



*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

*Free and fair discussion
is the firmest friend of truth.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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General Assembly Clears Illegal Immigration Reforms
Wide-ranging Bill Addresses Fraudulent Hiring & Prohibits Public Benefits

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri State Legislature gave final approval and sent to the governor today to wide-ranging bill that battles illegal immigration and protects Missourians from the tens of millions of dollars it costs taxpayers each year.

[House Bill 1549](#) includes several provisions promoted by Sen. Scott T. Rupp, R-Wentzville, including cracking down on employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants, bars illegal immigrants from obtaining driver's licenses and prevents illegal residents from receiving state or local public benefits.

"These critical reforms send a convincing message that Missouri is prepared to handle a tough issue that has received little action from Washington, D.C.," Rupp said. "Missourians asked lawmakers to address this issue, and we have. And, as we have said all along, Missouri will continue to heartily welcome legal immigrants, but we cannot tolerate illegal activity and its harmful economic impact."

The comprehensive bill tackles illegal immigration on several fronts. Missouri employers are barred from hiring illegal immigrants and could lose permits or licenses if they knowingly employ illegal workers. To be eligible for state contracts, employers must participate in a federal work authorization program, including public employers. Employers who misclassify workers will be subject to penalties of \$50 per day per misclassified worker and up to a maximum of \$50,000 in fines. Under the measure, the state's attorney general can investigate suspected violations.

The bill also allows law enforcement officers to check the immigration status of anyone arrested or detained in Missouri and denies bail for jailed individuals who cannot prove legal residency. The Missouri State Highway Patrol will also receive training to enforce immigration laws.

Other reforms prohibit communities from adopting safe sanctuary policies for illegal immigrants, bar individuals from transporting or harboring any alien, require written tests for commercial licenses to be administered in English only and provide penalties for individuals who use fraudulent means to assist illegal immigrants in obtaining driver's licenses. In addition, the legislation prohibits government entities, political subdivisions and government officials from interfering with any communication with the federal government regarding the citizenship or immigration status of any individual.

Senate Leader Mike Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, said he is pleased the General Assembly made good on its promise to the people of Missouri to address illegal immigration reforms. "Everywhere I go in our state, everyone I talk to is frustrated with Congress' inability to secure our borders because it puts us all at risk," he said. "We want to protect jobs, education and healthcare benefits for hardworking Missouri families and these reforms do that."

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