



Bush Renews Call for Guest Worker Amnesty in State of the Union Address

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush issued an old appeal to a new audience. The old appeal was for his plan to turn tens of millions of illegal aliens into “guest workers,” create a “pathway to citizenship,” and allow millions more additional foreign workers to flood U.S. labor markets.

See Page 3

FAIR Teaming with Leading Radio Talk Show Hosts for 2007 Hold Their Feet to the Fire Campaign

There’s an old expression that if you want to get politicians to see the light, make them feel the heat. That’s just what FAIR and dozens of radio talk show hosts from across the country are planning for April. Spearheaded by FAIR and popular San Diego talk show host Roger Hedgecock, advocates of true comprehensive immigration reform are gearing up for the 2007 version of Hold Their Feet to the Fire during the week of April 23.

See Page 5

Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rangel Calls Guest Worker Plan “The Closest Thing I’ve Ever Seen to Slavery”

For President Bush, the crown jewel of his version of immigration reform is the enactment of a virtually open-ended guest worker program. Without inclusion of the guest worker provision, it is doubtful that the president or the business lobby would sign-off on any legislation that emerges from Congress. For many congressional Democrats and organized labor, a key Democratic constituency, the guest worker provision represents a poison pill.

See Page 6

Seven Important Questions About the Guest Worker Amnesty Program

President Bush’s immigration proposal, which appears to have the support of many in the Democratic congressional leadership (although there is by no means a consensus within the Democratic Party), sets out some broad policy objectives, but seems to be a little sketchy on details.

See Page 7

FAIR Intervenes in Farmers Branch Effort to Resist Illegal Immigration

An ordinance enacted by the city of Farmers Branch, Texas, barring local landlords from renting to people in the U.S. illegally has met with the predictable legal challenges from advocacy groups like the ACLU and MALDEF on behalf of illegal aliens. As part of FAIR's national effort to assist local governments that enact measures aimed at discouraging illegal aliens from settling within their jurisdictions, FAIR has become a party to the legal battle over the Farmers Branch ordinances.

See Page 9

Around the Country

See Page 10

President Wants Half a Fence, Democrats Want No Fence, The American People Get Lied To

In 2006 Congress passed a law to build 700 miles of security fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border. President Bush signed the bill, in essence, giving his word that the fence would get built. That was 2006. This is 2007, and apparently memories and commitments have a short shelf-life.

See Page 11

California Freeze Illustrates the High Cost of Cheap Foreign Labor

The overwhelming majority of California's fruit and vegetable crops are harvested by low wage illegal aliens or agricultural guest workers. Without those workers, the argument goes, we'd all be paying much higher prices for produce at the supermarket checkout stand. Enter Mother Nature.

See Page 12

From the Hill—Need Credit? No Visa? No Problem. by Rep. Marsha Blackburn

The national debate over illegal immigration and our continued failure to properly secure our borders is not going away. As a matter of fact, recent developments in the nation's financial sector have moved this issue to the front pages of our newspapers.

See Page 13

Duncan Hunter Becomes the Second Vocal Immigration Reform Advocate to Run for President

With the announcement in early January by Tom Tancredo that he was forming an exploratory committee to seek the Republican presidential nomination, it became clear that this pressing national issue would not be swept under the rug in 2008 the way it was in 2004. By the end of January it became clear that Tancredo would not be the only one bringing national attention to the immigration enforcement issue. California Congressman Duncan Hunter joined an expanding field of candidates seeking the GOP presidential nomination.

See Page 14

Senate Includes Penalty for Hiring Illegal Aliens in Minimum Wage Bill

Increasing the federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour may be the first important piece of legislation passed by the new Congress. Thanks to Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), it could also include a meaningful deterrent to hiring illegal aliens. An amendment to the bill offered by Sen. Sessions would bar companies convicted of employing illegal aliens from receiving government contracts for up to ten years.

