



## Floridians for Immigration Enforcement

*When immigration is viewed only racially and culturally, limits and legality will never be imposed. The debate must focus on limitations and lawfulness, otherwise open borders will make the United States a marketplace instead of a country.*

February 9, 2009

Re: Illegal Immigration Legislation

Dear Representative Fetterman

Floridians for Immigration Enforcement is a non partisan citizens group that has concerns regarding the criminal and economic impact of illegal aliens on our communities. It is our mission to encourage state and local governments to protect their **citizens** by enacting and enforcing laws regarding illegal immigrants.

Please consider sponsoring immigration enforcement legislation for 2009 Florida Legislative Session. When reviewing this proposed legislation you should be aware that enforcement of immigration law by states is clearly allowed. The myth that immigration enforcement is strictly a federal matter has been promoted by anti-enforcement immigration groups. About 12 or more states have enacted immigration enforcement at the state level and the statues have held up under judicial challenge. The main conditions of such legislation are that states cannot enact monetary penalties and the realm of authority must be licenses regulated by the state.

In the six years from 2000 to 2006 Florida's illegal immigrant population increased by 643,000. Florida's illegal immigrant population is now estimated at over one million. This rapid influx of illegal immigrants into Florida has negatively affected every citizen in Florida, except those businesses that are violating the law by hiring illegal aliens. Unrestricted illegal immigration is now costing Florida's taxpayers nearly **two billion dollars** a year, will cost an estimated three billion in 2010, and five billion in 2015.

State Legislators this session face the difficult task of balancing our budget and still providing the funds for essential programs. The enormous cost of illegal immigration to the taxpayers of Florida can no longer be ignored. Many states around the nation have been proactive in dealing with illegal immigration in their states by doing several things: Removing the job magnet that brings them here and by enacting law enforcement measures that remove illegal alien criminals from their communities. Many illegal immigrants from those states are voluntarily leaving and returning to their country of origin or to another state that has not addressed the issue. If Florida fails to take

measures to reverse the flow of illegal immigrants into our state we can expect increased budget deficits, higher unemployment rates, more crime, and the possible failure of our health care system. The Florida Hospital Association has reported that there are 51 hospitals in Florida that are in financial trouble due to unreimbursed medical charges. To better understand the negative affect illegal immigration is having on our hospitals, take a minute to view this testimony from the workshop on the illegal immigration bills sponsored in 2008.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLJxmJZXgNI&feature=related>. Last month another illegal alien with no driver's license and a previous conviction for DUI had an accident. This accident resulted in one passenger's death and five passengers in the back of his truck were severely injured. I'm sure all the victims of this single car accident were transported to Martin Memorial. I doubt if the unlicensed driver of this vehicle had insurance, so the passengers are probably being treated at the expense of Martin Memorial and the taxpayers of Florida. Remember that our hospitals would not have this drain on their resources if the job magnet was removed. Without the prospect of employment, illegal immigrants would not be unlawfully residing in communities and accessing health care at local hospitals.

There were a number of good illegal immigration bills sponsored in the 2008 session that would have helped to address Florida's illegal immigration problem and **Florida's budget deficit**. Unfortunately, these bills never made it though the committee process. Unless legislation is sponsored and enacted in 2009, Floridians can expect future budget cuts that will affect every citizen in Florida. Effective legislation should address the following:

- Public Employment
- Private Employment
- Public Benefits
- Law Enforcement
- Sanctuary City Policy
- Publicly Funded Day Labor Centers

Floridians for Immigration Enforcement recommends that legislators sponsoring bills utilize the resources of The American Federation for Immigration Reform (<http://www.fairus.org/site/PageServer> ). They have been working with state legislators across the country and have been instrumental in helping to get legislation passed in a number of states, including HB1804 in Oklahoma. They also have a legal branch, The Immigration Reform Law Institute, which provides assistance in drafting the language of bills. There is no other legal organization that can provide better assistance to assure that the language of your legislation will not prompt court challenges that might overturn your legislation.

The attached bills were drafted by IRLI for Florida. They have all been sent to drafting by Representative Nehr and Senator Storms. The two bills that will have the most impact on addressing this problem are the Private and Public Employment Bills. These bills help to assure that jobs only go to citizens or those individuals that have legal

status to work here. The bills require that the E-Verify program is used by employers for new hires. The E-Verify program crosses the Social Security data base with the Homeland Security data base. It is **free to use** and will let the employer know within a matter of minutes if their new job applicant has legal status to work in this country. It is a very accurate program that has few kick backs. The majority of these are caused by newly naturalized citizens that have applied for jobs, but have not applied for social security cards. There are safety procedures and a grace period in place to address this so that these cases are usually resolved within a couple of days. Tens of thousands of Floridians have either lost their jobs or are working for substandard wages because the influx of illegal immigrants into the workforce in Florida. It has also negatively affected law abiding businesses in Florida that do not hire illegal workers. It has placed these business owners at a competitive disadvantage with businesses that are openly violating federal law. There is no better time than now to implement this type legislation. Positive results that can be expected if this legislation is enacted are:

- Lower unemployment rates
- All business will be operating on a level, legal playing field
- Lower enrollment numbers in our K-12 schools. This will reduce class sizes and will save millions of tax dollars.
- Fewer individuals on public assistance.
- More sales tax revenues
- Provide relief to our health care facilities from unreimbursed medical charges.
- Crime Reduction

Remember that these bills will only apply to new hires. This will allow a smooth transition back to fuller domestic employment. Any companies that have difficulty filling their labor needs can do so through the visa program. Many pro illegal immigrant advocates have stated that our agriculture business would fail if this illegal workforce was not available. This is patently untrue. One example of this is J and J Produce in Loxahatchee Groves, Fl. They are one of the most profitable growers in the state and they hire only legal workers through the visa program. The advantages of this are they have a steady, reliable work force that has been screened through the program. Individuals have criminal and health background checks. As guest workers they do not bring their families with them. Using illegal workers often results in addition cost to the taxpayers due to the educational, medical, and public benefits needed by the families of these low skilled workers.

At the present time there is no legislation that can be sponsored that will have a more positive effect on all the citizens of Florida. I hope the citizens of Florida can count on

**you** to sponsor legislation this session that will help protect them from the economic and criminal impact of illegal immigration on their lives.

Please contact me if Floridians for Immigration Enforcement can be of any assistance in helping you to get legislation enacted that will help solve Florida's illegal immigration crisis and reduce Florida's costs.

Sincerely Yours

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