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# Candlelight Vigil in Nashville to Save the American Worker Draws Hundreds

## Workers, Activists Plead with Senate Majority Leader Frist to Block Guest Worker Plan

On the chilly Friday evening of Jan. 27, 600 Tennesseans joined FAIR, the Minuteman Project, the Eagle Forum, and Nashville radio talk show host Phil Valentine, in a quiet, peaceful gathering in front of Sen. Frist's office. As majority leader, Frist sets the Senate's agenda. Holding candles as a symbol of hope, the crowd asked for Frist's leadership in preventing legislation from passing the Senate that would undermine American workers.

FAIR conceived the idea for a candlelight vigil when the Ford Motor Company announced that it was preparing to eliminate some 30,000 American jobs over the next few years. Similar layoffs were announced by General Motors in November. These two auto giants are only the latest and most highly publicized examples of American companies that are scaling back good-paying jobs in America. The timing of the Ford announcement and the repeated calls from President Bush to open the doors to millions of new foreign guest workers seemed incongruous. In addition to being the majority leader, Sen. Frist also represents a state with numerous auto plants and suppliers who will be directly and indirectly affected by the Ford and GM layoffs.

As the crowd stood in a parking lot adjacent to Sen. Frist's office, speakers, including Valentine, Minuteman co-founder Chris Simcox, and FAIR's National Field Director, Susan Tully, warned that passage of a guest worker amnesty bill could well seal the fate of the embattled middle class worker in the United States. The message of the speakers and the 600 people who joined them to Sen. Frist was simple: PLEASE SAVE THE AMERICAN WORKER. In the upcoming Senate debate that will pit corporate profits against American workers, Sen. Frist's constituents pleaded with him to stand with millions of people in Tennessee and around the nation who are struggling to hold on to jobs and wages that allow them to support their families in dignity.

In addition to braving the evening chill, the vigil participants signed postcards asking the majority leader to oppose a new and vastly expanded guest worker program. Hundreds of these signed postcards were placed through Sen. Frist's mail slot, that his staff literally had to wade through when they returned to work the following Monday.

The success of the Nashville vigil provides a model FAIR intends to replicate around the country at district offices of other key members of the Senate. The sight of hundreds of ordinary workers — who are also voters — gathering peacefully to seek the help of their elected representative in Washington is a powerful image that is very difficult for even the most cynical politician to ignore.

The purpose of these candlelight vigils is to drive home to members of Congress and the media that there are real people whose lives and livelihoods will be damaged, if not destroyed, by a massive new guest worker program that gives employers the green light to bypass American workers in favor of foreign workers who are willing to work for less money.

## Bush Renews Call for Amnesty Guest Worker Program in State of the Union Address (but Quietly)

In a subtle, but notable, departure from recent White House strategy, President Bush once again used his annual State of the Union address to call for an immigration policy that would allow millions of illegal aliens to become “temporary workers” and millions of additional guest workers to enter the American labor force. In contrast to the recent high-powered sales pitch that included lengthy statements by the president himself and key members of his cabinet, the January 31 State of the Union remarks on the subject were brief and lacking in specifics.

That does not mean, however, that President Bush has abandoned his efforts to enact an amnesty and guest worker program. Rather, the president’s abbreviated remarks on the subject in the State of the Union tend to indicate that the White House is coming to the realization that the American public cannot be convinced that such an immigration policy would serve the interests of the country. The Bush Administration appears to be determined to move forward with an effort in the Senate to gain passage of an amnesty guest worker bill that would be combined with a rather weak enforcement bill passed by the House in December. The amnesty and guest worker provisions would be cited as the price for immigration enforcement which, if history is any guide, will never come about in any event.

In a speech in which “hope” was the theme, Mr. Bush attempted to portray those who oppose his open immigration policies as lacking in hope and confidence for the future, and of wanting to retreat to policies of isolationism and protectionism. “We hear claims that immigrants are somehow bad for the economy — even though this economy could not function without them. All these are forms of economic retreat, and they lead in the same direction — toward a stagnant and second-rate economy,” said Bush in the Jan. 31 address.

