



ACA 14 – Benefits, Verification of State-funded Benefits Eligibility

Audra Strickland (R-Westlake Village)

CWA Position – Support

Talking Points

1. ACA 14 places an initiative measure on the ballot that, if approved by California voters, would amend the California Constitution to, within the limits of federal law, include proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency as a requirement for any individual 18 years of age or older to receive non-emergency state-funded benefits including welfare, non-emergency medical care, and college tuition assistance.
2. With a looming budget deficit estimated between \$8-16 billion this year, California simply cannot afford to continue providing costly benefits to individuals living here illegally and absorbing so much of our limited resources. In particular, it is blatantly unfair to our state's taxpayers to further endure tax increases and/or cuts to so many important programs including education, foster care, and certain health care services in order to subsidize illegal immigration.
3. A key component of reducing illegal immigration is removing the incentives to come to this country illegally. Eliminating many of the financial rewards currently available to illegal immigrants clearly removes a primary incentive for those considering coming here illegally. Also, this approach would likely be more effective in reducing illegal immigration rather than through more conventional "catch and release" efforts whereby the incentives that initially drew the deportees to this country will likely draw them back again.
4. This legislation clearly ensures that all federal laws regarding availability of government services will be adhered to. Additionally, the state would continue to help support the needs of those under 18 that likely are here through no fault of their own and should not be held to the same legal standard as adults.
5. This amendment would give the people of California the opportunity to speak for ourselves on this critical matter. There are clear indications that many state politicians are not inclined to recognize the ill-effects of illegal immigration on the state's financial health. Gov. Schwarzenegger, for example, in March 2008 stated his belief that "illegal immigration hasn't created the mess we are in," despite clear evidence of the economic toll in analyses by organizations such as the Federation of American Immigration Reform that estimated at an annual cost of \$10.5 billion to Californians for education, incarceration and medical care in 2004.
6. ABX3 20, also authored by Assemblywoman Strickland, includes the same language as ACA 14 in the form of a bill. This measure could be taken up in future weeks as part of an extraordinary session.

**CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA
OF CALIFORNIA**