See Page 15

Reformer Corner—FAIR's New Western Region Representative, Joe Turner

Although I had been passionately interested in the subject of illegal immigration since 1994, it wasn't until a few high profile raids in Southern California and pointed criticism of the complacent political establishment by the Los Angeles-based "John & Ken Show" talk radio program during the summer of 2004, that I decided to become an activist and founded Save Our State, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

See Page 16

Key Players in Immigration Policy in the 110th Congress

Committee assignments and chairmanships in the new Congress have been allocated for the 110th Congress which convened in January. Below are the key players in both houses who will help determine the direction of U.S. immigration policy over the next two years.

See Page 17

Louisiana Official Goes to Mexico City to Thank Them for Illegal Alien Workers

A year and a half after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of thousands of Louisianans remain scattered across the country, unable to return to their homes for lack of jobs and lack of money to rebuild their lives. So what was Louisiana State Treasurer John Kennedy doing in Mexico City in January, expressing his appreciation for workers from that country — many of them in the U.S. illegally — while countless Louisianans are pleading for the opportunity to go home and go to work?

See Page 19

Bush Renews Call for Guest Worker Amnesty in State of the Union Address

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush issued an old appeal to a new audience. The old appeal was for his plan to turn tens of millions of illegal aliens into “guest workers,” create a “pathway to citizenship,” and allow millions more additional foreign workers to flood U.S. labor markets. But for the first time in his presidency, the Congress he was addressing has Democratic majorities in both houses. Unable to convince Republican-led Congresses to go along with what most Americans perceive to be a massive illegal alien amnesty, Bush is hoping that the new Congress will view his plan more favorably.

Bush’s lobbying of the Democratic controlled Congress for his guest worker amnesty proposal did not end with his annual pilgrimage to Capitol Hill for the State of the Union. Ten days later, he turned up at the House Democrats’ annual retreat in Williamsburg, Virginia, where he made a bid for support for a number of his policy priorities. With little hope of Democratic support for his planned troop surge in Iraq, or his proposed \$2.9 trillion Fiscal 2008 budget, Bush focused on immigration as a policy area where, he told lawmakers, “I’m looking forward to working with you,” promising that, “We’re going to do big things together.”

Specifically, Bush stated that, “A great goal is a comprehensive immigration bill.” The outline of the president’s plan for “comprehensive immigration reform” was included in his January 23rd State of the Union Address and augmented by a four-page release put out by the White House in advance of the speech. The proposal includes promises of future border enforcement and a crackdown on employers who hire illegal aliens. These promises have been made repeatedly by this and previous administrations but have never been kept.

In exchange for these future promises of enforcement, the Bush plan calls for a legalization process for tens of millions of illegal aliens and their families that includes some fines and other requirements designed primarily to refute claims that it is an amnesty. The 2007 version of the Bush plan, like previous ones, includes an open-ended guest worker program that will allow American businesses nearly unfettered access to additional foreign labor.

The president, once again, justified the legalization of millions of illegal aliens by offering the argument that it is not possible to deport that many people. As FAIR and other advocates of real comprehensive immigration reform have repeatedly asserted, significant reductions in the illegal alien population can be achieved without mass deportation. While deportation should be part of any enforcement strategy, workplace enforcement, the elimination of non-emergency benefits and services, an end to birthright citizenship for children of illegal aliens, and other measures would result in many, if not most, illegal aliens leaving voluntarily.

In an interesting juxtaposition of issues, President Bush segued seamlessly from his immigration proposal that, by conservative estimates, could lead to a 20 percent increase in U.S. population over the next 20 years, to a call to “reduce gasoline usage in the United States by 20 percent in the next 10 years to cut our total imports by three-quarters of all the oil we now import from the Middle East.” How the administration plans to reduce energy consumption while promoting a significant surge in population has not been explained by the White House or any of the congressional backers of the guest worker amnesty proposal.

