



Board of Supervisors County of Los Angeles

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MAYOR

**Testimony by
Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich
before the House Judiciary Committee
August 2, 2006
San Diego, California**

Immigration Hearing

**IN DISCUSSING IMMIGRATION, ONE MUST FIRST
DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LEGAL AND ILLEGAL
IMMIGRATION.**

LEGAL IMMIGRATION STRENGTHENS OUR NATION.

**HOWEVER, ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS AN AFFRONT TO
THOSE WHO *LEGALLY* IMMIGRATE.**

**IT TEARS AT THE MORAL AND ECONOMIC FABRIC OF OUR
SOCIETY. IT SHOULD NOT BE REWARDED.**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY HAS A LARGER POPULATION THAN 42 STATES--10.2 MILLION.

HOWEVER, IT IS ALSO HOME TO ALMOST 12% OF THE COUNTRY'S ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT POPULATION -- THE MOST OF ANY COUNTY IN THE NATION.

UNLIKE THE EAST COAST WHERE THE CITIES RUN MOST OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS, LOS ANGELES COUNTY HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FELONY PROSECUTIONS AND ALL SOCIAL AND WELFARE SERVICES.

OUR 88 CITIES ARE MORE SIMILAR TO NEW YORK CITY'S BURROUGHS.

AS WE HAVE EXPERIENCED SINCE THE PASSAGE OF THE SIMPSON-MAZZOLI LEGISLATION IN 1986, AMNESTY ONLY PROVIDED INCENTIVES FOR CONTINUED ILLEGAL ENTRY INTO OUR COUNTRY.

WE MUST NOT REPEAT THE MISTAKES OF THE PAST. WE NEED TO TIGHTEN THE BORDERS, INCREASE ENFORCEMENT, PROSECUTION, AND END INEFFECTIVE

**STRATEGIES INCLUDING THE “CATCH AND RELEASE”
PROGRAM FOR DETAINED ILLEGALS.**

**THE FISCAL DRAIN ON THE TAXPAYERS BY THOSE WHO
ARE HERE ILLEGALLY CATASTROPHIC.**

**IN PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTHCARE, SOCIAL SERVICES AND
EDUCATION, ILLEGALS COST LOS ANGELES COUNTY
TAXPAYERS NEARLY \$1 BILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR.**

**TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF INMATES IN OUR COUNTY JAIL
SYSTEM ARE ILLEGALS.**

**THE COST TO OUR COUNTY’S JUSTICE SYSTEM IS \$150
MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR WHICH INCLUDES
INCARCERATION, PROSECUTION, DEFENSE AND
PROBATION.**

**OUR HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM HAS BECOME THE
HMO FOR THE WORLD.**

**WITHIN OUR HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM,
APPROXIMATELY 30 PERCENT ARE ILLEGALS WHO ARE
BEING TREATED ANNUALLY AT A COST OF ROUGHLY \$360**

MILLION DOLLARS.

**THIS INCLUDES INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT SERVICES
AS WELL AS MENTAL HEALTHCARE.**

**OUR COUNTY'S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
ESTIMATES THAT NEARLY 26% OF THE AMBULATORY
CARE VISITS WERE MADE BY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.**

**WE ARE ONE OF THE FEW COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD
WHERE CHILDREN OF ILLEGAL ALIENS BECOME LEGAL
CITIZENS IF BORN HERE.**

**AS A RESULT, EVERY CHILD BORN TO AN ILLEGAL ALIEN
IS ENTITLED TO A VARIETY OF SOCIAL SERVICES,
INCLUDING WELFARE, UNTIL THEY ARE 18 YEARS OF
AGE.**

**THIS COSTS LOS ANGELES COUNTY NEARLY \$276 MILLION
DOLLARS ANNUALLY IN CAL WORKS PAYMENTS
(FORMERLY CALLED AID TO FAMILIES OF DEPENDENT
CHILDREN.) THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE COSTS OF
FOOD STAMPS AND CHILD CARE SERVICES.**

NEARLY 100,000 CHILDREN OF 60,000 UNDOCUMENTED PARENTS RECEIVED AID IN JANUARY 2006 – FOR A TOTAL OF 160,000 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR U.S. BORN CHILDREN RECEIVING GOVERNMENT AID.

IF THEY WERE INCORPORATED INTO A CITY, IT WOULD BE THE 5TH LARGEST CITY IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY.

WE HAVE A MELTDOWN IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS OF ALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE COUNTRY – NEARLY HALF OF ALL STUDENTS DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH.

JUST 44 PERCENT OF LOS ANGELES UNIFIED STUDENTS RECEIVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, MAKING THE 727,000-STUDENT DISTRICT'S GRADUATION RATE AMONG THE LOWEST IN THE COUNTRY.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CAUSES AMERICAN CITIZENS AND LEGAL IMMIGRANTS TO PAY MORE FOR JAILS, HOSPITALS AND CLASSROOMS.

