

THE GREEN WIRE

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For Immediate Release

Senate GOP continues support for employers hiring illegal workers

JEFFERSON CITY – Senate Republicans have again chosen to protect employers who hire illegal, undocumented workers at the expense of hard-working, tax-paying professional laborers, and Sen. Timothy Green (D-Spanish Lake) is more than frustrated.

“I offered an amendment to the illegal alien legislation Monday which would only have strengthened our ability to enforce immigration laws and control the flow of undocumented workers to our state,” the Spanish Lake Democrat said. “Instead, the GOP supported a gutting amendment to mine, and protected employers who consciously bring these illegal workers to Missouri.”

Sen. Jason Crowell (R-Cape Girardeau) offered the amendment which removed the word “negligently” from Sen. Green’s amendment which required that any entity found to have “knowingly or negligently” employed an undocumented worker on a public project would be barred from public projects for a three-year period. Sen. Crowell’s amendment passed on a pure party line vote.

“Crowell’s a lawyer; he clearly knew the effect of his amendment,” Sen. Green noted. “How he can stand up one minute and claim to be so pro-family and then offer an amendment like this which can only harm American working families and further protect employers who hire cheap, undocumented workers is beyond me. The hypocrisy is gargantuan.”

The senator said these undocumented workers are a serious threat to working Missourians. In February, two cases at far ends of the state surfaced in which illegal, undocumented workers were found at construction sites. At O’Fallon, nearly 50 illegal aliens were found at an apartment construction site, and in southwestern Missouri at Carthage, 56 illegal workers were arrested at another construction site.

Sen. Green said that “negligently” needs to be part of the law governing employers because “knowingly” does not go far enough. “If an employer is negligent about who he hires, he is still breaking the law and deserves to be reprimanded. Those are still jobs taken from Missourians, whether it was done by an employer intent on breaking the law or one so careless that he doesn’t even know who is working for him.”

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Earlier in the legislative session, Sen. Green worked long hours to reach a compromise on the project labor agreements bill, but when one was finally reached, Sen. Crowell suddenly became a factor in the process.

“He seems intent on protecting these employers who want to hire illegal, undocumented workers to steal jobs from tax-paying Missourians,” Sen. Green said. “As long as the other Senate Republicans want to follow his lead, Missouri will be a haven for illegal aliens, and our professional workers will always be looking over their shoulders, wondering when their next work opportunity will be stolen from them.”