



THE STOUFFER REPORT

Senator Bill Stouffer
Senate District 21

Capitol Building, Room 332
Jefferson City, MO 65101

For the Week of:
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Straight Talk on Illegal Immigration

According to federal statistics, at least 22,000 illegal immigrants lived in Missouri in 2000, a 38 percent increase from 1996. This is one reason why immigration is one the biggest issues of 2006.

Earlier this year, the problem in Missouri was magnified when illegal immigrants were found to be working on the construction site of a low-income housing complex in O'Fallon. The housing complex had received millions of dollars in local, state and federal assistance. This year the Missouri Senate took up Senate Bill 1250 to strengthen states laws on illegal immigration.

SB 1250 requires members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol to receive training on federal immigration laws from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The bill also allows all police officers to "investigate, apprehend, or detain" illegal immigrants and transport them to Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials.

In addition, officials at local jails in Missouri are required to try to verify that inmates charged with felonies are citizens or lawful U.S. residents. If the inmate's residence cannot be verified, jail officials must notify the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The legislation also prohibits illegal immigrants from attending public universities in Missouri and penalizes contractors who hire undocumented workers on taxpayer-funded projects. Employers who are found to knowingly hire illegal immigrants would not be allowed to work on public projects for three years.

As a resident of Saline County, I have seen firsthand the important role immigrant workers and residents play in our economy. These families, particularly the Hispanic community, have become an important part of our area as good neighbors dedicated to faith and family.

As a society, I understand we can't afford the economic and security risk involved in allowing people to come into this country illegally. To honor taxpayers and our resources, it is important to enforce our laws.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by email at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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