

Oregonians for Immigration Reform
PO Box 1438, McMinnville OR 97128; Telephone: 503-435-0141
Internet: <http://www.oregonir.org> Email: o4ir@excite.com

OFIR Newsletter, December 2008

Notice: If you have email and are not receiving OFIR emails, please send your email address to OFIR.

A Message from OFIR President Jim Ludwick

OFIR members and supporters:

Please fill out and return the enclosed 2009 membership dues envelope.

The year 2009 likely will be an action-filled year at both the national and state level. Before we discuss 2009 let me give you a brief recap of the year 2008.

The year 2008 was a mixed bag in regard to our efforts to end illegal immigration.

On the positive side, immigration reform achieved a major milestone when the Oregon legislature passed Senate Bill 1080, the driver license bill. When Governor Kulongoski issued his executive order requiring proof of citizenship or legal status in order to receive an Oregon driver license, it forced the legislature to do the right thing. OFIR had worked for eight years to pass stricter driver license standards.

On the first day of the governor's executive order, February 4, 2008, the number of **DMV Internal Fraud Alerts were cut by 90%**, and that's been sustained ever since. **Internal Fraud reports** occur when a person is denied a driver license at one DMV office, then attempts to acquire a license at another office. **There is no question that under the new driver license rules illegal aliens are no longer flocking to Oregon to get driver licenses.**

OFIR also was successful in opposing any new attempt to pass a bill that would have given illegal aliens in-state tuition rates. It was the third legislative session in a row in which we successfully fought such a bill.

On the negative side OFIR was unsuccessful in getting our initiative "*The Respect for Law Act*" on the 2008 ballot. It wasn't because of lack of effort. Trying to collect 120,000 initiative signatures as a grass roots organization is a daunting task. The new initiative rules are stacked against regular citizens petitioning their own state government.

Measure 58, the English Immersion initiative, was defeated this November by a 54% to 46% margin. This was a major setback for Oregon public school children. Present ESL/ELL/bilingual education is largely a failure. Our opponents spent over \$14 million in opposition to requiring English immersion after 2 years. The OEA ought to be ashamed of itself.

The year 2009 is going to another interesting year.

In Oregon, 22 out of the 33 candidates that OFIR endorsed for election for the Oregon Legislature won. We are going to ask that the 2009 Oregon Legislature pass an E-Verify bill that would protect American workers.

In the U.S. Congress, OFIR has joined with national and state organizations in successfully fighting against amnesty proposals in Congress. Unfortunately it is likely that another attempt will be tried in 2009. OFIR will join with national and state organizations in fighting any amnesty proposal. OFIR will continue to provide information to members about any federal immigration legislation.

IF THERE IS ANOTHER AMNESTY ATTEMPT WE WILL NEED A CONCERTED EFFORT BY EVERYONE.

With unemployment at its highest levels in 21 years, it would seem to be insanity that anyone would propose that we would encourage more illegal alien workers to compete for jobs against American citizens. Oregon unemployment spiked to 7.3 last month. The numbers of unemployed Oregonians are skyrocketing in virtually every employment sector.

American workers should not have to compete for jobs against illegal aliens. We need the reauthorization of E-Verify in Congress and in addition a law in Oregon requiring that all companies sign up for E-Verify.

Please fill out your 2009 membership envelope and return it to OFIR.

Jim Ludwick

Working for True Immigration Reform

At the OFIR meeting on Nov. 15, OFIR Board Member Lyneil Vandermolen gave a very informative talk on tactics for advancing our cause. Here is her summary of the talk.

By Lyneil Vandermolen

At the meeting on Saturday I mentioned a few strategies we can use at both the state and federal level. Obama's immigration plan is no different from McCain's. However, the shift of power from Republicans to Democrats over the last two years gives immigration reformers two new opportunities.

First, we can hammer the misguided Republican hierarchy for appearing to be the party of amnesty. Senator McCain has long advocated for amnesty and he lost much of the Republican base in doing so. **Second**, we can ask Democrats how they will protect American jobs now that they are responsible for the economy. With unemployment skyrocketing it would be unconscionable for the government to increase the number of foreign workers to compete against American workers.

One hopeful sign is that Obama has expressed interest in extending the E-verify Program. We must pressure him to follow through. Until recently, both parties tended to accommodate the demands of big business and big government interests at the expense of average Americans. But with rising unemployment, we must force both to compete with each other for the protection of American workers.

