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Permit me to introduce myself as a new Alexandria resident who relocated here from DC where I had lived my entire adult life because my formerly idyllic former neighborhood almost overnight became dangerous and because DC's planning office decided to transform it from its historically low-density character to a high-density "transit-oriented" neighborhood notwithstanding long-time residents' objections.

Public safety and preserving my neighborhood's low-density character I consider crucial. Just before I moved into my house, an armed robbery took place two doors away. Unlike the neighborhood I left where many recent serious crimes, such as the triple shooting/single homicide across the street from my house, go unsolved, Alexandria police did yeoman work solving the robbery two doors from mine. Follow-up is essential to make sure the city diligently prosecutes the perpetrators and the courts give them stiff sanctions. Crime is countercyclical, so it goes up when unemployment rises. Accordingly, Alexandria needs to put resources into all aspects of its crime control functions in this time of fiscal distress. The broken window theory insists that, now especially, even quality of life misdemeanors neighbors grouse about at Queen & Fayette Streets call for strict attention rather than fiscal triage lest they lead to worse.

Our society is only beginning to grasp the severity of the forthcoming business-cycle contraction and whisper the word "depression". What warns us this may be a depression rather than recession is the self-feeding downward spiral—a qualitative, as well as quantitative, difference. Although unlikely to be a 1930s redux, it may well be like the late Nineteenth Century depressions, marking it as the kind of circumstance for which rainy day funds were designed. Alexandria ought not hesitate to tap into its rainy day fund for important services such as crime control.

Alexandria ineluctably will also need to examine the costs of services, revenues generated, and social costs/externalities associated with persons who are not legally in the country. Notwithstanding Alexandria's desire to be liberal and welcoming, we cannot allow ourselves to get in the budget fix California finds itself which some experts believe is partly due to the costs imposed by illegal immigration. The interests which most benefit from illegal immigration such as construction and hospitality are likely to be hardest hit by the forthcoming depression, while wage competition between persons present illegally and low-wage working Americans, especially African Americans, could get ugly in a depression especially if taxes increase while services and city staff slashed.

Alexandria needs to be proactive to avert a Prince William-style backlash. The city should assemble a team of experts representing the entire spectrum of views on illegal immigration and conduct a *bona fide* economic and fiscal impact analysis illegal immigration has on Alexandria's city budget and should do so NOW so it is ready in time to stanch any backlash. Depending on what the experts' report shows, Alexandria might consider cutting services disproportionately relied upon by persons present illegally as a way to both acknowledge legitimate grassroots concerns about their impact while at the same time averting a Prince William-style backlash. Similarly, relying on the rainy day fund would cushion the blow on Alexandria's citizen taxpayers as well as service cuts for low-wage working Americans, especially African Americans.

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