based on the number of households still unconnected to fiber-optic networks.

Repairing all bridges with identified needs of repairs would cost an estimated \$171 billion²⁰. At a speed of repair at four times faster than is currently occurring, investment would need to be \$9 billion per year. The cost of repairing existing highways, system expansion, and system enhancements is estimated to be around \$700 billion⁴⁰. \$50 billion per year is sustainable with state and local governments contributing to the costs as well.

Agriculture Investment

A majority of agriculture investment costs will be factored into enrollee costs. Land is already owned federally, so costs would come mostly from capital equipment. Costs should be less than \$10 billion per year.

Major Costs Summary

Major investments over the first 5 years would near \$500 billion per year. Costs could easily fall far below this as most estimates include labor at prevailing wages whereas enrollees in the FTUI will be working in service to the United States. State and local governments will also be expected to pay a percentage of project costs further reducing the overall federal burden. Investments may also not be possible in these amounts as there is only so much work capacity that depends on enrollment numbers and program expansion rates.

Enrollee Leasing

Overview

The enrollee leasing program will be a way to work with the private sector, provide training, increase tax revenue, and help distribute income away from the top 1%. Businesses will be able to “hire” enrollees in exchange for an altered tax rate. Different industries will have different rates depending on profit margins and needs. For certain job types, it will be more effective to have private companies train enrollees. Some industries will be limited in the amount of “hires”, and in certain instances it can help startup companies avoid seeking venture capital.

Businesses would not be responsible for paying salaries to enrollees, payments will be in taxes and enrollees will still receive benefits from the FTUI.

Example 1

Manufacturing Company Corporation wants to “hire” 1 employee from the FTUI

Manufacturing Company Corporation has 49 employees. Machinists are in high demand and there are not enough available workers in the area. Manufacturing Company Corporation leases 1 machinist for 1 year from the FTUI.

Now, Manufacturing Company Corporation has 50 employees. Employees leased from the FTUI are 2% of their total workforce.

At the end of the year, Manufacturing Company Corporation makes a profit of \$2 million. In addition to their current tax liability, Manufacturing Company Corporation will also be taxed on the percentage of

their workforce being leased from the FTUI. Their tax burden would increase 2%, and an additional \$40,000 would be paid in taxes.

Example 2

Manufacturing Company Corporation wants to “hire” 50 employees from the FTUI

Manufacturing Company Corporation has 50 employees. Machinists are in high demand and there are not enough available workers in the area. Manufacturing Company Corporation leases 50 machinists for 1 year from the FTUI.

Now, Manufacturing Company Corporation has 1000 employees. Employees leased from the FTUI are 50% of their total workforce.

At the end of the year, Manufacturing Company Corporation makes a profit of \$2 million. In addition to their current tax liability, Manufacturing Company Corporation will also be taxed on the percentage of their workforce being leased from the FTUI. Their tax burden would increase 50%, and an additional \$1 million would be paid in taxes.

Now Manufacturing Company Corporation has a direct line to workers that are in shortage. After enrollees complete their 2 years of service, Manufacturing Company Corporation can hire well-trained employees who are newly available to the market.

Example 3

Nursing Home, LLC wants to hire additional aides for their care facility

Nursing Home, LLC pays a strong living wage, yet there are not enough trained aides to provide enough support for the elderly they care for. Currently Nursing Home, LLC employs 15 staff members to take care of their residents. 70% of resident care is paid for by Medicaid. Nursing Home, LLC wants to lease 5 more staff members from the FTUI.

Now, Nursing Home, LLC has 20 employees. Employees leased from the FTUI are 25% of their total workforce.

At the end of the year, Nursing Home, LLC makes a profit of \$80,000. Due to the high level of resident care paid for by Medicaid, the additional tax burden for leased employees will be reduced to 12.5% of total profits, and an additional \$10,000 will be owed in taxes.

Now Nursing Home, LLC has a direct line to workers that are in shortage. After enrollees complete their 2 years of service, Nursing Home, LLC can hire well-trained employees who are newly available to the market.

Note: It would not be financially feasible for Nursing Home, LLC to hire 5 additional employees at a living wage under our current tax system. Using the living wage tax incentives proposed at <https://wilcox2020.com/issues/income-inequality> would make the hiring of additional employees possible.

Example 4

Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC wants to hire additional aides for their care facility

Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC pays strong living wage, yet there are not enough trained aides to provide enough support for the elderly they care for. Currently Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC employs 25 staff

members to take care of their residents. 30% of resident care is paid for by Medicaid. Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC wants to lease 5 more staff members from the FTUI.

Now, Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC has 30 employees. Employees leased from the FTUI are 17% of their total workforce.

At the end of the year, Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC makes a profit of \$200,000. Due to the low-level of resident care paid for by Medicaid, the additional tax burden for leased employees will not be reduced. The additional tax burden will be 17% of profits, \$34,000.

Now Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC has a direct line to workers that are in shortage. After enrollees complete their 2 years of service, Wealthy Nursing Home, LLC can hire well-trained employees who are newly available to the market.

Example 5:

New Solar, Incorporated is a startup company that is developing renewable energy technology and needs additional engineers and staff to bring the product to market

New Solar, Incorporated has four employees. They have come up with an idea to produce a high-efficiency solar panel, but do not have the resources to hire additional employees. Rather than looking into large venture capital investments that are funded by the 1% in attempts to increase their wealth, they receive a grant for \$2 million from the FTUI. New Solar, Incorporated also leases eight more employees from the FTUI.

Now, New Solar, Incorporated has 12 employees. Employees leased from the FTUI are 66% of their total workforce.

At the end of the year, New Solar, Incorporated has an operating loss of \$200,000. Startup companies rarely make a profit during their first year. The extra employees leased from the FTUI are renewed for a second year.