FAIR Teaming with Leading Radio Talk Show Hosts for 2007 Hold Their Feet to the Fire Campaign

There's an old expression that if you want to get politicians to see the light, make them feel the heat. That's just what FAIR and dozens of radio talk show hosts from across the country are planning for April. Spearheaded by FAIR and popular San Diego talk show host Roger Hedgecock, advocates of true comprehensive immigration reform are gearing up for the 2007 version of Hold Their Feet to the Fire during the week of April 23.

In 2005, FAIR and Hedgecock organized a similar event that focused on passage of the REAL ID Act. During that 2005 event, some two dozen radio talk show hosts from around the country devoted their programs to immigration policy, while several hundred of their listeners fanned out across Capitol Hill for a week of citizen lobbying. In 2007, the stakes will be even higher, as President Bush is renewing his effort for a guest worker amnesty bill with the support of some in the new Democratic congressional leadership.

Hold Their Feet to the Fire 2007 will focus on driving home to the new congressional leadership that there is strong and widespread opposition to any proposal that includes amnesty for illegal aliens (no matter what euphemism they devise for it), increases in guest workers, and expansion of government mandated immigration. Already, about 20 leading talk show personalities from top broadcast markets, have agreed to join FAIR and Hedgecock in Washington during the week of April 23. FAIR has arranged for them to broadcast back to their home markets from a hotel just steps from congressional offices on Capitol Hill.

In addition to coming to Washington themselves, the radio hosts will be inviting listeners to join them for a week of congressional visits. All 535 members of the House and Senate are slated to receive visits from constituents who will demand that their elected officials reject any legislation that includes a guest worker amnesty, and instead support a comprehensive package of immigration enforcement measures.

FAIR is also urging its members to join this national grassroots effort in Washington and to counter the expected renewed round of illegal alien marches and boycotts.

As spring approaches, the illegal alien advocacy network is planning a series of public events demanding that Congress enact amnesty and open borders policies. It is essential, given the new leadership in Congress, that the American public again drive home its opposition and its demands for enforcement. The public's overwhelming response to last year's illegal alien marches and boycotts played a critical role in derailing the McCain-Kennedy amnesty bill that passed the Senate and it will be even more crucial to stopping amnesty legislation in 2007.

Please contact FAIR at (202) 328-7004 to be part of this landmark grassroots effort to stop amnesty in 2007. Hotel space in Washington is limited, so it is important to sign up early. For those who cannot come to Washington during that week, FAIR will provide contact information so that immigration reform activists can call their representatives and be a part of this historic event from home.

We also encourage FAIR members to contact radio talk show hosts in their cities and urge them to join the national Hold Their Feet to the Fire campaign. Our opponents will be pulling out all the stops in their effort to pass an illegal alien amnesty in 2007, and we must be equally as adamant in demonstrating to the White House and Congress that such a plan is vehemently opposed by the overwhelming majority of Americans.

Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rangel Calls Guest Worker Plan “The Closest Thing I’ve Ever Seen to Slavery”

For President Bush, the crown jewel of his version of immigration reform is the enactment of a virtually open-ended guest worker program. Without inclusion of the guest worker provision, it is doubtful that the president or the business lobby would sign-off on any legislation that emerges from Congress. For many congressional Democrats and organized labor, a key Democratic constituency, the guest worker provision represents a poison pill.

Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) the powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, made his views on guest workers unequivocally clear as he made the rounds of television news programs after the State of the Union Address. “This guest worker program is the closest thing I’ve ever seen to slavery,” Rangel told Lou Dobbs on CNN. The plan would undermine American workers by placing almost complete control of the supply of labor in the hands of business, Rangel charged.

Rangel, a Democrat from Harlem and a senior member of the Congressional Black Caucus, also rejected Bush’s repeated assertions that foreign labor is needed to fill jobs that Americans supposedly won’t take. The chairman pointed out that if American workers are willing to collect garbage or repair sewers in New York City, there is little reason to believe that they would not take just about any job. Stating the obvious, Rangel observed, “You pay American workers, give them health care and a pension, believe me, we don’t need people coming in to do jobs that Americans will do if the pay was right.”

