

# ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION UPDATE

Immigration is another issue that came to the forefront this past session; not just immigration in general, but illegal immigration. The issue was embodied in Senate Bill 335, which was authored by Sen. Mike Delph (R-Carmel) and was passed by the Senate by a 37-11 vote. In the House, the language was amended into Senate Bill 345, which was passed by a 66-33 vote. The bill was sent to conference committee, where it died.

The illegal immigration language was modeled after a bill that passed into law in Arizona last year. In speaking with legislative leaders in Arizona, implementation of the law is proceeding well and effectively. Arizona has begun to use E-Verify, an easy-to-use and free program run by the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration to check identification for all new state employees hired after Jan. 1, 2008, as have thousands of other private employers. The law has been continuously upheld in court, most recently when the ACLU failed to get a temporary injunction in the 9th Circuit Court. I will continue to monitor the progress of the bill as we decide on what approach to take in the future.

I continue to be frustrated with the federal government and its unwillingness to address what, constitutionally, is one of the few issues it is responsible for. They have fumbled on this issue for decades. President Ronald Reagan attempted to address the issue, with mixed results. The states have been patient and are now saying, "Enough is enough." We must understand that the states not only have the inherent authority to enforce federal law, but our citizens have a constitutional right to expect our laws to be enforced. We must continue to pursue a balanced approach that, hopefully, will also send a message to Washington.



*"Undocumented workers clearly are the responsibility of the federal government, but its refusal to come up with a comprehensive solution leaves the state Legislature to come up with a plan. I will work to create a fair plan that treats people and businesses in a fair manner."*

*-John*

