The "Left Coast" exodus just makes good financial sense

The savings for leaving a Blue state are just staggering

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For years the story was familiar, Californians, tired of sky-high housing costs, crushing taxes, and endless regulations, were packing up and heading for cheaper, redder pastures. It was easy to dismiss as individual choice. A family here, a retiree there. Nothing systemic. Just people voting with their feet.

That narrative is now CONCLUSIVELY out of date.

The migration from the “Left Coast” — California, Oregon, and Washington — has entered a new, more serious phase. It is no longer just individuals fleeing. Major companies are now doing the same. And the consequences for the Blue states they are leaving behind are becoming impossible to ignore and now there are numbers to back it up!

A recent study by the California Policy Lab tracked Californians who moved between 2016 and 2025. The financial upside was clear. On average, movers saved roughly $672 per month on housing alone. After seven years, they were 48 percent more likely to own a home than those who stayed. Groceries cost 11 percent more, gas 40 percent more, and utilities 61 percent more in California than the national average. The data is unambiguous: for many families, leaving the state was not just a lifestyle choice — it was a sound financial decision.

But the real story today is what is happening at the corporate level.

Starbucks, one of Seattle’s most iconic companies, **just announced a $100 million investment to build a new Southeastern corporate office in Nashville, Tennessee.** The move is expected to create up to 2,000 jobs. Seattle could lose hundreds of millions in tax revenue as a result. Washington’s business tax climate has plummeted from 6th in the nation in 2014 to 45th today. The state recently passed a “millionaires tax” — a 9.9 percent levy on income above $1 million — and local progressive politics have grown increasingly hostile to business. Starbucks is not alone in noticing.

Meanwhile, Miami has become a full-blown mecca for the ultra-wealthy. Tech titans like Mark Zuckerberg, Sergey Brin, and Larry Page have led a billion-dollar exodus from high-tax blue states to South Florida. Luxury condo sales in Miami are up 17 percent in the first quarter, and sales of homes above $5 million have risen nearly 10 percent. **Corcoran Group CEO Pamela Liebman called it a "permanent structural shift,"** no longer a boom-and-bust cycle. Miami is now a "true luxury lifestyle home" and a global city that is pulling capital away from traditional coastal hubs.

This is no longer scattered personal decisions. It is a structural movement. Companies and high-net-worth individuals are deliberately choosing red states with lower taxes, fewer regulations, and more business-friendly environments. Blue states like California, Oregon, and Washington are watching both people and revenue walk out the door.

The pattern is clear and repeating. Progressive policies — steep income taxes, heavy regulation, and an increasingly hostile attitude toward business — have created an environment where staying is simply no longer worth the cost. When even Starbucks, a company long associated with progressive values, decides Tennessee makes more sense than Seattle, the message should be impossible to miss.

The financial consequences for the states being left behind are significant. Lost corporate headquarters and high earners mean lost tax revenue, lost jobs, and a shrinking base to fund the very services progressives claim to champion. (As Mamdani in New York is discovering rapidly!) Seattle's potential loss of hundreds of millions in tax revenue from the Starbucks move is just one example of a much larger trend.

Red states, by contrast, are reaping the benefits. Tennessee is gaining jobs and investment. Florida and Texas continue to draw both companies and wealthy individuals. The migration is not random — it is rational economic behavior in response to very different policy environments.

This should not be surprising. When the cost of living, doing business, and simply existing becomes punitive, people and companies eventually find the exit. What began as a trickle of individuals has become a steady flow that now includes major corporations. The Left Coast is not just losing residents. It is losing the economic engines that pay the bills.

The data and the corporate moves tell the same story. High costs, high taxes, and heavy-handed progressive governance are driving a genuine exodus. And unlike the individual families who quietly packed their bags, companies leaving make headlines and create measurable economic pain for the states they abandon.

The migration from California, Oregon, and Washington is no longer just a personal story. It has become a structural one. Companies are now voting with their headquarters the same way individuals have been voting with their feet for years. The consequences are already showing up in tax revenue projections and corporate relocation announcements.

Blue-state leaders can continue to pretend this is temporary or partisan spin. Or they can look at the data, the corporate moves, and the people leaving — and finally admit that their policies have consequences.

The Left Coast is emptying out. The question now is how much more it will lose before anyone in power decides it is time to change course.

Given Tom Steyer's comment the other night at the California Governor debate, it seems that the lessons are still falling on deaf ears at the moment.

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MODERATOR: "Should language proficiency for truck drivers be strictly enforced?" TOM STEYER: "Racial profiling is illegal."