Seven Important Questions About the Guest Worker Amnesty Plan

President Bush's immigration proposal, which appears to have the support of many in the Democratic congressional leadership (although there is by no means a consensus within the Democratic Party), sets out some broad policy objectives, but seems to be a little sketchy on details. Having led the nation into some difficult situations by failing to think more than one move ahead, it would seem that President Bush and members of Congress who share his vision should be obliged to answer some basic questions BEFORE such a plan is enacted.

As citizens and constituents, we have the right to answers to these questions:

1. **How many people would receive legalization under the president's plan?**

Most estimates of the illegal alien population range in the neighborhood of 12-15 million. Others, including the Wall Street brokerage firm Bear Stearns, placed the estimate at 20 million in 2005. During the 1986 amnesty, the number of people who received legalization was significantly higher than anyone had estimated before it was passed.

2. **How would the government process this surge in applications?**

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency admits that it cannot handle its current workload. Passage of the Bush plan would inevitably result in many millions of new cases.

3. **How would massive fraud be prevented?**

All versions of the legalization program being considered would require that applicants "prove" they were present in the U.S. by a certain cut-off date. Proof would constitute easily forged pay stubs, rent receipts, utility bills and the like, including those accumulated using aliases and false IDs.

4. **How would background checks be conducted?**

President Bush and congressional supporters of his plan assure the American public that all applicants would have to go through rigorous background checks and that criminals, terrorists and others who pose a danger to the nation would not receive legal status. No one has explained how it is possible to conduct meaningful background investigations on that many people.

5. **How many additional relatives would follow?**

The plans being considered would allow newly legalized aliens to bring immediate family members who live outside the U.S. to join them in this country. Since we don't even know how many illegal aliens are here, it is hard to estimate how many relatives would follow immediately, or how many extended family members would apply to come in the future.

6. **How should local governments prepare for the influx?**

State and local authorities would be responsible for providing basic — and in some cases federally mandated — services to relatives who would be admitted as a result of enactment of a legalization plan. Yet those authorities have no way of knowing how many additional children they should expect in their schools, or patients in their emergency rooms.

7. **How would back taxes be collected?**

President Bush insists that people receiving legalization would be obligated to settle up with the IRS. How would those obligations be determined when millions of people have been working off-the-books, or using aliases and fraudulent or stolen Social Security numbers? Would legalized aliens simply declare their earnings to the government without corroboration (and if so, would the rest of us be afforded the same opportunity)? Would newly legalized aliens be eligible for refunds and programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit? If so, might we end up owing money to the former illegal aliens, rather than the other way around?

FAIR encourages American citizens to demand answers to these questions from the Bush Administration and their congressional representatives before legislation is passed. As citizens, we have the right to know what will happen after the vote in Congress and after the signing ceremony in the Rose Garden.

FAIR Intervenes in Farmers Branch Effort to Resist Illegal Immigration

An ordinance enacted by the city of Farmers Branch, Texas, barring local landlords from renting to people in the U.S. illegally has met with the predictable legal challenges from advocacy groups like the ACLU and MALDEF on behalf of illegal aliens.

As part of FAIR's national effort to assist local governments that enact measures aimed at discouraging illegal aliens from settling within their jurisdictions, FAIR has become a party to the legal battle over the Farmers Branch ordinances.

Representing FAIR and its 1,200 members in Dallas County (which includes Farmers Branch) the Immigration Reform Law Institute (IRLI, www.iri.org) filed a petition of intervention in January. The petition filed by IRLI claims that "by filing this meritless lawsuit," the groups representing illegal aliens have "obstructed the start of a program of relief desperately needed by the citizens of Farmers Branch, which includes members of FAIR."

IRLI has been instrumental in helping many local governments around the country craft local ordinances in a way that does not conflict with federal jurisdiction over immigration policy. As the leading public interest law group in the area of immigration law, IRLI is in a unique position to defend ordinances, such as the one adopted by Farmers Branch, in the courts. In addition to representing the interests of FAIR members in Farmers Branch and surrounding areas, FAIR and IRLI see this case as a precedent-setting one that could clear the way for other local governments to protect legal residents against an influx of illegal immigrants.

