

Ada Evening News

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Dealing with illegal immigration

Susan Paddack

— I have heard from many of my constituents about their concerns with the growing problem of illegal immigration. I want to thank you for sharing your concerns with me.

Please know that I appreciate your input. I also share many of the same concerns on the subject.

The United States was founded by immigrants from other countries who came here to seek a better life. After more than 200 years that tradition continues —people still come to America to seek a better life for themselves and for their families.

That's just as it should be, so long as the laws of our country are upheld in the process. And therein is the heart of the problem.

Too many people are entering our borders illegally and a few employers are hiring them in violation of immigration and employment laws designed to protect our citizens and our jobs.

Illegal immigration first and foremost is a federal issue. Unfortunately, over the course of the last several years, Congress has failed us miserably in this area.

It's becoming painfully clear that state governments are going to have to act in the absence of federal leadership.

So what exactly can we do at the state level? One course of action is to hold the employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants accountable for their actions. I believe this could be a huge step toward resolving many of the problems associated with this complex issue.

Further, we can require that anyone seeking refuge and a better life within our borders does so legally, takes appropriate steps toward learning English, and pays taxes like the rest of us.

I believe that is a more than fair exchange for the freedoms and opportunities that can only be found in the United States .

Senate Bill 1804 made it out of the Senate Judiciary Committee a few weeks ago. This bill takes significant steps toward dealing with the problems associated with illegal immigration. And while the bill isn't perfect, it attempts to deal with this important issue that the federal government refuses to address. The bill now awaits action by the full Senate, and I will be supporting this bill when it comes time to vote.

Thanks for reading my "Senate Review." If you have any questions on a legislative matter, please do not hesitate to contact my Senate office at the Capitol by calling (405) 521-5541 or email me with your concerns at paddack@oksenate.gov. I always enjoy hearing from my constituents and consider it an honor to be your voice in the Oklahoma State Senate. May God bless each of you.

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