


# Introduction to NEED

I-NeXT Kiwanis Club  
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National Economic Education Delegation



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## National Economic Education Delegation

- **Vision**
  - One day, the public discussion of policy issues will be grounded in an accurate perception of the underlying economic principles and data.
- **Mission**
  - NEED unites the skills and knowledge of a vast network of professional economists to promote understanding of the economics of policy issues in the United States.
- **NEED Presentations**
  - Are **nonpartisan** and intended to reflect the consensus of the economics profession.



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## Who Are We?

- **Honorary Board: 54 members**

- 2 Fed Chairs: Janet Yellen, Ben Bernanke
- 6 Chairs Council of Economic Advisers
  - o Furman (D), Rosen (R), Bernanke (R), Yellen (D), Tyson (D), Goolsbee (D)
- 3 Nobel Prize Winners
  - o Akerlof, Smith, Maskin

- **Delegates: 649+ members**

- At all levels of academia and some in government service
- All have a Ph.D. in economics
- Crowdsource slide decks
- Give presentations

- **Global Partners: 49 Ph.D. Economists**

- Aid in slide deck development

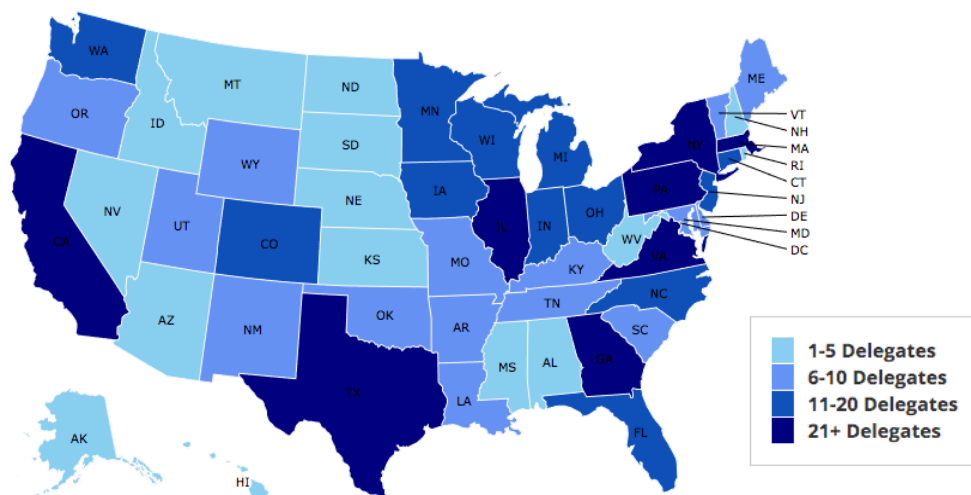


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## Where Are We?



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## On the Need for NEED

“ I’ve never seen the disjunction between the political debate about economics and the consensus of economists be as large as it is today. ”

*Justin Wolfers, University of Michigan*

The misuse of economic data is widespread and there is no countering, clarifying force.

This leads to continued misunderstanding of economics and poorly researched and implemented economic policy.

## Examples Where Economics Could Help More

- **Example of the use of economics to push agendas:**
  - Job creators
  - Tax cuts for the wealthy
  - Trade policy
- **Examples of the lack of use of economics to push agendas:**
  - Climate change
  - Infrastructure
- **Examples where it is simply misunderstood or underused:**
  - Inequality
  - Economic mobility
  - Minimum wage

## Example: Minimum Wages

- **Minimum wage increases are “sold” as beneficial to people with low incomes. However:**
  - A higher minimum wage may lead to unemployment.
  - Even among those who remain employed, their overall compensation might be lower. Their work environment might be less pleasant.
- **Minimum wage increases are “sold” as antipoverty programs, However:**
  - They lift relatively few out of poverty.
  - We should be talking about programs that directly address poverty.
- **Minimum wages are expensive. Is this the best way to spend money to help the poor?**



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## Example: Tax Cuts for the Wealthy