Around the Country

Iowa

The 2008 presidential campaign has already begun and Iowa, once again, will lead off the nomination process with the first party caucuses. Illegal immigration has been a growing problem in the state for many years, and the candidates are certain to get an earful from voters as they go knocking on doors seeking support. The eastern Iowa town of Marion has joined the growing list of communities all across the country that are taking local action to curb illegal immigration. In January, Mayor John Nieland announced that Marion would adopt local measures to punish local businesses that employ illegal aliens and, in the mayor's words, "put our workers out of jobs."

Utah

A bill before the Utah legislature would add the state to the list of those whose police are trained to identify and detain suspected illegal aliens (known as 287(g) training). By a 6 to 3 vote in January, a state House committee approved a bill that would seek federal training for Utah state police. The bill, introduced by State Representative Glenn Donnelson, will go before the full House for approval. This and other legislation aimed at immigration enforcement in Utah are the result of a robust and growing immigration reform network in the state. Groups like Utahns for Immigration Reform and Enforcement, www.ufire.net, that have worked with FAIR on state and national immigration reform efforts, have been instrumental in advancing positive legislation in the state.

New Jersey

In January, FAIR published the latest in its state impact reports, *The Costs of Illegal Immigration to New Jerseyites*. The report found that just three state-funded programs used by illegal aliens in the Garden State cost taxpayers \$2.1 billion a year. Apparently, the majority of people in New Jersey already knew that illegal immigration was hitting them in the wallet. A poll conducted by the Bergen Record in January found that state residents favor tough enforcement of immigration laws. Fifty-eight percent of respondents in New Jersey said they approved of tightening the borders and cracking down on illegal aliens living in the U.S., up from 51 percent in a poll conducted in 2005. Only 21 percent said they favored making it easier for illegal aliens to live and work in the U.S.

Tennessee

Davidson County, home of the state capital of Nashville, has entered into a 287(g) agreement with the Department of Homeland Security. County Sheriff Daron Hall says he hopes to have officers trained in immigration law enforcement and on the streets by no later than May. The Davidson County action illustrates the dramatic turn of events that occurred in Tennessee in the past few years as a result of citizen activism. As recently as a few years ago, Tennessee was moving to grant services and benefits to illegal aliens, including the issuance of driver's licenses. However, local reform groups like Tennesseans for Responsible Immigration Policies, www.tnrip.org, that have worked closely with FAIR, have reversed policies that favor illegal aliens and advanced enforcement efforts in Tennessee.

President Wants Half a Fence, Democrats Want No Fence, The American People Get Lied To

In 2006 Congress passed a law to build 700 miles of security fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border. President Bush signed the bill, in essence, giving his word that the fence would get built. That was 2006. This is 2007, and apparently memories and commitments have a short shelf-life.

President Bush's proposed budget, released on February 5, calls for funding to construct just 150 miles of security fencing in the coming fiscal year and a total of 370 miles by the time the president leaves office in January 2009. "We are committed to the right fencing at the right place at the right time," said Michael Chertoff, Secretary of Homeland Security, who was assigned the task of explaining the administration's apparent flip-flop.

The 370 miles of fencing the Bush Administration is prepared to fund is exactly 370 miles more than the Democratic leadership in Congress seems willing to go along with. In an interview in January, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) expressed doubt that Congress would appropriate any money at all for fence construction, vaguely referring to "other ways" that Congress might seek to stem the flow of illegal immigrants and secure the border against the possible infiltration of terrorists.

FAIR believes that the failure of both the Bush Administration and the congressional leadership to honor this commitment they made to the American public just six months ago is further proof that promises of future enforcement in exchange for a guest worker amnesty program cannot be trusted. This development should remind the American people that the battle for true immigration reform does not end with the enactment of a law. The battle has to continue to convince Congress to appropriate the funds necessary to implement the law and on the administration to move forward with construction.

