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## **FY11 Senate State Budget – Amendment 172.1**

### **Why a NO Vote on Anti-Immigrant Amendments was the right vote:**

**This was 27 pages of detailed legislation which no Senators had adequate time to review and fully comprehend. Making law through the budget is not the way to handle detailed and far reaching and extremely costly policy changes.**

### **Unemployment Benefits –**

**Higher costs for the state and it will be harder for citizens to get benefits, and undocumented immigrants were already barred:**

- To file for unemployment benefits you need a social security number which is verified through federal databases, therefore no undocumented immigrants are able to apply.
- Currently US citizens are allowed to declare their citizenship through an oath, this bill would require the state to set up a costly bureaucratic apparatus to physically view, capture, and store paper proof of citizenship for all applicants.
- This will mean that instead of continuing the streamlining of the filing process for unemployment benefits through phone and internet filings, the state will move in costly direction of opening more office and hiring additional staff to handle these new documents.
- Also if the proof provided by the applicant inadequate or cannot be confirmed through additional checks with the faulty federal verification system benefits will be cut off after the first payment.

### **Employment Verification–**

**It will be costly for small businesses and redundant since all employers must check immigration status through the federal I-9 form. It will also jeopardize the jobs of citizens.**

- The bill will force all companies and individuals doing business with any state entity or organization which contracts with a state entity to utilize E-verify.
- This means that if your business prints pamphlets for a state agency, then you and anyone you do business with must be registered to use E-verify and have proof of your registration from the department of labor.
- Example – If you own a catering business that provides food for a meeting of a business that has a contract of any kind with any state agency you must use E-verify
- Some small businesses have estimated that the cost of installing and running E-verify is as high as \$27,000
- The E-verify system uses the social security administration database, which the administration admits has millions of errors. These errors mean that US citizens are incorrectly reported as unauthorized to work, a mistake that can take months to correct leading to lost wages, and possibly loss of employment.

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### **Civil Liberties:**

#### **The bill is extremely costly and erodes privacy and civil liberty rights of ALL residents.**

- The bill mandates a hotline which anyone from anywhere can call and report someone of being undocumented, the reporter is kept completely confidential, they don't have to give a name or a reason.
- As soon as your name is mentioned on this line, regardless of why or by whom, an automatic investigation begins by the Attorney General's office into you and what your residency status and work authorization are.
- This opens the private affairs of all MA residents up to the scrutiny of the Attorney General's Office.
- It gives those with personal scores a means of harassing other residents.
- In addition the Attorney General's office has no new funds to implement this enormous investigative mandate, nor the other requirements hoisted upon the office in this bill.
- This program is also costly and redundant, as the Federal Government has a hotline for such information. This hotline has access to federal databases to confirm the validity of caller's claims.

### **Public Housing**

#### **Punishes citizen family members for the status of their relatives increases the financial burden on the Commonwealth**

- The bill would deny access to state public housing to citizen children whose parents may not have documentation.
- This will create a new wave of homelessness at a time when families in the Commonwealth are already struggling economically.
- The direct and indirect cost of increased homelessness would be an increased burden on the Commonwealth.

### **In state Tuition**

#### **Bars hard working, high-achieving students from contributing to the MA economy**

- These students were brought here as children and had no say in their status
- By not allowing these students to attend state colleges and universities at the same rates as their classmates depriving the Commonwealth of over 2.5 million in additional educational revenue. (Figure from Mass Taxpayers Association)
- The Commonwealth has already substantially invested in these students, by educating them through high school as required by the Supreme Court.

**For more information** please contact Nicole Tambouret, State Policy Director, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, 617 350 5480 x222, [ntambouret@miracoalition.org](mailto:ntambouret@miracoalition.org).

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