- **The wealthy are the investor class, so if we reduce their taxes, they will have more money to invest! This will create jobs!**
  - This may be true, but is it the best way to create jobs? Economic studies have NEVER suggested that the answer is yes.
  - Giving money to low income individuals increases demand for goods and services.
    - o It is this increase in demand that leads the investor class to invest more.
- **The United States used to pursue policies that grew the middle class.**
  - Perhaps investing in these policies would be a wiser use of the money from the tax cuts.
- **Tax cuts for the wealthy are expensive. Is this the best way to spend money to grow the economy?**



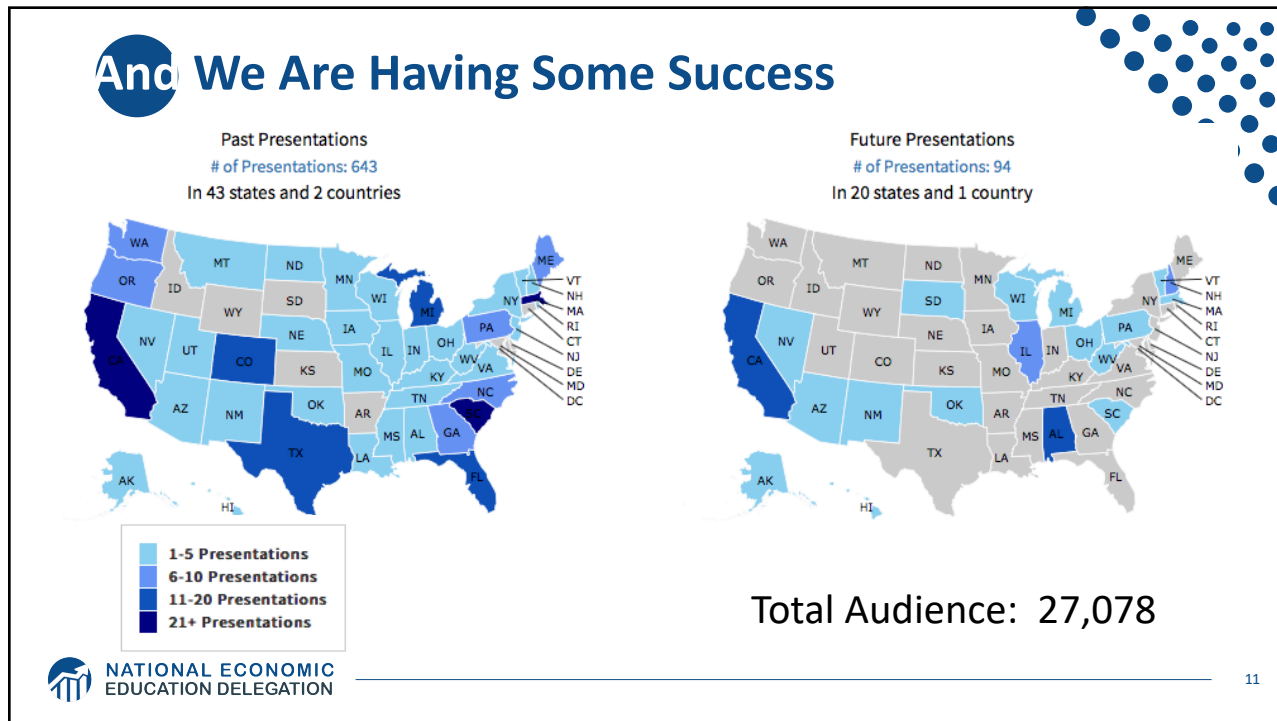
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## The Problem: Intuition

- The tax cuts argument is intuitive.
- The minimum wage argument is intuitive.
- The world ... is not intuitive. It is highly complex.
  - Economists and economics help to sort through the complexity.

## Another Problem: Economists

- We just need to get out more...
- ...and tell people what we know about important economic policy issues.
- That is what NEED is designed to promote.