California Freeze Illustrates the High Cost of Cheap Foreign Labor

The overwhelming majority of California's fruit and vegetable crops are harvested by low wage illegal aliens or agricultural guest workers. Without those workers, the argument goes, we'd all be paying much higher prices for produce at the supermarket checkout stand. Enter Mother Nature.

A hard freeze hit California in mid-January causing an estimated \$1 billion in damage to the state's fruit and vegetable crops, and a spike in prices to consumers.

Leading economists have long argued that the labor component represents only about 10 percent of the cost consumers pay for their produce. Other factors, including this winter's damaging freeze, play a far more important role in determining the retail price Americans pay for a head of lettuce or a pound of oranges.

The January California cold snap also substantiates FAIR's longstanding arguments against the large-scale importation of foreign labor, either through illegal immigration or guest worker programs. Temporary foreign labor invariably turns out to be anything but temporary. The destruction of California's winter harvest did not send jobless illegal aliens or guest workers heading back to their countries of origin. Rather, it sent them to the unemployment office. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced that anyone whose job was affected by the freeze would be eligible for state unemployment benefits. "Everyone will get help," Schwarzenegger announced. "We are not here collecting immigration statuses."

So, add the cost of unemployment benefits for out-of-work illegal aliens and guest workers to that morning glass of orange juice.

From the Hill

Need Credit? No Visa? No Problem.

By Rep. Marsha Blackburn

The national debate over illegal immigration and our continued failure to properly secure our borders is not going away. As a matter of fact, recent developments in the nation's financial sector have moved this issue to the front pages of our newspapers.

Those of us who support strong measures to secure the border know a few things. A porous border is a threat to national security, Social Security, health care security and, most recently, financial security.

Recent reports have shown that Bank of America, a bedrock banking institution and leader in the global financial sector, has chosen to develop a product and market directly to the illegal immigrant population. In order to expand their market share, this icon of American banking has apparently started issuing credit cards to illegal immigrants.

This action runs in direct opposition of efforts to crack down on the influx of illegal entrants who are flooding through our borders. By offering U.S. issued credit cards to illegal entrants, it encourages more people to make a run for the border. This is just another step in the slippery slope that leads to amnesty for people who have little or no regard for the laws of the United States. If this is the case, why would any person wanting to live in the United States try to obtain citizenship through legal channels? Crossing the border illegally, with the promise of amnesty, a guest worker program and easily obtained lines of credit from banking institutions is more enticing than the legal way, which is filled with lawyers, long waits, and bureaucratic red tape.

As we learn more about the situation, it is possible that illegal entrants receiving credit cards have committed social security fraud, mail fraud, and by lying about their status in this country on financial loan documents, credit card fraud. It is also possible that financial institutions who market to the population of illegal immigrants are guilty of encouraging illegal immigration. What happens when an illegal entrant, accumulates thousands of dollars in credit card debt on an undocumented and unreported salary, defaults on the credit card balance? Who is going to pick up the tab?

By making the choice to market to the illegal immigrant population, Bank of America and other similar institutions could be in danger of eroding the faith that the American people have placed in our foundational institutions. When Americans open banking accounts, they are placing their trust in the security of our financial infrastructure. Offering the same opportunities to those that have repeatedly broken the law undermines that trust.

This is why, as a member of the House Financial Services Committee, I have asked Chairman Barney Frank and Ranking Member Spencer Bachus to begin an investigation into this questionable practice. There are many questions that must be answered including making a determination of how the financial institutions are circumventing the law, which loopholes they are using and what legislation would be needed to prevent an expansion of this practice.

While I am an ardent proponent of limiting government interference in the free market system, when it threatens to alter the stability of our financial system, action must be taken. It is an item of fairness to those who choose to play by the rules.

I invite the readers to keep up with the work I am doing on the issue by logging into our website at house.gov/blackburn.