Bowing to overwhelming public pressure, the president acknowledged that, “Our nation needs orderly and secure borders.” However, in order to achieve this objective, “we must have a rational, humane guest worker program that rejects amnesty, allows temporary jobs for people who seek them legally, and reduces smuggling and crime at the border.” Once again, speaking to Congress and the American public, the president failed to explain how his plan for turning illegal aliens into guest workers could be anything other than an amnesty on a six-year time delay, or how American jobs and wages will be protected if employers have access to virtually unlimited numbers of new guest workers.

FAIR noted in its widely quoted response to the State of the Union address that if President Bush’s immigration proposals were to be enacted, hope would be pretty much all that the American middle class worker would have left. “Concerned citizens will not have much hope that today’s illegal workers will leave the country after being given six-year work permits, and they will simply have to hope that there is still a middle class in a few years. President Bush also talked about ‘stronger immigration enforcement and border protection,’ and we might hope that after decades of broken promises that this time he really means it, but the record does not justify much hope.”

While President Bush may be hopeful that he, along with allies in the Senate, will succeed in passing their amnesty and guest worker proposal without too much public attention, he is guaranteed to be disappointed. FAIR will continue to shine a spotlight (or candlelight in some instances) on their efforts to sell out working Americans.

## President Puts Little Money Where His Mouth Is on Immigration Enforcement

“Our nation needs orderly and secure borders,” said President Bush in his State of the Union Address. As the saying goes, “Talk is cheap,” and talk is mostly what the president is willing to invest in securing America’s borders and enforcing our immigration laws.

Less than a week after Mr. Bush spoke of the need for orderly and secure borders, he announced his proposed fiscal year 2007 budget, and immigration enforcement is short-changed. The FY2007 budget calls for the hiring of 1,500 new Border Patrol agents, or a modest 12 percent increase in manpower. Even more important, the number of new Border Patrol agents slated to be hired is 500 fewer than authorized by Congress.

Most of the modest increases in immigration enforcement are being focused at the border, while interior workplace enforcement remains the stepchild of the Department of Homeland Security. In the first five years of the Bush presidency, enforcement against employers who hire illegal aliens has virtually ceased, and the prospects for change in FY2007 are not promising. The proposed budget calls for only \$42 million for worksite enforcement, and the highly successful basic pilot verification program that would allow employers to check an applicant’s work eligibility instantly can expect only \$111 million next year.

A good indication of President Bush’s priorities can be found by tracing the flow of federal money. The 2007 budget asks for \$247 million to implement a new guest worker program, in spite of the fact Congress has not even approved such a program. While the White House promised a guest worker program would be accompanied by mandatory worker verification, when asked about the matter Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff spoke vaguely about worksite enforcement as a “two-part strategy.” Chertoff continued, “One part is giving employers increased ability to verify the status of their workers. But the second part is to hold them increasingly accountable, and be tougher about what we expect them to do and be tougher with the sanctions that we apply to them if they don’t do what’s expected.” Translation: We’re not going to be in any hurry to enforce employer sanctions.

The proposed FY2007 budget is the strongest indication history will repeat itself if the president succeeds in getting his amnesty and guest worker program through the Senate and combined with even the modest enforcement bill approved by the House. The Bush Administration’s budget priorities indicate in no uncertain terms that, in such a scenario, the enforcement provisions will never be carried out, while the illegal alien amnesty and middle class-crushing guest worker program will be implemented fully. In the immortal words of Deep Throat: “Follow the money.”

# Around the Country

## Maine

Maine is the state where 9/11 terrorist Mohammed Atta began his murderous day. It is also a state that in recent years adopted policies making it a de facto sanctuary for illegal aliens. But times and attitudes are beginning to change in the northeastern most corner of the country. Under a bill approved by the state legislature, Maine will no longer issue driver's licenses to foreign citizens with expired visas, lapsed departure dates, or expired foreign documents. The move is a small step, but an indication of the influence of a growing immigration reform movement in Maine and across New England.

## Massachusetts

Immigration reform advocates won a major victory late last year with the defeat of a bill that would have allowed illegal aliens to attend public universities at subsidized in-state tuition rates. Local reform groups like the Massachusetts Coalition for Immigration Reform are not resting on their laurels. They are pushing forward in 2006 with legislation that would require proof of legal residency for most public benefits and services in the commonwealth. Senate Bill 2199, introduced by Sen. Robert Hedlund, would require the use of a "secure and verifiable" document in order to gain access to most non-emergency benefits and services.