WE HAVE MADE SOME REFORMS. ONE OF THE PROGRAMS I INITIATED WITH MY LONGTIME CHIEF OF STAFF, THE LATE DR. TOM SILVER, TOOK US ABOUT EIGHT YEARS TO GET ADOPTED.

THE HIGH INTENSITY CRIMINAL ALIEN APPREHENSION AND PROSECUTION PROGRAM (HI-CAAP) IS A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY PREVIOUSLY DEPORTED CRIMINAL ILLEGAL ALIENS USING FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION.

ANOTHER PROGRAM WHICH TOOK US ABOUT FIVE YEARS TO IMPLEMENT, IS A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE SHERIFF OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT.

THIS M.O.U. WAS ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN JANUARY OF 2005 AND ALLOWS TRAINED AND CERTIFIED SHERIFF'S PERSONNEL TO IDENTIFY CRIMINAL ILLEGAL ALIENS IN THE JAIL THROUGH AN INTERVIEW PROCESS.

WITH THE HELP OF THESE SHERIFF'S PERSONNEL, FEWER CRIMINAL ILLEGALS ARE RELEASED BACK INTO OUR

COMMUNITIES.

IN FACT, THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE OF OVER 40% IN THE NUMBER OF I.C.E. HOLDS OVER THE SAME PERIOD OF TIME LAST YEAR.

THIS PILOT PROGRAM NEEDS TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

WE ALSO NEED TO INCREASE FUNDING FOR MORE PROSECUTIONS BY THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THOSE WHO VIOLATE FEDERAL IMMIGRATION LAWS.

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IN LOS ANGELES HAS LOST MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS. THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF OVER TWO DOZEN PROSECUTORS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALSO NEEDS TO FULLY FUND THE S.C.A.A.P. PROGRAM IN ORDER TO RECOGNIZE THE SEVERITY OF THE IMPACT OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ON ONE OF THE HARDEST HIT COUNTIES IN THE COUNTRY.

I WOULD RECOMMEND:

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICAL CENTERS ALONG THE MEXICAN SIDE OF THE AMERICAN/MEXICAN BORDER STATES.

JUST AS WE HAVE COUNTY HOSPITALS TEACHING STUDENTS TO BECOME QUALIFIED PHYSICIANS AND NURSING PROFESSIONALS, THESE TYPES OF FACILITIES ON THE MEXICAN SIDE OF OUR BORDER STATES WOULD AFFORD MEXICAN MEDICAL STUDENTS SIMILAR OPPORTUNITIES.

IT MAKES SENSE AND WOULD BE CHEAPER TO PROVIDE MEDICAL SERVICE THAN TO HAVE INCENTIVES FOR PEOPLE TO COME HERE ILLEGALLY. THAT'S A GOOD INVESTMENT IN FOREIGN AID.

A BONDED GUEST WORKER PROGRAM WOULD ALLOW AN IMMIGRANT TO WORK HERE TEMPORARILY WHILE BONDED FOR ANY MEDICAL CARE THEY MAY NEED WHILE IN THE UNITED STATES.

THIS GUEST WORKER PROGRAM WOULD PERMIT

FOREIGN WORKERS TO REGISTER IN THEIR COUNTRY FOR TEMPORARY JOBS IN THE UNITED STATES.

THIS PROVIDES THE WORKER LEGITIMACY, SECURITY AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK IN AMERICA WHILE SPARING TAXPAYERS THE BURDEN OF FINANCING THEIR HEALTH CARE AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER INITIATED SUCH A PROGRAM. IT PERMITTED UP TO 400,000 MEXICANS A YEAR TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES FOR VARIOUS AGRICULTURE JOBS THAT LASTED FROM 12 TO 52 WEEKS.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINED RESERVE COMPONENT -- SIMILAR TO RESERVE UNITS UTILIZED BY THOUSANDS OF POLICE AND SHERIFF DEPARTMENTS ACROSS THE NATION -- IS A PROVEN COST-EFFECTIVE PROGRAM TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BORDER PATROL OFFICERS.

ESTABLISHING A HOTLINE FOR EMPLOYERS TO QUICKLY VERIFY THE LEGITIMACY OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR ENFORCEMENT.

ALONG WITH THESE RECOMMENDATIONS, THE UNITED STATES NEEDS TO ENCOURAGE MEXICO TO PRIVATIZE THEIR STATE-RUN OIL COMPANY.

JUST AS ENGLAND, CHINA, THE EASTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC HAVE PRIVATIZED MANY INDUSTRIES, A MARKET- BASED ECONOMY WILL HELP MEXICO TO IMPROVE JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND REDUCE UNITED STATES RELIANCE ON OIL FROM THE MIDDLE EAST.

IT WILL ALSO GROW THE MEXICAN MIDDLE CLASS AND REDUCE THE EXODUS OF MEXICANS IMMIGRATING TO AMERICA FOR JOBS AND OPPORTUNITY.