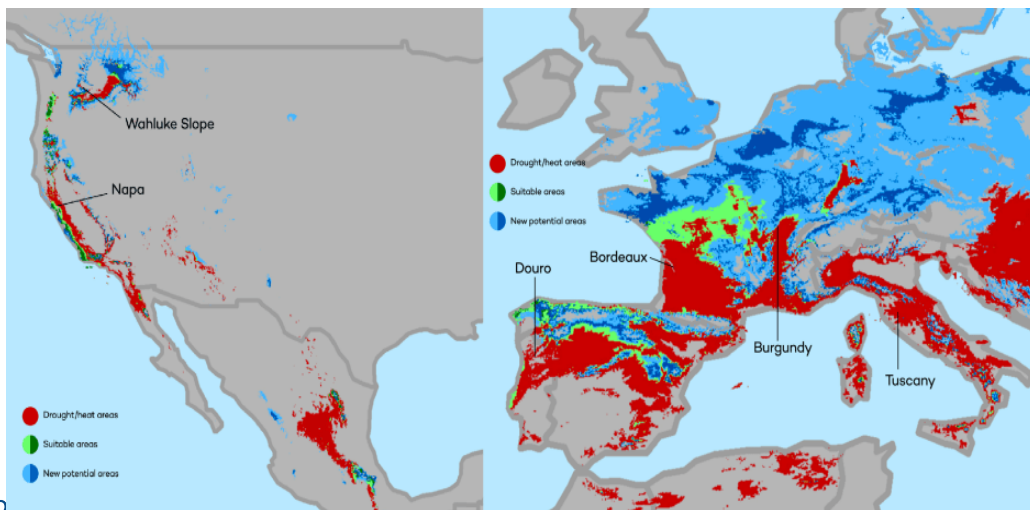
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# Climate Change Economics

The changing map of the world's wine-growing regions.



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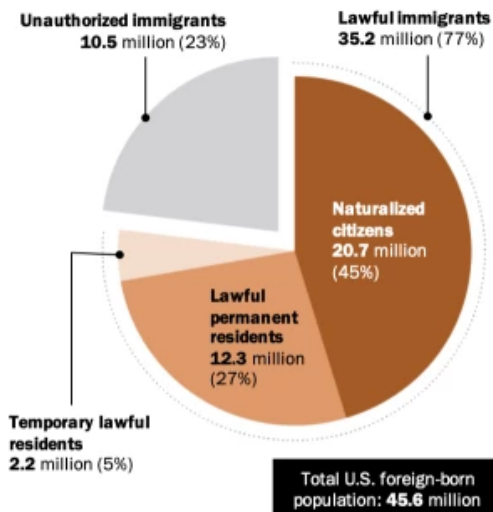
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# Immigrant Population in 2017

Foreign-born population estimates, 2017

Categories of the total number of immigrants in the United States.



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<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/12/how-pew-research-center-counts-unauthorized-immigrants-in-us/>

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## Current State of Infrastructure in the US

### 2021 Infrastructure Grades

AVIATION	↑ D+	PORTS	↑ B-
BRIDGES	↓ C	RAIL	B
DAMS	D	ROADS	D
DRINKING WATER	↑ C-	SCHOOLS	D+
ENERGY	↑ C-	SOLID WASTE	C+
HAZARDOUS WASTE	D+	STORM WATER	D
INLAND WATERWAYS	↑ D+	TRANSIT	D-
LEVEES	D	WASTEWATER	D+
PARKS AND RECREATION	D+		