## Virginia

Coping with the effects of large-scale illegal immigration was a key issue in the 2005 gubernatorial race in Virginia, and the issue remains a top priority for the legislature in 2006. In one of the first orders of business in the new year, the House of Delegates, by a 77-22 vote, authorized the training of 50 state troopers in immigration law enforcement. If the measure is approved by the state senate and signed by Gov. Timothy Kaine, Virginia would join Florida and Alabama as the third state to avail itself of such training.

## Georgia

The Georgia legislature will continue with no less than 15 bills and resolutions aimed at dealing with the state's growing illegal immigration crisis. The effort is being led by state senator Chip Rogers and is buoyed by a Zogby poll that shows strong support in the state for immigration enforcement. The bills would curtail access by illegal aliens to nearly all non-emergency state-funded benefits and services and would set up a state program that requires all employers to verify the legal status of people they hire. The momentum for immigration enforcement is a reflection of the growing influence of the grassroots immigration reform movement in Georgia.

## New Mexico

In 2004, New Mexico enacted the most illegal alien-friendly driver's license policy in the nation. Under current law, applicants don't have to prove they're legal residents. Foreign nationals can present a passport, a federal tax identification number or a consular identification card when applying for driver's licenses. Now a group of legislators wants to undo this policy and require driver's license applicants to present a valid social security number or other proof of legal residence in the U.S. State legislators are also promoting a resolution urging Gov. Bill Richardson to deploy National Guard troops to the border. Last year, Richardson declared an immigration emergency in New Mexico as did Gov. Janet Napolitano for her state of Arizona.

## Wisconsin Ends Home Mortgage Program for Illegal Aliens Amid Strong Public Opposition

A program that made home mortgage loans available to illegal aliens at below market interest rates has been repealed as the Wisconsin state legislature and Gov. Jim Doyle responded to a public outcry over the highly unpopular Immigrant Lending Program. The state program, which helped illegal aliens buy homes by guaranteeing the loans, was eliminated as part of an overhaul of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Agency (WHEDA). WHEDA declined to disclose how many government-backed home loans were made to illegal aliens.

Home buyers who lack valid social security numbers will still be able to obtain mortgage loans; however, without government guarantees the cost of a home loan for illegal aliens will be substantially greater. State Senator Glenn Grothman, one of the leaders of the effort to repeal the illegal alien mortgage program, argued that it sent a strong signal that Wisconsin did not take immigration laws seriously. He criticized the program as being “more of a political statement than an economic statement,” promoted by illegal alien advocacy groups.

The repeal of the Wisconsin program also demonstrates the power of citizen action. FAIR’s National Field Director Susan Tully, a Wisconsin resident, first exposed the illegal alien mortgage program that took effect in April 2004. As the program became better known through media reports, public opposition grew among Wisconsiners who were outraged that state funds were being used to help illegal aliens secure home loans. A key component of FAIR’s national field program is to track and expose attempts by advocacy groups to grant benefits and special privileges to illegal aliens. When these efforts are revealed, vocal public opposition forces political leaders to deny or repeal these benefits and privileges.

# Mexican Military Caught on U.S. Side of the Border

For years, illegal alien advocates chafed at the use of the term “invasion” to describe the endless influx of people illegally crossing the border with Mexico. Invasion, they have argued, applies only to military incursions across the border.

So, is the United States now officially being invaded? Over the past four months there have been six confirmed incidents — five in Texas and one in California — of Mexican military personnel and vehicles crossing into the United States, most likely in support of drug smuggling cartels. Since 1996, the Department of Homeland Security acknowledges there have been 231 such incidents, though the majority of those were accidental. According to T.J. Bonner, president of the Border Patrol union, there is nothing accidental about the most recent incursions. U.S. Border Patrol officers have come under fire from the Mexican military, Bonner told a House committee investigating the situation.

