



Office of
Jason Crowell State
Senator

The Crowell Connection



Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Curbing Illegal Immigration in Missouri

Illegal immigration creates a problem in our state because it threatens the job security and services available for Missourians. We have started to take action that will make Missouri's stance on illegal immigration clear. [Senate Bill 858](#) received approval from the Senate last week and has now moved to the House. This bill will institute policies that keep our state from becoming a safe-haven for illegal immigrants.



Illegal immigration is a growing problem in our country, but Washington has failed to act to resolve the issue. Missourians are directly affected by the growing population of undocumented residents. Estimates based on the U.S. Census Bureau's March 2005 population survey suggest that there are between 35,000-65,000 illegal immigrants living in the state of Missouri. An Immigration and

Naturalization Service (INS) estimate from 2000 found that the illegal immigrant population in our state rose 38 percent in a four-year period and 175 percent in a ten-year period. In 2007, U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement deported 8,900 illegal aliens from a six-state area that included Missouri.

Senate Bill 858 contains a number of provisions designed to deter illegal immigrants from coming to Missouri. While some cities throughout the nation have adopted policies that

would give illegal immigrants sanctuary, Missouri will make it clear that this practice will not be tolerated. This legislation would prohibit municipalities within our state from granting sanctuary to illegal immigrants. Any city, town, or village that does adopt such a policy would not be able to receive any state grants.

Allowing those in this country illegally to receive a driver's license wrongly validates their residency in this country. Other states have considered schemes that would allow illegal immigrants to receive a driver's license. An initiative I sponsored, which was included in SB 858, would make it so that illegal immigrants cannot obtain a driver's license from the Missouri Department of Revenue. The bill also specifies that a driver's license issued to an illegal immigrant in another state would not be valid in Missouri.

Our state provides public benefits such as housing assistance, food assistance, or unemployment for Missourians struggling to make ends meet. This legislation would require public assistance recipients to prove residency before receiving any benefits. The bill would work to make sure that illegal immigrants in Missouri are not able to collect non-emergency public benefits.

Senate Bill 858 also addresses the problem of illegal immigrants taking the jobs of Missourians. The legislation specifically states that employers are barred from employing unauthorized workers. Businesses that continue to do so would be subject to the suspension of their business permits and licenses. Violators under contract with the state would have their contracts voided and be barred from contracting with the state for three years. Contractors that



continue to violate the measure would be permanently barred from contracting with the state. The bill also requires employers on state contracts or using state grants, loans or tax credits to participate in a federal work authorization program in order to be eligible for state contracts. Public employers would also be required to participate in the program. The new laws also apply to general contractors and subcontractors and would make them potentially liable for instances such as illegal hiring fraud.

Senate Bill 858 makes sure that Missouri is making comprehensive reforms to fight

illegal immigration. Missourians cannot afford to wait for Washington to act on the issue of illegal immigration. We are working to make sure legal residents have access to jobs and services in our state.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.senate.mo.gov/crowell>.

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