

Oregonians for Immigration Reform
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OFIR Newsletter, March 2008

Notice: If you have email and are not on the OFIR email list, please send your email address to OFIR.

OFIR members and supporters:

The OFIR Board of Directors thank you for your support this past year. We encourage you to renew your membership for 2008.

The year 2007 and the first two months of 2008 have been extraordinary times on the issue of immigration.

In 2007 members of Oregonians for Immigration Reform joined with millions of American citizens in flooding the United States Senate with phone calls, e-mails, faxes and personal appearances in protest of the Kennedy / McCain amnesty bill. We, America, won when the bill was defeated. OFIR will be vigilant in monitoring Congress and state government to alert everyone if any other such onerous bills are in the offing. We will continue to work with other state and national organizations who are trying to end illegal immigration.

On January 1, 2008, OFIR started the process of collecting signatures on the Respect for Law Act. We have until the end of June to turn in 83,000 valid signatures. That means we should collect at least 100,000 signatures. Thank you to all who are collecting signatures. Please continue to do so.

One of the three components of the Respect for Law Act is the requirement that anyone receiving an Oregon driver license prove that they are legally present in the United States and ending the policy of granting 8-year driver licenses to people here on 6-month visas. On Friday, February 15, 2008, Governor Kulongoski signed Senate Bill 1080 into law. SB 1080 is almost a carbon copy of the driver license portion of the Respect for Law Act. OFIR has worked for 8 years trying to enact such a law.

There are 2 other key elements in the Respect for Law Act.

- The requirement that anyone registering to vote in Oregon for the first time, prove that they are citizens. Currently no proof is required to prove citizenship.
- Passage of the Respect for Law Act would also allow local police to work directly with federal immigration authorities if they so chose. Currently some local police will not cooperate with federal immigration authorities claiming that to do so would violate ORS 181.850. The Respect for Law Act would supersede that State Statute and allow local police to work with federal authorities directly.

Once again thank you for your support. Please consider renewing your membership in Oregonians for Immigration Reform.

Jim Ludwick, OFIR President

OFIR Officers and Board Members -- President, Jim Ludwick; Vice President, Richard (Rick) Hickey; Treasurer, Roy Duncan; Secretary, Linda Ciavara. Board Members: Vern Cook, Jim Elvin, Lee Vasché, Lyneil Vandermolen, Ken Evans, Clark Seeley, Beverly Brady. Webmaster, Frank Brehm; newsletter editor, Elizabeth Van Staaveren.

The officers of OFIR have given an enormous amount of time and energy over several years working to end illegal immigration. Fortunately, in 2007 our membership expanded sharply; we now have significant help from a number of new and older members who are gathering signatures for the Initiative, while spreading knowledge of immigration issues and how to deal with them.

National Elections Coming Up – All three likely Republican and Democratic Party Presidential candidates, John McCain, Barack Obama, and Hillary Clinton, have extremely low ratings by Americans for Better Immigration, based on the candidates' voting histories in Congress. Our country apparently will be faced with a continuation of Pres. George Bush's policies, or worse, in the next Administration. However, 2007 showed that an organized, motivated public can prevent bad bills from being passed in Congress, and enact some good bills. Importantly, too, the public can make changes at the State and local level that discourage illegal immigration.

To paraphrase Michelle Malkin, instead of bemoaning presidential candidates, walk the walk for those Congressional, State and local candidates and office holders who are promoting immigration controls; support their re-election bids. Pressure mayors and police chiefs and city councils to rescind dangerous sanctuary policies. Stop patronizing businesses that you know are knowingly employing illegal immigrants. "Get involved. ... Get fired up."

And here in Oregon – full steam ahead with the Respect for Law Initiative!

Backroom Negotiations in the U.S. House of Representatives – FAIR and NumbersUSA are alerting activists about a new amnesty plan led by Rep. Joe Baca (D-CA), Speaker Nancy Pelosi and others. Please call your Representatives NOW, FAIR urges, insist that instead of working on comprehensive immigration reform 'lite' Congress should get serious about enforcement legislation. "Tell them you oppose all forms of amnesty and oppose allowing big business to import even more cheap foreign workers so they can increase their profits at the expense of U.S. workers and wages!!!" Call toll-free at 866-220-0044 or 866-340-9281.

Update on the SAVE Act – The SAVE Act (Secure America Through Verification and Enforcement Act of 2007) focuses on reducing illegal immigration instead of rewarding it. This bipartisan bill would require all employers to use the electronic verification system called E-Verify to keep illegal aliens out of U.S. jobs. The SAVE Act (H.R. 4088 in the House and S.2366/S.2368 in the Senate) now has 144 sponsors, NONE of whom is from the Oregon. We need to prod our Oregon Representatives and Senators to get on board! The toll-free numbers again are: 866-220-0044 and 866-340-9281.