Also testifying before the House Homeland Security Investigations Subcommittee in early February was Sheriff Arvin West of Hudspeth County, Texas. Describing an incident on Jan. 23, West told members of the committee that his deputies, acting on a tip, intercepted a group of drug smugglers and got more than they bargained for. The smugglers raced back across the border under the protection of what appeared to be the Mexican military. When one of the SUVs, carrying a load of marijuana, became stuck in the Rio Grande River, men in Mexican military uniforms “took up a defensive position” while the drugs were being offloaded.

In spite of the fact that the incident was caught on videotape, Mexican foreign minister Luis Ernesto Derbez denies that the Mexican military is providing cover for smugglers operating on the U.S. side of the border. The video “doesn’t present any evidence that allows one to suppose that Mexican soldiers crossed the frontier,” stated Derbez. Nor, have the incursions and the threats of violence raised any serious concerns on the part of the Bush Administration, which has not forcefully condemned the incidents or demanded that the Mexican government take action to control the situation.



# FAIR Argues Before Arizona Appeals Court in Effort to Fully Implement Prop. 200 Law

More than one million Arizonans voted in favor of the ballot initiative known as Proposition 200 in November 2004. That overwhelming public support, however, did not impress Gov. Janet Napolitano or Attorney General Terry Goddard, who were both staunch opponents of the measure that would bar illegal aliens from receiving most public benefits in Arizona.

Unable to dissuade 54 percent of the voters from approving the initiative, the two state officials decided to disregard the outcome of the election. In an opinion issued shortly after the voters approved Proposition 200, Goddard determined that the law should apply to only five small state-funded government benefit programs. Based on that opinion, Gov. Napolitano ordered state employees to limit the law's implementation to those programs.

In 2005, FAIR, the Yes on Proposition 200 Committee, and other proponents of the law, challenged the governor's implementation of the law in an Arizona court. The state court, however, refused to hear the case, ruling that the plaintiffs lacked the requisite legal standing to challenge the governor's decision. On Jan. 31, Phoenix attorney David Abney presented oral arguments before the Arizona Court of Appeals, asking the court to order the lower court to hear the case.

In addition to the importance of implementing Proposition 200 in discouraging mass illegal immigration, the case has far greater implications, Abney argued on behalf of the plaintiffs. The actions of the governor and attorney general of Arizona effectively nullified the results of a fair and democratic election and, if allowed to stand, would set a dangerous precedent. Moreover, federal courts have already ruled that the law can be fully implemented without preempting federal authority over immigration matters.

FAIR, along with grassroots organizations in Arizona, worked tirelessly to help get Proposition 200 on the ballot and to win approval from the voters. We were an integral part of the legal team that successfully defended the measure in federal court when it was challenged by illegal alien rights groups, and FAIR intends to continue fighting to ensure that the law is implemented as the voters intended when they went to the polls in 2004.

# The Minutemen Come to Capitol Hill

A movement that began along the Arizona border has made it all the way to Capitol Hill. The Minuteman Project, which drew national and international attention to the crisis at the border last April, again drew national attention with a rally outside the U.S. Capitol on Feb. 8, demanding Congress take action to deal with illegal immigration.

Rallies and vigils, like the one organized by FAIR in Nashville two weeks earlier, are a growing sign of the public demand for immigration enforcement and opposition to proposals for amnesty and guest worker programs. These events, taking place at the start of an important legislative year, are aimed at convincing the U.S. Senate to protect America's borders and American workers. Minuteman leader James Gilchrist, addressing members of the Senate, warned legislators that they can no longer ignore the voices of the American people on this subject. "I can assure you that we can move you with our rhetoric. And we will most assuredly move you out of office with our votes," Gilchrist said.

Addressing the Minuteman rally, Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.) expressed the views of those who are working to defeat President Bush's guest worker amnesty proposal. "We are being told that we have to bring more people in from other countries because there are jobs that American people won't do," Rohrabacher said. "Americans will do any job as long as they are paid a fair and decent wage."

Congressman Rohrabacher's comments echo the message FAIR has been spreading in numerous national media appearances. The tragic coal mining deaths in January sadly dispel the myth that Americans will not do difficult, even dangerous jobs, provided they are paid a fair wage. If American workers are willing to work 12,000 feet underground, it is impossible for President Bush and others to make a credible argument that there are any "jobs Americans won't do."