America's Cumulative Infrastructure Grade

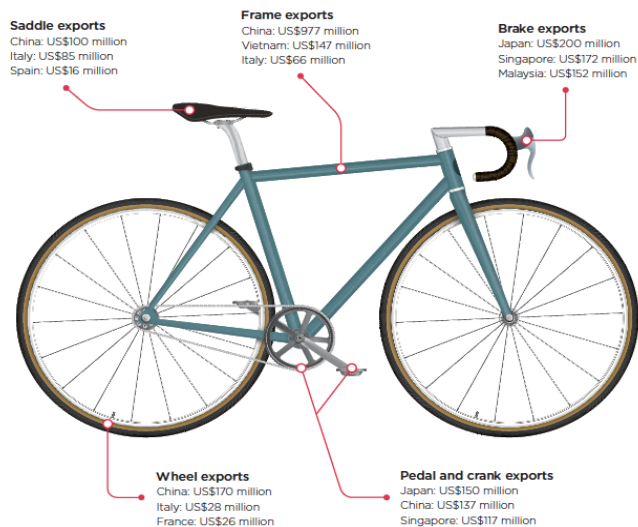


A	EXCEPTIONAL
B	GOOD
C	MEDIOCRE
D	POOR
F	FAILING

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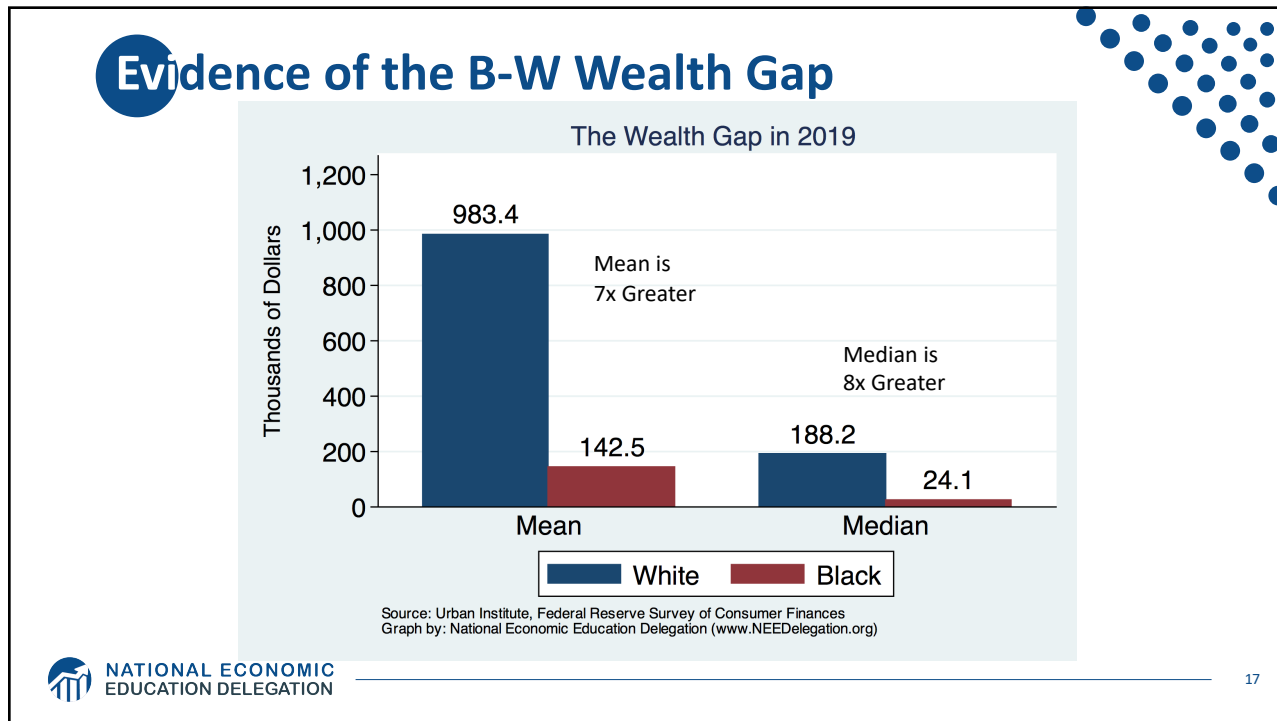
## Trade: Bicycle Supply Chain

Figure 1.1 Where do bicycles come from?

