



TALKING POINTS for CONGRESSIONAL VISITS

INTRODUCE YOURSELF

I'm an employer in your district. My company [makes, does, provides, equips – fill in the details of what you do], and I'm here to talk to you about immigration.

Even now, even in a recession, I have trouble finding workers to do [fill in with concrete details about your business]. Because I can't find enough Americans to take these jobs, I often have to hire immigrants. And I want to hire *legal* immigrants. That's why I've come to talk to you. I need an immigration system that works.

FIND OUT WHERE YOUR MEMBER STANDS ON IMMIGRATION

Do you expect immigration to come up in Congress in 2009?

Will you work to support common-sense reforms to the immigration system so that companies like mine can find the legal workers we need and law-abiding businesses aren't punished unfairly?

Can you support some modifications to the number of legal immigrants we allow into the country each year so that number reflects our real need for workers, not an arbitrary quota set by Congress?

[OPTIONAL, if you have time: Do you support the DREAM Act? Do you support AgJOBS? Do you support extension of the H2B returning worker exemption?]

Would you be willing to come and tour my [facility, yard, farm, shop] so you can get a better understanding of my workforce and my labor needs?

E-VERIFY

As you know, the federal employment verification system, E-Verify, is going to come up for renewal in March.

As an employer, I support better immigration enforcement. Once we have a system in place that supplies me with the workers I need legally, I want that system enforced – and I'm prepared to be part of the enforcement process.

But E-Verify is riddled with problems.

- The databases are still full of errors. SSA estimates that its database contains 17.9 million discrepancies that could affect verification checks – and the DHS databases are also filled with outdated and inaccurate information.
- The system is being expanded too quickly – from 6,000 businesses to nearly a hundred thousand in just a few years. And many employers don't know how to use it – so it's a threat to workers' privacy and civil liberties.
- Mandating use of the program will result in increased discrimination against workers who look or sound foreign, and I could become the target of a civil rights suit just for trying to follow the law.

E-Verify makes sense for some businesses. But it's too soon to mandate it for everyone. Will you work to make sure we don't move too fast implementing a program that isn't ready for prime time?

STATE IMMIGRATION LAWS

Many states are now passing immigration laws of their own, and together these measures are adding up to crazy quilt of conflicting rules. What's a national company to do when one state mandates that we participate in E-Verify and another mandates that we don't participate? What can you in Congress do to help? Would you support legislation upholding federal preemption of state immigration law?