# Immigration Conference Coming to Kansas City

## *The Impact of Illegal Immigration on State and Local Governments*

FAIR's highly successful series of regional immigration reform conferences is coming to Missouri. State and local law enforcement, and elected officials from across the region will gather in Kansas City on Saturday, March 25, for an all-day conference to identify the problems and prepare strategies for confronting the challenges of uncontrolled illegal immigration.

This conference will feature presentations from prominent national experts on immigration including Professor Vernon Briggs of Cornell University, Professor Kris Kobach of the University of Missouri Law School, Michael Hethmon of the Immigration Reform Law Institute, Jared Lewis, a national gang expert and Steven Camarota, the Director of Research for the Center for Immigration Studies. *Also invited, but not yet confirmed are representatives from Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE).*

Topics to be discussed include:

- Wage and job displacement of American workers
- In-state tuition for illegal alien students
- City sanctuary policies
- Gang violence
- Local law enforcement officer training
- Health care, welfare and education

The conference will take place on March 25 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center, located at 2345 McGee Street in Kansas City, Missouri. The \$85 fee includes conference materials, and breakfast and lunch. For those traveling from out of town, special room rates are available at the Hyatt for \$125 per night by calling the hotel's reservation desk at 1-800-233-1234.

Please contact Susan Tully to confirm your attendance: [stully@fairus.org](mailto:stully@fairus.org) or call (608) 675-3400.

## From the Hill:

### *"Amnesty is a Bad Idea"*

by Rep. Edward Royce

Recently, I toured the southern border at San Diego with local border security and immigration officials. I entered the tunnel where drugs and people were trafficked illegally across the border over chiseled floors, under electric lighting and supported by a full ventilation system. One other tunnel has since been discovered, and many more may exist. I also followed border inspection agents as they seized large stores of drugs before my eyes. This visit reinforced my belief that our immigration system is broken. Our border agents are doing a great job, but are clearly overwhelmed, understaffed and ill-funded.

Yet, the President and some in Congress insist on adding a temporary worker program to this already overburdened system. This proposed program is clearly blanket amnesty. Amnesty is unfair to law-abiding legal immigrants who work their way through the legal system to obtain citizenship, and it sends the message that individuals who want to come to our country need not follow our laws.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), the agency that will be in charge of implementing the president's Temporary Worker Program, is in disarray. For the past four years, the USCIS has been working to clear its backlog of 3.5 million cases and achieve a six-month processing standard for immigration applications.

During a September 2005 briefing, an internal investigator told members of Congress that USCIS employees face 2,500 misconduct charges, including bribery and exchanging immigration benefits for sex. Allegations of influence by foreign governments and terrorist infiltration due to inaccurate or incomplete background checks also abound.

Based on past experience, we can see why an amnesty is a bad idea. The 1986 amnesty was touted as the solution to the problem 20 years ago and the "first and last" amnesty program. As we've learned, it did not solve the problem.

In this post-9/11 world, amnesty makes even less sense than in the 1980's. I am Chairman of the House International Terrorism Subcommittee. I know that terrorists will employ every conceivable means of entering and staying in our country. Terrorists have entered as students, tourists, and business visitors; faked asylum, and used false passports. And they have taken advantage of amnesty.

Mahmud Abouhalima, a leader of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, fraudulently claimed he was a seasonal agricultural worker. Only after he was legalized — thanks to the 1986 amnesty — was he able to travel several times to the Afghanistan/Pakistan border where he received the terrorist training used in the bombing. Mohammed Salameh, another participant in the 1993 bombing, applied for the same amnesty but was denied. Yet, he was still allowed to function in the United States illegally.

Terrorists will continue to abuse our immigration laws to enter and remain in this country and our customs and border patrol agents will be even more overburdened if we add a new guest worker program. If we fail to wake up to the reality of what lax enforcement at our borders and of our immigration laws is doing, we are doomed to put our homeland at further risk. Before adding a new guest worker program, we should first ensure that we have all the necessary resources and strategies in place to improve national security.

You may write Congressman Edward Royce, 2202 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20525; or send a fax to his district office, 714-992-1668; or call 714-992-8081.