My next point was the federal government's role in both the mortgage meltdown and our illegal alien crisis. For instance, the FDIC has created a program to help "unbanked Latinos" for the benefit of the banking industry. The FDIC has exploited the illegal alien crisis by creating the New Alliance Task Force, a coalition of FDIC representatives, Mexican Consulates, community organizations, social service agencies, secondary markets (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) and private companies. The program helped 5 million illegal aliens get mortgages with only an ITIN number, according to HUD. As the effects of government complicity are reverberating through our economy, I believe we can effectively lobby for Oregon citizens in many small steps.

Lyneil Vandermolen

Statement on E-Verify by Senator-Elect Jeff Merkley

During the Senatorial campaign, OFIR Board Member Vern Cook, a Democrat, contacted Jeff Merkley requesting Merkley's position on E-Verify. Cook received this statement back by fax:

SENATOR MERKLEY'S STATEMENT ON HIS POSITION ON E-VERIFY.

"It is abundantly clear that we need a stronger system to verify the immigration status of employees. Too often, employers are able to turn a blind eye to blatant violations of immigration law using the excuse that it's just too hard to get accurate information. We need to take this excuse away from employers even as we step up enforcement. Right now, you are more likely to be eaten by an alligator than an employer is to be fined for immigration violations. That's wrong.

"The E-verify system still has a few glitches that need to be worked out – including errors in the database and questions of the staffing levels needed to successfully implement the program. However, the goal of the program is a good one – to find a simple and easy-to-use tool for employers to check the status of applicants. As the government phases in mandatory use of E-verify for government contractors like Smith Frozen Foods, I am hopeful we can solve some of the outstanding problems with the system."

Now that Merkley has been elected to the U.S. Senate, we need to remind him of this pledge and urge him to follow through. Merkley was quoted by a reporter as saying, "E-Verify originally had some flaws but now those flaws have been corrected."

The new, 111th Congress convenes January 6, 2009. Meanwhile you can contact Merkley at his office in the Oregon Legislature where he has been Speaker of the House: 503-261-7826 or **by**

email: rep.jeffmerkley@state.or.us. Merkley's telephone number in Washington DC beginning Jan. 6 will be: 202-224-3753; fax number will be: 202-228-3997.

Oregon's Congressional Delegation

U.S. Senators serve 6-year terms. Sen. Ron Wyden's term will expire in 2010 and he will be up for reelection then if he chooses to run again. In the U.S. House of Representatives, where terms of office are for 2 years only, the Oregon Congressional delegation is mostly unchanged from the previous one. Incumbent Representatives David Wu, Greg Walden, Earl Blumenauer, Peter DeFazio were all reelected

In the 5th Congressional district, Kurt Schrader (D) won over Mike Erickson (R) to fill the seat vacated by Darlene Hooley. As an Oregon Senator, Kurt Schrader voted in favor of the very successful new Oregon driver license bill. Beginning Jan. 6, 2009, Rep. Schrader's Washington DC telephone number will be: 202-225-5711; fax number: 202-225-5699. Until then, he can be reached through his office at the Oregon State Legislature, where he has been serving as a State Senator: 503-986-1720.

You can reach the Washington DC office of any U.S. Senator or Representative by calling this toll-free number: 866-220-0044. This number connects to the Capitol switchboard; then you must ask for the legislator by name. If you don't know who your U.S. Representative is, call OFIR at 503-435-0141, or visit: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/>

Join OFIR. You can make a difference!

Oregonians for Immigration Reform was organized in 2000 with the goals of ending illegal immigration and reducing legal immigration levels to environmentally and socially sustainable numbers. It is a 501(c)(4) organization under IRS rules; dues and contributions to OFIR are not tax-deductible. All officers and Board members serve as volunteers; there is no paid staff. All activities of OFIR depend on the cooperation and support of members.

Checks for annual dues can be written to OFIR, or to Oregonians for Immigration Reform. The scale of dues is listed inside the enclosed dues remittance envelope.

An annual financial report for OFIR is filed with the Oregon Dept. of Justice, Charitable Activities Section, and can be seen online.

OFIR also has a Political Action Committee. Contributions to the OFIR PAC are eligible for the political tax credit on Oregon state (not federal) income tax returns, up to \$50 per year for an individual, and \$100 for a couple filing jointly. Checks for the OFIR PAC must be written to OFIR PAC.

!!!!!!Please fill out and return the enclosed 2009 OFIR membership dues envelope!!!!!!

!!!!!!Together, we can win the battle for a sensible immigration policy in this country!!!!