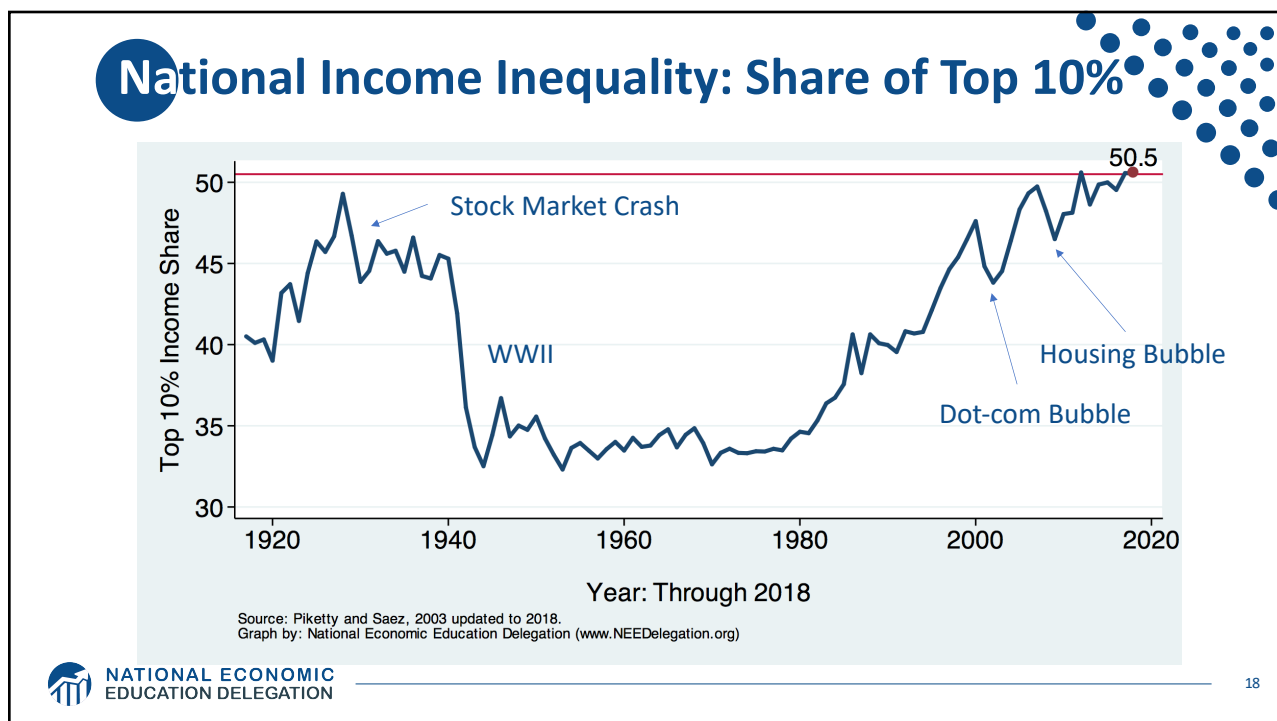


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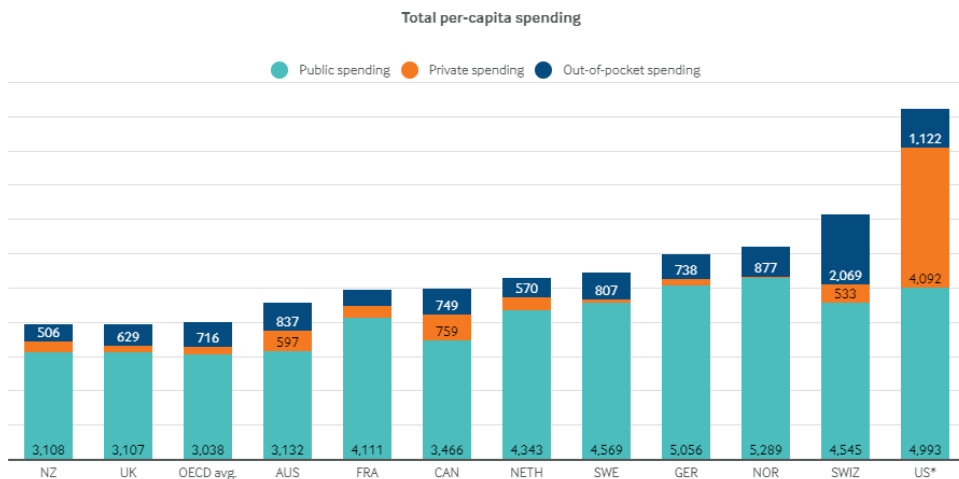
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# International Comparison: Health Spending

Dollars (US\$), adjusted for differences in cost of living



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# Autonomous Vehicles



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## Next Steps:

- Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to Congress we go!
- Going after the kids in High schools!

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## Thank you!

# Any Questions?

[www.NEEDelegation.org](http://www.NEEDelegation.org)

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