



HOPKINS COUNTY, KY – Congressman Ed Whitfield shared his frustrations with the immigration system in this week's letter to the editor.

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Dear Editor,

As I travel throughout the First Congressional District this month and meet with constituents, there is one topic that always comes up – illegal immigration. I share the frustrations of many Kentuckians over our flawed immigration system and the lack of enforcement which has left our borders weak and allowed hundreds of thousands of undocumented workers to enter our country illegally. The economy and healthcare have taken center stage in Washington this past year and President Obama, Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid have failed to bring immigration reform to the table for consideration. With an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants currently living in the United States, and thousands more crossing the border unlawfully every week, Congress must act to fix this problem.

In the meantime, with the federal government failing to step up to the plate and enact reform, it

is essential States not be denied the ability to seek their own solutions to the immigration crisis. Earlier this year, the state of Arizona did just that by passing a law which would make the failure to carry immigration documents a crime and requires law enforcement officials detaining someone for a legal offense to question anyone they suspect of being in the U.S. illegally. The law was set to take effect at the end of July, but U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder filed a lawsuit against the state of Arizona and successfully blocked implementation of many of its key provisions. While an appeal is pending, this slap in the face to the lawmakers and citizens of the state of Arizona sets a dangerous precedent and sends a message that the federal government is not serious about thwarting illegal immigration.

Ahead of the court ruling, I joined over 75 of my colleagues in the House of Representatives and five U.S. Senators in filing a court brief in opposition to the Obama Administration's legal challenge of Arizona's new immigration law. The brief cites numerous constitutional and legal problems with the Administration's challenge to the Arizona law and expresses our support for the state's right to enforce its new policy. Moving forward, I will do all that I can to support Arizona's, and any other state's rights, to enact policies which will protect its borders and curb illegal immigration

That being said, illegal immigration is a national problem that must be addressed on a federal level. This month Congress passed, and I supported, legislation which will provide 1,500 new agents to help patrol and monitor the U.S.-Mexico border. While this is a good first step in giving our Border Patrol Agents the tools and resources they need to successfully do their jobs, it is not nearly enough to solve our illegal immigration problem. The U.S. needs to not only better enforce its current immigration laws, but update them to address the ever-changing threats to the nation's borders, security and economy. I have long been a supporter of immigration reform and am a cosponsor of the SAVE Act, which is a common sense plan to drastically curb illegal immigration in America by emphasizing border security, employer verification and interior enforcement.

The time is long past for the federal government to start cracking down on illegal immigration by enforcing our own national policies and moving forward with reform. However, in the meantime, we must support states' rights to enact their own laws which will help close our borders and ensure lawful entry into this country.

Sincerely,

U.S. Representative Ed Whitfield

Information provided to iSurf News by Kristin Walker  
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