Duncan Hunter Becomes the Second Vocal Immigration Reform Advocate to Run for President

With the announcement in early January by Tom Tancredo that he was forming an exploratory committee to seek the Republican presidential nomination, it became clear that this pressing national issue would not be swept under the rug in 2008 the way it was in 2004. By the end of January it became clear that Tancredo would not be the only one bringing national attention to the immigration enforcement issue. California Congressman Duncan Hunter joined an expanding field of candidates seeking the GOP presidential nomination.

In a speech in South Carolina, an early primary test state, and a state that has seen a significant increase in illegal immigration in recent years, Hunter stated, "Let's begin this race for the American presidency and let's win." Hunter, who chaired the Armed Services Committee when Republicans held the majority in Congress, was the driving force behind the 2006 legislation approving construction of a security fence along the U.S.-Mexico border. His congressional district spans large sections of the southern border. Hunter has also been an outspoken critic of the government's failure to enforce laws against illegal immigration.

As was emphasized in the February issue of the FAIR Immigration Report when we reported Tancredo's entry into the race, FAIR does not endorse candidates for any political office. However, the presence of two candidates who have taken strong positions on immigration enforcement will guarantee that all contenders are forced to address this issue that is of paramount concern to the American public.

Senate Includes Penalty for Hiring Illegal Aliens in Minimum Wage Bill

Increasing the federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 an hour may be the first important piece of legislation passed by the new Congress. Thanks to Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), it could also include a meaningful deterrent to hiring illegal aliens. An amendment to the bill offered by Sen. Sessions would bar companies convicted of employing illegal aliens from receiving government contracts for up to ten years. The provision was approved 94-0 by the Senate. The provision must be approved by the House in order for it to be included in a final bill sent to the president for his signature.

Denial of lucrative government contracts to companies that disregard federal immigration laws and deny opportunities to legal workers is an idea first proposed by FAIR in model immigration reform legislation drafted in 2005.

Attaching a strong deterrent to hiring illegal aliens to legislation intended to improve wages and opportunities for American workers recognizes that illegal immigration is harming millions of hard-working people in this country. Apparently, not a single senator disagrees.

Reformer Corner

FAIR's New Western Region Representative Joe Turner

Although I had been passionately interested in the subject of illegal immigration since 1994, it wasn't until a few high profile raids in Southern California and pointed criticism of the complacent political establishment by the Los Angeles-based "John & Ken Show" talk radio program during the summer of 2004, that I decided to become an activist and founded Save Our State, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Save Our State was the first organization to highlight The Home Depot's partnering with local governments to establish day laborer centers. Combined with our filming and monitoring of employers at these day labor centers, we helped bring national attention to this phenomenon. Our protests and refusal to "turn the other cheek" in hostile areas like Maywood and Baldwin Park, California, drew the attention of hundreds of police officers in riot gear, SWAT teams and hundreds of radical supporters of open borders. As a result, Save Our State became one of the most widely recognized local immigration reform groups.

I am the author of the original Illegal Immigration Relief Act, which is the first attempted use of the direct initiative process in San Bernardino, California, to mitigate the harmful effects of illegal immigration at the local level. It was my hope that this would serve as a template and empower other cities with the political will and desire to tackle the illegal immigration issue. Since this groundbreaking measure, cities across the nation work to emulate this model in local ordinances thanks to the Immigration Reform Law Institute.

My nuts and bolts, boots on the ground perspective and experiences will allow me to guide others and help them avoid some of the pitfalls and mistakes that can hinder growth. It is my ultimate goal to empower activists and organizations by providing them access to the vast resources and tools available through FAIR.

I will continue to exert proactive pressure by working to expand the adoption of measures at the local level. Additionally, I believe the IIRA model ordinance as currently applied to local governments can be adapted for use and implementation at the local school district level. Local ideas empower activists because a tangible result is manifested by their activism and allows the individual to take "ownership" over the problem solving process.

I look forward to serving the activist community and can be reached at (909) 522-4564 or turner@fairus.org.

