

## MY VIEWS ON ILLEGAL ALIENS

The last five years have seen the largest migration of people into the United States in history (7.9 million).<sup>1</sup> I will call it what it is. . . an invasion. There are 35.2 million immigrants, both legal and illegal, living in the United States. Of this total, roughly 29% (10.3 million) are here illegally.<sup>2</sup> Between 700,000 and 800,000 illegal aliens arrive in the U.S. every year (57% are from Mexico and 24% are from Latin America).<sup>2</sup>

To begin with, I want to state that I do not hate, dislike or wish all immigrants would “go back where they came from.” If I lived in another country, I would definitely come here. I am not against anyone coming here. In fact America needs immigrants, but they must obey the law and come here legally. It is not fair to Americans or to the immigrants who have obeyed our laws to let these illegals go unpunished. Illegal immigration poses the greatest single threat to our nation’s security and economic interests. I simply cannot understand why our government, state or federal, is unwilling to stop this illegal behavior.

In Tennessee, we have an immigrant population of 264,000, up from 110,000 in 2000 (an increase of 140%...the largest increase of any state) and 39,000 in 1995. Of the 264,000 immigrants living here, between 100,000 to 150,000 are believed to be here illegally.<sup>2</sup> There is a bright side to these figures...that is we do not live in North Carolina with an estimated illegal population of 300,000, or Georgia with between 200,000 to 250,000.<sup>2</sup> California has 2.4 million illegals and Texas has 1.4 million illegals living in their state.<sup>7</sup>

The education level of most immigrants is low with 29.6% having less than a high school diploma and 25.6% having a high school diploma.<sup>2</sup> Tennessee residents do not fair much better with 53% of residents at or below the high school level.<sup>3</sup> The education levels of both immigrants and Tennesseans play a large part in the jobs illegals perform. They do not simply do menial tasks as some think, but compete in many industries such as construction, manufacturing, and other jobs where a high school diploma or less is required (see Jobs and the Illegals). It should make sense that 150,000 illegals coming into the state will drive wages down for these jobs. This will lead to people in these areas of work making less, not more money.

While I was selling automobiles, a van from Texas pulled up. Out came six illegals, none spoke English and all were covered with paint. How would you like to be the painting contractor competing with them? It is hard to believe that any legitimate business owner could overcome the unfair competition imposed by illegals. The illegals do not have to pay income or business taxes nor do they purchase business licenses. Illegals will lower everyone's wages in the areas that they work in to due over supplying cheap labor. This will either drive the legitimate businesses into bankruptcy or force them to close. I find it ironic that business owners that hire and train these workers will eventually be put out of business by them. It will actually be simple for the illegals to do. The illegals will pool their resources and buy the vehicles and equipment needed (which is happening now) and go to all the owner’s customers and offer to do the work for half price.



Some of these illegals smuggle people into our country and then force them into prostitution or slave labor (up to 18,500 per year).<sup>4</sup> Women and children comprise most of this group. Still other criminals bring drugs and weapons, or help terrorists enter the country. Illegals also commit a host of other crimes such as income tax evasion, welfare fraud, and identify theft.

Illegals cost state and local governments between 11 and 22 billion dollars per year. These costs are associated with education, medical treatment and the court system. In California illegal immigration costs the state as much as 3 billion dollars a year.<sup>5</sup> In a USA Today report, we see that the enrollment of 25 major government programs increased 17% between 2000 and 2005 even though our nation's population increased by only 5%. This was the "largest five year expansion of the federal safety net since the Great Society created programs such as Medicare and Medicaid in the 1960's." The largest expansion was Medicaid, the healthcare program for the poor. It added 15 million new beneficiaries over the last five years. In 2005, Medicaid had 53.4 million people enrolled at a cost of 198 billion dollars. Child Nutrition has 32.3 million people enrolled with a cost of 12 billion dollars. The Earned income Tax Credit has an enrollment of 21.2 million people with a cost of 35 billion dollars. Seventy-five percent of the spending increase resulted from enrollment growth. Certainly not all of this increase is due to illegal aliens, some of the programs have been expanded, but isn't it a coincidence that the largest increase in federal aid programs occurred at the same time as the U.S. had the largest increase in illegal and legal immigration.<sup>6</sup>

This can also be a good place to talk about why an income tax is so bad. An income tax would let all of these illegals, plus the rest of the underground economy; escape what taxes they now pay in sales tax.

Failure to assimilate into our culture is another problem with illegals. They do not see themselves as "Americans" nor do some value our beliefs and practices. I know a person who, while in Florida, entered a fast food restaurant and could not find any employee (even the manager) who spoke English nor was the menu in English. This is not an isolated case. The next time you are at the store, look up and you can see the contents of the aisles in both English and Spanish. Failure of the Mexican government to assimilate Texans into their culture led to the war of independence of that state. I do not believe a physical war will occur but certainly a cultural war may be occurring. What we can now see happening in some areas is the unwillingness of some immigrants to learn English and some are even demanding that Spanish become a second language. It really angers me that not only is someone here illegally but they are unwilling to even learn our language. If I moved to Germany, I would be expected to learn their language. I would not expect the German people to learn English.

