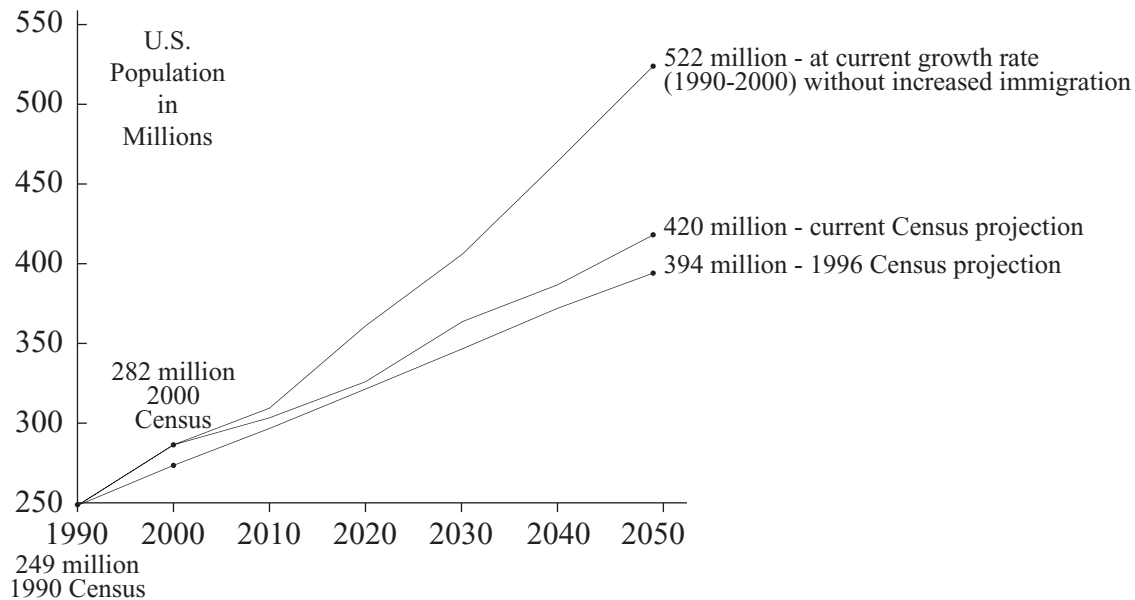


U.S. population growth set to pass half-billion at mid-century!

Census Bureau projections have historically been low



In 1933 Herbert Hoover's Committee on Social Trends forecast that "we shall probably attain a population of between 145 and 150 million during the present century." This prediction was off by over 130 million.

- In 1996, Census Bureau projections under its most probable "middle series" scenario showed the U.S. population reaching 394 million in 2050. Updated projections released in January 2000 increased that mid-century projection to 404 million. After the 2000 census, the Bureau increased its current mid-level projection for U.S. population in 2050 to 420 million.
- Projections about future U.S. population involve assumptions about fertility, mortality, and immigration. Given the inherent uncertainties of these assumptions, it may be more accurate to project the U.S. population using the current growth rate, the rate for which we have hard data. From 1990 to 2000, our country's population increased from 249 million to 282 million—an increase of 13 percent.
- *If we continue at our current growth rate, our population will reach 522 million in 2050—even without another amnesty! This is much closer to the high-level projection of 553 million for 2050 that the Bureau made in 2000 than it is to its mid-level projection of 404 million.*
- *That same high-level projection shows the U.S. population reaching 1.2 billion in the year 2100. (Current Census Bureau projections do not extend beyond 2050.)*
- The Bureau report issued in 2000 also included a "zero net migration" projection. Under it, U.S. population would reach 377 million in 2100, versus 571 million under the mid-level projection. In other words, *two-thirds of U.S. population growth results from immigration.*
- The above projections were made *before* the amnesty and other immigration increases proposed in the Senate bill. According to the Congressional Budget Office, that legislation would increase the number of legal immigrants by nearly 20 million just over the next decade. Robert E. Rector, a senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, estimated that the Senate bill would add 60 million legal immigrants to the U.S. over the next 20 years.