## Monthly Outrage

### *Can't Afford to Buy a House in San Diego? Become an Illegal Alien.*

The San Diego housing market is one of the most expensive in the country and many first-time home buyers are simply priced out of the market. Even if you can somehow scrape together enough money for a down payment, rising interest rates and mortgage insurance make it exceedingly difficult to become a homeowner. That is, unless you happen to be an illegal alien.

If you are in the country illegally, don't have a valid social security number and use a taxpayer ID number instead, you're in luck. The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) has persuaded Citibank, one of the nation's largest banks, to help out. Illegal aliens in San Diego can purchase a home at below market interest rates, receive down payment assistance, and not have to take out mortgage insurance like other risky customers do.

A similar program instituted by Wells Fargo in the Los Angeles area attracted bad publicity, so Citibank is trying to keep quiet the fact that illegal aliens can get better deals on home mortgages than citizens. The position of the banks is that as long as there is a buck to be made off of illegal aliens, they are going to keep marketing to them. As Chuck Lemoine, a senior vice president at Wells Fargo said, "It's not only the right thing to do, it's good business."

Citibank (West) FSB  
PO Box 348480  
Sacramento, CA 95834-8480

# Mississippi Burning

Mississippi is about the last place one thinks of when talking about the illegal immigration crisis gripping the country. But like the rest of the nation, mass illegal immigration has come to the Deep South.

FAIR worked with local reformers in the state to form Mississippi Federation for Immigration Reform and Enforcement (MFIRE), a grassroots group pushing for policies that will discourage illegal aliens from settling in the state. In 2006, MFIRE was able to get 16 immigration enforcement bills introduced in the Mississippi legislature. The efforts of immigration reformers, however, have not escaped the attention of a few self-appointed advocates for illegal aliens.

At a legislative luncheon and hearing in the State Capitol on Jan. 25 organized by Rep. Mike Lott, the prime sponsor of many of the immigration enforcement bills, FAIR's national field director was one of the featured speakers, addressing members of the Mississippi legislature. While Tully was discussing the need for state action to combat illegal immigration, a small group of illegal alien rights advocates, led by a group calling itself the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance (MIRA) demanded the right to speak and eventually became so disruptive that the hearing had to be adjourned.

According to MFIRE's website ([www.mfire.org](http://www.mfire.org)), the disruptive behavior did not stop with the adjournment of the hearing. "[I]llegal alien activists surrounded Mr. Lott in the hallway outside the hearing room and continued to berate him. By forcing the adjournment of the hearing, the activists prevented the legislators from conducting state business on behalf of their constituents, and infringed upon the right of the law-abiding citizens who were present at the hearing to witness democracy in action," reported MFIRE.

Unfortunately, according to MFIRE, the tactics of the illegal alien rights agitators succeeded. Fourteen of the 16 bills aimed at curbing illegal immigration in Mississippi died in committee, before they could be brought to the floor of the legislature. However, MFIRE activists vow to determine who in the legislature was responsible for killing these measures and will "provide the name and contact information for each relevant committee or subcommittee chairman and ask that you respectfully let them know of your disappointment and of your desire to see legislators take a bold stand on this issue."

## Reformer Corner

*Rodney Hunt*

I began working for immigration reform in Mississippi after treating an Israeli Muslim, who was also an illegal alien, for a jaw fracture he received while being detained during 9/11. He was guarded by the INS 24 hours a day while hospitalized. I learned later that he had overstayed his visa and been in this country illegally for 21/2 years.

This experience caused me to educate myself about the scope and extent of illegal immigration. I began talking to government representatives and political party members about addressing this issue. Because of inaction and apathy from these people, I and other concerned citizens formed the Mississippi Federation for Immigration Reform and Enforcement (MFIRE) in the fall of 2005 in order to present a combined front to educate Mississippians and our elected officials about illegal immigration. Susan Tully, FAIR's National Field Director, provided us with direction in our organizational efforts.

MFIRE's goal is to get comprehensive legislative reform in Mississippi to protect our citizens' physical safety, to ensure our jobs go to citizens and legal immigrants, and to preserve our environment and way of life. Sixteen bills towards this goal were introduced in the 2006 state legislative session. Also, the state auditor is completing an audit regarding the cost of illegal immigration to the taxpayers of our state.

We invite Mississippians to join our cause. Please visit us at [mfire.org](http://mfire.org).