



# **BILL HORN**

**SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

## **AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** September 25, 2007

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** ESTIMATING THE COST OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO (DISTRICT 5)

### **SUMMARY:**

#### **Overview:**

On May 9, 2006 this Board voted unanimously to investigate the cost of illegal immigration on the County's budget. A study of that information was completed in September of this year by Dr. John Weeks and Dr. David Eisenberg.

The numbers are astounding. Using methodology similar to that of the 2000 Border Counties Coalition analysis, Dr. Weeks and Dr. Eisenberg were able to give an estimate of the impact that a porous border has on County taxpayers. Approximately \$101.5 million was drained from the County budget in fiscal year (FY) 2006-2007. The estimated cost of these services per legal resident is \$35.31. In addition to County costs, roughly \$155 million was spent for uncompensated care at our community hospitals. While not a direct cost to the County, the hospitals are still a vital part of our communities. Those combined figures bring the total cost to county taxpayers to \$89.21.

Today's action would ask our Congressional Representatives to bring forth legislation on behalf of the County of San Diego to ease the financial burden to taxpayers that a lack of border enforcement has caused.

#### **Recommendation(s):**

##### **SUPERVISOR HORN:**

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a letter, for the signature of the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, which is addressed to Congressman Brian Bilbray, Chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus.
2. The letter will request Congressman Bilbray to work through the Caucus to discuss the possibility of: (a) sharing information between Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and local law enforcement, (b) directing dollars from the Social Security Administration (SSA) "earning suspense file" to the County of San Diego, and (c) restructuring the guidelines of Section 1011 of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) to distribute funding to cover more of the burden of local hospitals.

**SUBJECT: ESTIMATING THE COST OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO (DISTRICT 5)**

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Business Impact Statement:**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Due to our proximity to the border, San Diego County is required to provide services to a growing number of undocumented immigrants. These services are necessary to ensure Public Health and Public Safety. Unfortunately, many of these services are not reimbursed by the federal government. Since it is failed federal policy that leaves our border permeable, it is unfair to expect local governments and their taxpayers to pay the price.

According to the study an estimated \$75 million in FY 2006-2007 went to Public Safety alone. This includes the incarceration, prosecution, and defense of illegal immigrants. The study also shows that Probation costs are a combined \$10 million between Adult and Juvenile services. Information sharing between ICE and our local law enforcement agencies will arm our field deputies and officers with the information needed to identify criminals, thus giving them the tools to prevent more serious crimes from being committed.

Our local hospitals are essential to the well-being of our community. The unfair burden they are required to shoulder puts a strain on everyone who relies on them. By asking for reform on the guidelines of Section 1011 of the MMA with respect to distribution of funds, we will position our hospitals for additional funding to cover uncompensated care for undocumented immigrants. Currently the administrative process of those funds does not release all of the funds available. Consequently those dollars never reach our local service providers.

The SSA has an “earning suspense file” that holds funds paid by persons with social security numbers that do not match the SSA’s records. This fund includes dollars paid by illegal immigrants, and it would stand to reason that a portion of those funds should be allocated to local governments to cover the services of the same population.

Respectfully submitted,

BILL HORN  
Supervisor, Fifth District

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**CONCURRENCE(S)**

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

**Other Concurrence(s):** N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** Supervisor Bill Horn

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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