Attrition Through Enforcement – The E-Verify system called for by the SAVE Act is already required in the state of Arizona, through a state law passed last year. Here is a recent article explaining the critical importance of E-Verify in reducing illegal immigration.

The Immigration Answer, by Kris W. Kobach

In The New York Post, Feb. 13, 2008

On Jan. 1, Arizona became the first state to require all employers to confirm workers' legal status via the federal "E-Verify" system. Having survived a federal court challenge last Thursday, the law promises to transform the immigration crisis in America.

After just six weeks, Arizona's system is already working: Newspapers in the state report that illegals are self-deporting by the thousands. Apartment complexes in Phoenix and Tucson confirm that thousands of tenants have skipped town. Many are returning across the border to Mexico.

This success is proof that attrition through enforcement works. The premise is straightforward: The way to solve our illegal-immigration problem is to ratchet up enforcement while making it more difficult for employers to hire illegals.

Illegal aliens are rational people. If their chance of being able to work illegally goes down, while the chance of getting detained goes up, at some point the only sensible thing to do is go home.

E-Verify is free and easy to use. The employer simply types in the employee's name, date of birth and Social Security number (or other work-authorization number). He gets an answer back from the government in seconds.

More than 20,000 businesses nationwide were using E-Verify voluntarily before Jan. 1. Now Arizona's 145,000 businesses are obliged to join their ranks.

Illegals know that E-Verify makes it impossible for them to fabricate Social Security numbers and use fake IDs to obtain jobs. And when the jobs dry up, they leave.

But Arizona isn't the only compelling proof that attrition through enforcement works. We have another case study: the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System.

The US Justice Department implemented the program back in 2002-03, in the wake of 9/11. It required all aliens from al Qaeda-associated countries to report to INS offices to provide fingerprints and register. The non-compliant faced stiff penalties.

Of the nations concerned, Pakistan had the largest number of nationals in the US. NSEERS led directly to the deportation of some 1,500 illegal-alien Pakistanis - and also prompted about 15,000 illegals to self-deport.

All this debunks the common claim that America has only two choices - either round up all illegals and send them home; or unjustly grant amnesty to millions of lawbreakers (thereby virtually begging millions more to break the law in the future).

We now know that there's a third option - attrition through enforcement: Give illegals little choice but to self-deport.

This strategy demands no government sweeps or snooping; we need only require employers nationwide to use E-Verify and increase the enforcement of current laws.

Again, Arizona is a case in point. Illegals began pouring out of the state on Jan. 1 - even though no county attorney there will take any enforcement action until after March 1. No government official has yet lifted a finger - a credible threat of enforcement is all it took.

Attrition by enforcement has never been tried at the national level. Instead, the strategy for the last decade has been "triage": Deport or incarcerate alien criminals, and shut down smugglers - but rarely enforce the law against garden-variety illegals.

That approach, combined with the fact that America has only a few thousand immigration-enforcement agents to cover our nation's entire vast interior, means that most illegals know their chances of being able to work are very high.

Attrition through enforcement would change the behavior of millions of illegal aliens. Even under today's relatively lax enforcement, nearly 200,000 illegals are estimated to exit each year - while more than a million enter. Attrition through enforcement could reverse those numbers.

To have any hope of reducing the number of illegals in this country, our next president must aim for attrition via enforcement. By requiring every US employer in the country to use E-Verify, and significantly ratcheting up enforcement (against all illegals), it is possible solve America's illegal-immigration problem.

Kris W. Kobach teaches law at the University of Missouri (Kansas City). In 2001-03, he served as counsel to the US attorney general and was the architect of the NSEERS program. He is also a member of the legal team that defended Arizona's new law in court.

OFIR'S Most Important Contribution Now – Encouraged by passage of the new Oregon driver license bill, by the successes in Arizona, and the attention immigration control is getting in many other states, we have an ideal opportunity to make further advances in our state through passage of the Respect for Law initiative. We can rightfully take major credit for the drivers license bill enacted in Oregon on Feb. 15. Let's work steadily now to qualify our Initiative for the November ballot, and pass it also. Proof of citizenship for voting and the ability of local law enforcement to cooperate with ICE are much needed. We can make these things happen!

Please use the enclosed remittance envelope to send in your annual OFIR dues for calendar year 2008. Regular dues are \$25 per year, or \$15 for those on restricted income. Larger amounts are welcome.

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