Key Players in Immigration Policy in the 110th Congress

Committee assignments and chairmanships in the new Congress have been allocated for the 110th Congress which convened in January. Below are the key players in both houses who will help determine the direction of U.S. immigration policy over the next two years.

House Judiciary Committee

Chair, John Conyers (D-Mich.). Conyers is a 21-term member from Detroit with a long history of supporting amnesty, open borders, and opposition to immigration enforcement.

Ranking Minority member, Lamar Smith (R-Tex.). Smith is a 10-term member who has previously served as chairman of the Immigration Subcommittee. During his years in Congress he has distinguished himself as a forceful advocate for immigration enforcement and has opposed amnesty.

Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law

Chair, Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) Lofgren is six-term member whose district includes large portions of California's Silicon Valley. Her voting record indicates strong support for H-1B guest workers and for amnesty, and opposition to most enforcement efforts.

Ranking Minority member, Steve King (R-Iowa). King is a three-term congressman who has been one of the most active and vocal proponents of immigration enforcement. He has also been an unwavering and outspoken critic of amnesty and guest worker proposals.

Senate Judiciary Committee

Chair, Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.). Leahy has served in the Senate since 1974 and was one of the leaders of the effort to pass a guest worker amnesty bill in 2006. Leahy famously responded to a question about how such a plan would be implemented by commenting, "The devil is in the details."

Ranking Minority member, Arlen Specter (R-Penn.). Specter has served in the Senate since 1980 and served as the Judiciary Committee chairman in the 109th Congress, during which he took a lead role in the Senate passage of the McCain-Kennedy guest worker amnesty, while opposing most measures to strengthen immigration enforcement.

Subcommittee on Immigration, Border Security and Citizenship

Chair, Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.). Kennedy has served in the Senate since 1962 and was one of the key authors of the disastrous 1965 immigration bill. In his 45 years in the Senate he has steadfastly fought for open borders and was a primary sponsor of the 2006 guest worker amnesty bill.

Ranking Minority member, John Cornyn (R-Tex.). Cornyn was elected to the Senate in 2002 and has compiled a record of opposition to amnesty for illegal aliens, but has leaned toward support of expansion of guest worker programs. In 2006, he opposed passage of the McCain-Kennedy bill.

Congressional Immigration Reform Caucus

Chair, Brian Bilbray (R-Calif.). San Diego representative Bilbray takes over the chairmanship of the Caucus in 2007, as its founder and former chair Tom Tancredo prepares for a possible presidential campaign. The 92-member caucus is a bipartisan coalition of members of Congress who support true comprehensive immigration reform. Before returning to Congress in 2006, Bilbray served as a consultant to FAIR.

Louisiana Official Goes to Mexico City to Thank Them for Illegal Alien Workers

U.S. Treasurer Extols the Virtues of Sending Money Out of the U.S.

A year and a half after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of thousands of Louisianans remain scattered across the country, unable to return to their homes for lack of jobs and lack of money to rebuild their lives. Gov. Kathleen Blanco, who faces re-election this November, has repeatedly sought federal assistance to help her state and its residents recover from the deadly storm.

So what was Louisiana State Treasurer John Kennedy doing in Mexico City in January, expressing his appreciation for workers from that country — many of them in the U.S. illegally — while countless Louisianans are pleading for the opportunity to go home and go to work? Speaking to the Mexico City Bankers Club, Kennedy said, “There is no doubt in my mind that we could not have made nearly the progress we have made without the working people from your country who have come to my state to rebuild.”

In case it wasn't clear, Mr. Kennedy works for the people of Louisiana.

At that same meeting of the Mexico City Bankers Club, U.S. Treasurer Anna Escobedo Cabral (you'll find her signature on the bills in your wallet) spoke glowingly about the remittances being sent by Mexicans working legally and illegally in the U.S. In 2006, an estimated \$22 billion were shipped out of the U.S. economy and into Mexico. Cabral called remittances a driving force for Mexico's economic growth.

In case it wasn't clear, Ms. Cabral is actually the Treasurer of the United States.