



# SENATOR MATT BARTLE

**District 8 – Capitol Building, Room 431 Jefferson City, MO 65101**

**Column for Week of:  
June 5, 2006**

**Contact: Todd Scott  
(573) 751-1464 / (888) 711-9278**

## **ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IN AN AGE OF TERRORISM**

Every so often an event comes along that fundamentally changes a nation. Ask people where they were when they heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been attacked, President Kennedy had been assassinated or when the space shuttle Challenger exploded in mid-flight, and they'll remember it like it was yesterday. These events remind us that we live in a dangerous world and whether by malice or accident, our lives can be changed in a moment.

September 11<sup>th</sup> was one such moment that will forever live in our national consciousness. On this pleasant late summer morning, the illusion that America was at peace was shattered with the recognition that dangerous enemies were plotting our destruction. On that morning I was in Jefferson City for the annual veto session. Like millions of my fellow Americans I watched the terrible events of those calamitous hours unfold.

In the days that followed these cowardly attacks, our nation resolved that we would not live in fear but that we would meet terrorism head-on. We resolved to prepare for and, if possible, prevent future attacks.

Yet as we approach the five-year anniversary of that day, many Missourians are dismayed to see that our borders, stretching through hundreds of miles of sparsely populated regions, are still porous and vulnerable. For evidence of this fact one need look no further than the nightly crossing of hundreds of illegal immigrants. We recognize that we can never be truly secure from terrorist attacks on our soil if we cannot protect our own borders. In an age of biological, chemical and nuclear devices that have the potential to wreak untold havoc, and with numerous enemies with the will, if not the technical skills, to use these devices against us, it is imperative that we take decisive action.

Over the course of the next few weeks I would like to discuss this very pertinent issue in this column. Specifically, I want to touch on the actions that we as a state can take to help in this national effort, including legislation that I voted for during the most recent legislative session to grant our law enforcement officers greater enforcement power and to remove the incentive of government services to illegal aliens.

The President has requested, and Gov. Blunt has willingly responded, that members of the Missouri National Guard take up positions in the future near the U.S. border in some of our sister states. They have been charged with helping shore up the efforts of the Border Patrol to enforce federal law and stop illegal crossings. I support this action and will bring you up to speed on Missouri's contribution to this effort.

I believe Americans, and Missourians in particular, are a kind and compassionate people. We recognize that at one time or another nearly all of our ancestors were immigrants. However, we also believe that half-hearted enforcement of federal immigration law must end. Allowing thousands of illegals to sneak across the border not only deprives prospective legal immigrants, who comply with the law, the opportunity to become Americans, it also opens us up to grave vulnerabilities from future terrorist attack. For these reasons we must take this issue seriously.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at [matt\\_bartle@senate.mo.gov](mailto:matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov) or by phone at (888) 711-9278.

-END-