

Here is State Senator Steinberg's response to a concerned constituent's question regarding illegal immigration.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <Senator.Steinberg@outreach.senate.ca.gov>

Date: Wed, Jul 14, 2010 at 2:01 PM

Subject: Regarding your comments concerning undocumented immigrants,

Thank you for your recent communication in opposition to the presence of undocumented immigrants in California. I appreciate hearing from you on this important issue.

Although I am strongly opposed to illegal immigration, Californians have for a long time tolerated the enormous costs of services for undocumented immigrants in order to benefit from cheap labor. It would be unethical to withhold social services to these immigrants while we benefit from their work. I believe that any call for an end to services for undocumented immigrants must be paired with a commitment to forgo all the benefits they bring to California. Undocumented immigrants, for example, do the majority of the crop harvesting in the Central Valley; our agricultural sector would not survive without their contributions. Furthermore, federal law prohibits hospitals from refusing treatment to illegal aliens, and also prohibits schools from denying their children access to education.

Additionally, undocumented workers pay taxes (in the form of income withholding and sales taxes), and they contribute to the economic and social makeup of our state. Although exact numbers are elusive, the Social Security Administration estimated that in 2007, nationwide, illegal residents contributed \$12 billion in taxes to the United States. Providing immigrants with a legal and reasonable path to citizenship would result in far less disruption of our state's economy than would ejection of all undocumented immigrants currently within our borders.

I trust that we agree on far more issues than we disagree. I appreciate hearing from my constituents on issues of concern to them. Please continue to express your views to me so I may best represent you in the state Senate.

If you need my assistance or have concerns about any other matter, please do not hesitate to call my office at (916) 651-1529, or email me at senator.steinberg@sen.ca.gov. You can also visit my website, www.sen.ca.gov/steinberg, to learn of community events and other issues in which I am involved.

Sincerely,

DARRELL STEINBERG
President pro Tempore
6th Senate District