

**MINUTES OF THE
IMMIGRATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Thursday, June 19, 2008 – 5:30 p.m. – Utah State University

Members Present:

Sen. Scott K. Jenkins, Senate Chair
Rep. Brad L. Dee, House Chair
Sen. Mark B. Madsen
Sen. Ross I. Romero
Rep. Stephen D. Clark
Rep. Glenn A. Donnelson
Rep. Ben C. Ferry
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Michael E. Noel
Rep. Mark A. Wheatley

Members Absent:

Sen. John W. Hickman

Staff Present:

Mr. Arthur L. Hunsaker, Policy Analyst
Mr. James L. Wilson, Associate General Counsel
Mr. Christopher R. Parker, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Chelsea Barrett, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Dee called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m.

Rep. Donnelson moved to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Comparing 2008 General Session Legislation S.B. 81, "Illegal Immigration," to Selected State Immigration Laws

Mr. Wilson distributed "Legislative Immigration Comparative" and the highlighted provisions for immigration laws in Oklahoma, Arizona, and Utah.

Rep. Clark requested additional information to further understand how immigration affects small businesses. Sen. Madsen asked for more information on other states and the e-verification system, an online system operated jointly by the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration (SSA) used to check the work status of new hires online by comparing information from an employee's I-9 form against SSA and Department of Homeland Security databases.

Mr. Wilson answered questions from the Committee.

3. Views on Immigration Issues: Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake

Rev. Clarence Sandoval, Pastor, St. Thomas Aquinas Parrish, Logan, Utah, informed the Committee of the large numbers of Hispanic people throughout the Logan area. He explained the impact of the illegal immigration-related raids on certain businesses and the community.

Ms. Dee Rowland, Government Liaison, Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake, educated the Committee on common misconceptions on the Catholic church's policies regarding immigration.

The Committee discussed the presentation.

4. Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce's Task Force on Immigration

Mr. Steve Tyler, Chair, Salt Lake Chamber's Immigration Task Force, expressed concern with the possible impacts of 2008 General Session, S.B. 81 "Illegal Immigration," on the business and social aspects of communities.

Rep. Noel requested quantitative statistics on 2008 General Session, S.B. 81 "Illegal Immigration" from the Salt Lake Chamber. Chair Jenkins noted the invaluable relationship that the Salt Lake Chamber's Immigration Task Force can create with Federal government agencies through the business components of immigration.

5. Immigration: Ethnic Community Perspective

Mr. Jesse Soriano, Director, Utah Office of Ethnic Affairs, explained the primary function of the Office of Ethnic Affairs, which entails working with other state agencies to ensure services are provided for ethnic communities in the state. Mr. Soriano noted that concerns with 2008 General Session, S.B. 81 "Illegal Immigration" include the implications of cross-deputization in law enforcement.

Mr. Leo Bravo, Director, Logan Multicultural Center, encouraged the Committee to consider the issues raised by Mr. Soriano.

Mr. Juan Carlos Vazquez, Center for Persons with Disabilities, Utah State University, expressed his belief that educational opportunities are critical for immigrants. Mr. Vazquez explained his experiences with some immigrant students at Utah State University.

6. Immigration: Impact on Business Community

Mr. James Hamilton, Director of Company Compliance, Swift & Company, explained Swift & Company's experience with the e-verification system. Mr. Hamilton proposed the concept of combining the e-verification system and social security records and databases to prevent document and identity fraud.

7. Public Comment

Mr. Ronald Mortensen, Utah Coalition on Illegal Immigration, recommended that the Committee have a representative from the Department of Homeland Security speak to the issue of illegal documentation, and a representative of the Department of Human Resources to speak to the e-verification issue.

Mr. Gaylon Stewart, constituent, explained his experiences with immigration as a retired school teacher in the Spanish Fork area.

Mr. Greg Siegrist, constituent, noted his experiences with immigration living in southern California and Utah.

Mr. Richard Burgin, constituent, commented on immigration and the medical community in Cache County.

Ms. Evelyn Sardinas, Utah State Multicultural Center, commented on her experiences as an immigrant from Brazil. She spoke favorably of the many resources available to immigrants in the United States.

Ms. Rosenilda De Gorza, student, Utah State University, shared her experiences receiving education with help from organizations like the Utah State Multicultural Center.

Mr. Gilberto Urroz, professor, Utah State University, noted his experiences with educational opportunities available to immigrants on Utah State University's campus.

Ms. Jennifer Villalpando, constituent, expressed concern for the issue of marriage by a U.S. citizen to an unauthorized alien and the effects this can have on the family unit.

Mr. Michael Sanchez, Utah Minuteman, expressed the need of defining terminology when discussing immigration issues, specifically the difference between American-Hispanic and Hispanic.

Ms. Danielle Isom, student, Utah State University, commented on the influence of immigration on the nation's economy.

8. Other Items / Adjourn

Chair Dee reminded the audience and Committee that if anyone would like to participate in future Immigration Interim Committees meetings, to please contact staff who will work with the chairs to create future agendas.

MOTION: Rep. Donnelson moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Dee adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.