

Illegal immigration is on the forefront of many Americans' minds lately and with good reason. The Center for Immigration Studies has recently reported that our immigrant population is now 37 million, up from 27 million in 1997. 1 in 3 of these immigrants are here illegally. We have a problem that has exploded in the last 10 years with no appreciable change in border security since September 11 when we were supposed to take a hard look at the problem. We have security issues at home and our resources are running thin. Our education system is stretched, and immigration accounts for virtually all the national increase in public school enrollment in the last 2 decades. There is a worker present in 78% of immigrant households using at least one major welfare program, according to the same study. It's no surprise then that often times these immigrants can afford to work for lower wages. They are subsidized by our government to do so. Right now we are subsidizing a lot of illegal immigration with our robust social programs and it is an outrage that instead of coming to the United States as a land of opportunity, many come for the security guaranteed by government forced transfer payments through our welfare system. I have opposed giving federal assistance to illegal immigrants and have introduced legislation that ends this practice. In the last major House-passed immigration bill I attempted to introduce an amendment that would make illegal immigrants ineligible for any federal assistance. Unfortunately, that amendment was ruled "not relevant" to immigration reform. I believe it is very relevant to taxpayers, however, who are being taken advantage of through the welfare system. Illegal immigrants should never be eligible for public schooling, social security checks, welfare checks, free healthcare, food stamps, or any other form government assistance. The anchor baby phenomenon has also been very problematic. Simply being born on US soil to illegal immigrant parents should not trigger automatic citizenship. This encourages many dangerous behaviors and there are many unintended consequences as a result of this blanket policy. I am against amnesty and I have introduced an amendment to the Constitution (H.J. Res 46) which will end this form of amnesty. I have also supported the strengthening our border and increasing the number of border patrol agents. It is an outrage that our best trained border guards are sent to Iraq instead of guarding our borders. For national security, we need to give more attention to our own border which is being illegally breached every day, and yet the government shirks one of its few constitutionally mandated duties, namely to defend this country. Citizens lose twice with our current insecure border situation – we don't have the protection we should have, and then taxpayers have to deal with the fallout in the form of overstretched public resources and loss of jobs. The anger is understandable when it comes to illegal immigration and the problems with our borders. I will continue to fight in Congress for more effective ways to address these issues in keeping with the Constitutional mandate to protect America .