



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: June 7, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

Immigration Reform: The National Debate and Missouri

The national debate on immigration reform continues to garner attention throughout the country. It is not surprising that so many people are interested in the safety of our borders and, in turn, the safety of our country. Arizona's recently passed legislation affecting immigration has stirred up a lot of controversy, but the issue has always been one that has concerned me and my actions in the General Assembly.

Prior to 2008, in St. Charles County, we had two separate instances when illegal immigrants were found on job sites that were funded by state tax credits. Using tax dollars to employ illegal workers is unacceptable, and so we worked to pass a law that would hold those trying to get away with employing illegal immigrants accountable. That law, which I was proud to sponsor in 2008, also included several other provisions now law that protect jobs and services in our state and fight illegal immigration activity in Missouri.

Since the passage of this law, the Missouri State Highway Patrol has reported that more than 500 illegal immigrants have started the deportation process. This is thanks to a provision now on the books that gives our state highway patrol the directive to check the residency status of anyone presented for incarceration. To further empower our local law enforcement, officers received special training so they can continue to enforce illegal immigration laws, including courses to learn about the administration of deportation.

In order to protect jobs in our state, the law also calls for employers to use a computer program that checks the legal status of anyone seeking employment in our state, and it establishes penalties for employers who hire illegal aliens. If a company receives a tax credit, a check of the immigration status of the workers is required.

The Missouri law protects our state from becoming a safe haven for illegals by prohibiting municipalities from establishing sanctuary policies. It also prohibits the issuance of driver's licenses to illegal aliens, as well as penalties for driver's license fraud. Illegal immigrants are prohibited from receiving state grants or scholarships and other taxpayer benefits. All of these measures were wildly successful from the beginning and continue to be successful today.

As evident from our actions in 2008 and in the measures adopted in Arizona, immigration is a continuing problem throughout our country. In Arizona and Missouri, citizens grew tired of waiting for Washington, D.C. and took action to push for solutions. I am pleased with the impact the 2008 bill has made in our state, and I will continue to work on making Missouri a safer place to live and work for its citizens.

If you want to comment on immigration reform in Missouri or any other matter relating to state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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