



BILL HORN

CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 9, 2006

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: THE COST OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION TO SAN DIEGO COUNTY
(District: All)

SUMMARY:

Overview

San Diego County is adversely affected by the tide of illegal immigrants entering the United States. A recent Pew Hispanic Center study estimates the number of illegal immigrants inside the U.S. has grown to at least 12 million and now makes up one in every 20 workers.

According to a 2000 San Diego State University report, the annual cost of providing law enforcement, criminal justice services, and emergency medical care to criminal illegal immigrants in San Diego County is more than \$50 million annually. Although that number has likely increased, it is unknown by how much. The Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties estimates that the uncompensated cost of treating illegal immigrants in San Diego County has grown by 63% in the last five years to \$119 million in 2005.

Many core county programs, including but not limited to public health services, county jails, alcohol & drug treatment centers, and child protective services, are being used by illegal immigrants. Unfortunately, no comprehensive study has been done to determine how much that costs the taxpayers of San Diego County.

The public has a right to know how much illegal immigration costs their county government. This information would also be useful in petitioning the federal government for increased reimbursement and grants.

SUBJECT: THE COST OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION TO SAN DIEGO COUNTY
(District: All)

Recommendation(s)

CHAIRMAN HORN:

Direct the CAO to return to the Board with a report on what would be involved if the County were to conduct a study to determine the fiscal impact of illegal aliens on county services. The report should address what reliable information the study will be able to collect on the question of the fiscal impact, as well as the costs to conduct the study.

BACKGROUND:

San Diego County, with Mexico at its southern border, is adversely affected by the tide of illegal immigrants entering the United States. A recent Pew Hispanic Center study estimates the number of illegal immigrants inside the U.S. has grown to at least 12 million and now makes up one in every 20 workers.

According to a 2000 San Diego State University report, the annual cost of providing law enforcement, criminal justice services, and emergency medical care to criminal illegal immigrants in San Diego County is more than \$50 million annually. Although that number has likely increased, it is unknown by how much. A 2001 Arizona State University study reported that between San Diego and Imperial counties, San Diego County shoulders 90% of the financial burden of illegal immigration. The Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties estimates that the uncompensated cost of treating illegal immigrants in San Diego County has grown by 63% in the last five years to \$119 million in 2005.

Many core county programs, including but not limited to public health services, county jails, alcohol & drug treatment centers, and child protective services, are being used by illegal immigrants. Unfortunately, no comprehensive study has been done to determine how much that costs the taxpayers of San Diego County.

This issue is of great concern to me. In September 2005, while preparing the State of the County Address, I contacted the Sheriff's Department to determine how many illegal immigrants were in our jails and the feasibility of implementing new strategies to improve our identification of them. I also contacted many county staff members requesting information on the cost of illegal immigration to county services. It was soon evident that there is a significant lack of data regarding the impact of illegal immigration to county government. After trying to work through County Staff it has become obvious to me that a more formal action of the Board must be taken to get an analysis of costs generated to the taxpayers by illegal immigration.

The public has a right to know how much illegal immigration costs their county government. This information would also be useful in petitioning the federal government for increased reimbursement and grants.

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Today's action would ask the CAO to come back to the board with the cost of a comprehensive study on the fiscal impact of illegal immigration on county services.

I urge your support.

Respectfully submitted,

BILL HORN
Chairman
Supervisor, Fifth District

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(District: All)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s):

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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