At the end of year 2, the development of panels is complete, but there is still an operating loss of \$400,000.

New Solar, Incorporated permanently hires FTUI enrollees after their service has completed. 0% of their workforce is supplied by the FTUI in year 3 of their business.

At the end of year 3, New Solar, Incorporated turns a profit of \$300,000. Now an additional tax burden of 66% is owed for the amount of \$200,000.

There were two years of leased employees at 66% of the workforce, so leased tax burdens will carry forward. At the end of year 4, New Solar, Incorporated turns a profit of \$2 million. The additional tax burden owed will be 66% of profits, or \$1.32 million.

By participating in the grant and enrollee leasing program, the owners of New Solar, Incorporated will be able to maintain ownership of their company without selling a large portion to an already wealthy investor.

Benefits

This program will be a benefit to both businesses and the FTUI. For professions or trades where there are shortages, businesses will have a direct pipeline to well-trained employees while undertaking few risks. Initially, it will be beneficial in construction fields as there will be a lot of projects undertaken. Experienced companies will be able to earn more money training and overseeing tradespersons and have an option to hire experienced employees afterward.

While not all businesses will cover the basic benefits costs of enrollees with increased proportional taxes, all the money will be invested into the US. It also provides a path for people to start or expand their own companies as labor costs are generally a large expense.

Societal Benefits of the Fight to Unite Initiative

The societal benefits of the Fight to Unite Initiative are vast. Providing a system for people of all classes to succeed is not only good for individuals, but will help shape our country as a real land of opportunity as our founders imagined it.

Proactively Fighting Climate Change

Investing in fighting climate change is expensive today, but it will be even more expensive tomorrow if we ignore it. The Army commissioned a report finding that if nothing is done, there is a high likelihood that the Army may not even exist in 20 years². Another report commissioned by our government says climate change could cause the GDP to take a 10% hit⁹⁰ in the future, which would amount to over \$2 trillion today. That same report says billions of labor hours will be lost, and cities and infrastructures could be devastated.

Investing a small portion of that money now will not only prevent the catastrophes the Army predicts, but will directly funnel that money into our economy.

Building an Educated Population

Everyone deserves a chance at education. The FTUI gives everyone, regardless of social status, a chance at getting education and training so they can be productive members of society. When parents are able to obtain jobs that provide steady and fair incomes, children do better in school⁹¹. The FTUI will provide economic security to everyone, which helps children succeed over the long term⁹². Ensuring that enrollees understand our constitution and government will help promote participation in public policy and discourse. Having a skilled and educated population will make it easier to defend against all threats no matter their origin.

Supporting All Citizens

The cost of supporting our most vulnerable citizens is larger than the cost of leaving them to their own devices. The taxpayers' cost of a chronically homeless person averages \$35,578 per year⁹³. The FTUI can provide rehabilitation and training for less than that while providing a stable environment that will lead to success. Reducing poverty will bolster our economy and ensure future success for the US.

Our elderly population does not have access to the services they need. America will be facing a shortage of aid workers in the near future and the FTUI addresses that. The FTUI also addresses providing childcare to all citizens as well, making sure no matter the age, all Americans will have opportunities.

Decrease in Crime

The FTUI will work to decrease poverty and income inequality, which in turn will decrease violent crime⁹⁴. The amount of job opportunities for adults has a direct correlation with violent crime reduction⁹⁵. The same correlation exists with youth as well^{96,97}. Providing opportunities will also decrease recidivism rates⁹⁸. Criminal justice reform in combination with the FTUI will be a major factor in crime prevention.

Infrastructure Improvements

Not only will improving our infrastructure have a direct impact of providing clean drinking water to Americans and improving overall health, but also providing better transportation, and access to more information. Making sure that all Americans have access to high-speed internet will provide economic and job opportunities to currently underserved rural regions. Transitioning to a green electric infrastructure will have incalculable positive effects as well.

Disaster Relief

Having a large infrastructure workforce at our fingertips will make it so we can provide aid to communities affected by disasters. Rebuilding power and water line, roads, and buildings quickly is important to help communities heal. Working with other countries we can hopefully lead by example and spread American influence by providing support to countries that are affected by disasters as well. There is no reason to have 500 million bushels of soy⁹⁹ or 1.4 billion pounds of cheese sitting in storage¹⁰⁰ while 20 million people are living in or on the brink of famine¹⁰¹.

Historically Disenfranchised

Throughout American history we have consistently abused minorities despite using them to build our country. There is an established and systemic issue that continues to this day where not everyone is given the same opportunities to succeed. The FTUI will give everyone the opportunity to succeed regardless of race, skin color, income, or other factors.

Immigration

The FTUI can help refugees and immigrants find a pathway to citizenship. With projected millions in job shortages, we cannot afford to close our borders. We need to integrate people who have overcome extreme adversity for the chance at a better life. If someone is willing to walk 2,000 miles in search of a better life, that is someone we should welcome and be proud to call an American.

Conclusion

The Fight to Unite Initiative does exactly what the name implies. Every day Americans are fighting and struggling. There are 38 million people in poverty right now¹⁰² who do not know how they are going to pay their bills next month. Climate change affects every single human, and many of them have not recovered from the last disaster. The infrastructure of the United States is outdated and in need of repair. New Orleans only has 80% of its population more than a decade after Katrina¹⁰³. Nothing can replace the more than 3,000 lives lost to Maria. The FTUI will unite those in need to help everyone.

America is facing a crossroads and needs to choose a path. Either we continue using socialism to bail out corporate greed and endless war, or we stand up and choose the United States. Our current system has enabled the greatest wealth inequality in history, and it is not working for a majority of Americans, nor the hundreds of thousands of deaths we are responsible overseas.

We need to work together and fight for our future, we need to Fight to Unite.

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