

American Renaissance

[Home](#) [Previous Story](#) [Next Story](#) [View Comments](#) [Post a Comment](#) [Send This Page](#)

Oklahoma: Governor Signs Sweeping Immigration Reform Bill

AP, May 9, 2007

AR Articles on Immigration Law Enforcement

[Fade to Brown \(May 2003\)](#)

[A Chronicle of Capitulation \(Aug. 2002\)](#)

[Immigration: The Debate Becomes Interesting \(Jul. 1995\)](#)

[More news stories on Immigration Law Enforcement](#)

Gov. Brad Henry signed a sweeping immigration reform bill Tuesday, describing it as a stopgap measure to deal with an illegal immigration problem that is actually the responsibility of the federal government.

The legislation, described as the nation's most meaningful attempt to deny jobs and public benefits to illegal immigrants, passed the House and Senate by overwhelming margins and was one of the key issues in last fall's round of state legislative and congressional elections.

{snip}

State lawmakers praised Henry's action. Supporters had urged Henry to sign the measure into law since it received final passage in a bipartisan 84-14 vote by the state House last week. The bill was approved 41-6 by the Senate last month.

"This important new immigration reform ensures we're upholding the rule of law in Oklahoma. Our citizens deserve nothing less," said House Speaker Lance Cargill, R-Harrah.

{snip}

More than 100,000 illegal immigrants are estimated to live in Oklahoma. The Federation of American Immigration Reform has said they cost state taxpayers up to \$200 million a year in public benefits, law enforcement costs and other resources.

{snip}

Ray Madrid, state director of the League of United Latin American Citizens, said the legislation may burden Latinos with new discriminatory barriers in housing and jobs.

“It’s going to take us back,” Madrid said. “I’m sure there’s going to be neighbors turning neighbors in.”

LULAC and other agencies that serve Latino communities are considering challenging the new law’s constitutionality because immigration policy is the responsibility of the federal government, not the state, Madrid said.

Ed Romo, vice president of LULAC, said the legislation is reminiscent of the Jim Crow laws directed at blacks in in the American South prior to federal civil rights legislation.

“Our concern is this goes too far,” Romo said. “If you dehumanize humans, it’s easy to mistreat them.”

{snip}

The measure targets employers who knowingly hire illegal aliens in order to gain a competitive advantage. Key elements of the bill focus on determining worker eligibility, including technology called the Basic Pilot program, which screens Social Security numbers to make sure they are real and that they match up with the job applicant’s name.

Created by the federal government to verify the eligibility of government employees, use of the program is mandated in Georgia, authorities said. It is free to employers who voluntarily sign up.

Public agencies will be required to use the program beginning Nov. 1 and private companies by July 1, 2008.

The measure would also limit state driver’s licenses and identity cards to citizens and legal immigrants and would require state and local agencies to verify the citizenship and immigration status of applicants for state or local benefits.

It also retains an in-state tuition program for children of illegal immigrants attending state colleges and universities. The measure now allows students to continue paying in-state tuition but new applicants must apply for citizenship within one year.

The measure would not affect emergency medical and humanitarian services, such as visits to hospital emergency rooms and enrollment in public schools, that are required by federal law.

{snip}

[Original article](#)

(Posted on May 9, 2007)