Illegal aliens also bring into this country a wide array of diseases, some of which are incurable and fatal (please read Health Issues and The Illegal Alien). This is because legal immigrants must pass a health examination and illegal immigrants do not.

It is beyond belief that our government is not doing more to stop this invasion of illegals who unfairly compete with U.S. citizens for jobs, commit crimes and bring life threatening diseases into this country.



Since it is apparent that our elected leaders are either unwilling or unable to address this issue, here are some steps I would take to slow the tide of illegal immigration into Tennessee. To begin with, we must ask why are they here? The answer is to make money, receive services, and to commit crimes.

Step one is to interrupt the illegals flow of income. Since most illegals live in or near the poverty level, holding them in a low cost detention facility for three to seven days may serve to encourage them to leave due to the loss of wages (see article *Solutions to Illegal Immigration*). If they still will not leave, detaining them for longer periods of time will cause further monetary hardships. Deportation is the most expensive solution and should be saved for last. It is my understanding that the federal government will pick up and deport illegals when they have 250 or more in one location. Without a place to hold illegals, any threat of deportation will not be taken seriously. By dealing with illegals at the state level, we will alleviate jail overcrowding for local Sheriffs and police departments. With the estimated 150,000 illegals now in Tennessee and that number expected to more than double every five years, we have to show illegals that we are serious.

Step two is to revoke all driver certificates, licenses and state identification cards obtained without proof of legal residency or proper immigration papers. Illegals are coming from all over the country for driver certificates. This is because these certificates can be used to open bank accounts and rent places to live. Seizure of vehicles driven by illegals that do not have a driver's license or insurance will also encourage them to leave. Before seizure, the illegal can be informed of the law and told that if caught again their vehicle will be seized (this is to encourage them to leave on their own).

Step three is to stop the demand for workers. Employers who hire illegals will be fined, and their business licenses suspended or revoked. This will occur only after repeated attempts to get the employer to comply have failed. A phone line can be set up to verify social security numbers of potential employees. Employers can be trained by the State in how to determine whether a potential employee is illegal (not speaking English would be the first indication). By making it harder to obtain employment the illegals will migrate to other states that are more receptive to them. If every state took this problem seriously we could pool our resources to combat it more effectively.

I believe the reason that these countries encourage it's citizens to migrate to the U.S. is two fold. First by getting young unmarried males to leave, it decreases the risk of civil unrest (which some countries are now having problems with). It also reduces the costs associated with this demographic group, which are typically poor and uneducated. Secondly, the amount of money sent back to relatives (30 billion dollars) is a prime motivation for these countries to not stop illegal immigration. This represents the largest form of direct foreign investment in the area.<sup>7</sup> If these countries allowed a free market to exist there would be enough jobs for their own people.

At the projected levels of growth for the Mexican population (presently 10.6 million), by 2050 this group will have 22 million immigrants living in the U.S. This is the equivalent of one in seven or 15% of those born in Mexico living here. When you add the children born in the U.S. to these projections, the population grows to 39 million or 30% of the people born in Mexico living in the



United States.<sup>8</sup>

For more information please go to these websites: The Heritage Foundation, Pew Hispanic Center, Eagle Forum, Center for Immigration Studies and the U.S. Department of State

#### REFERENCES:

<sup>1</sup>Center for Immigration Studies, *Immigrants at Mid-Decade: A Snapshot of America's Foreign-Born Population in 2005*, by Steven A. Camarota. Background, Dec 2005, p. 1, 7.

<sup>2</sup>Pew Hispanic Center. *Estimates of the Size and Characteristics of the Undocumented Population*, by Jeffrey S. Passell. Report, March 2005; p. 6, 10, 21.

<sup>3</sup>Office of Education Accountability, *Teaching Tennessee Adults*, by Alisa Palmisano and Kim Potts, Nashville, TN March 2004, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. department of State, fact sheet, Jan1,2005

<sup>5</sup>Center for Immigration Studies, *Costs*, p. 1

<sup>6</sup>*Federal Aid Programs Expand At Record Rate*, by Dennis Cauchon; USA Today; March 14, 2006.

<sup>7</sup>*Alternatives to Amnesty: Proposals For Fair and Effective Immigration Reform*, by Edwin Meese, James Carafano, Matthew Spalding, Paul Rosenzweig; p. 2.

<sup>8</sup>Pew Hispanic Center, *Unauthorized Migrants: Numbers and Characteristics*, by Jeffrey S. Passell, p. 40.

