



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on October 5, 2011

Alabama Law Prompts Illegal Aliens to Leave State

Alabama's tough new immigration law, most of which was upheld by a federal judge last week, is having its intended effect: Illegal aliens are leaving the state, and their children are disappearing from schools. Two news reports show that illegal aliens, who cost Alabama taxpayers some \$300 million annually, have read the handwriting on the wall: No more hiding; the free ride is over.



The news comes on the heels of federal Judge [Sharon Blackburn's decision](#) that most of the law does not interfere with federal prerogatives on immigration policy.

The law's most important codicils require police to check the immigration status of those they lawfully stop and reasonably suspect of being illegal aliens, and as well to detain and check the immigration status of those driving without a valid license.

Illegals on the Run

[According to](#) the *New York Times*, "The vanishing began Wednesday night, the most frightened families packing up their cars as soon as they heard the news.

They left behind mobile homes, sold fully furnished for a thousand dollars or even less. Or they just closed up and, in a gesture of optimism, left the keys with a neighbor. Dogs were fed one last time; if no home could be found, they were simply unleashed.

Writing of an area near a poultry plant that was filled with illegal-alien workers, the [Times dramatically observed](#), "It is hard to differentiate the silence of the workday, the silence of abandonment or the silence of paralyzing fear."

Such is the "paralyzing fear," the paper reported, that Hispanic immigrants are holed up, waiting for a change in the law.

"Until then, they are not leaving their homes unless absolutely necessary," the [Times said](#). This group of border jumpers gets "others to buy their groceries and tell their children to quit the soccer team and to come home right after school." According to the paper,

Rumors of raids and roadblocks are rampant, and though the new law has nothing to say about such things, distrust is primed by anecdotes, like one told by a local Hispanic pastor who said he was pulled over outside Birmingham on Wednesday, within hours of the ruling. His friend who was driving — and who is in the United States illegally — is now in jail on an unrelated misdemeanor charge, the pastor said, adding that while he was let go, a policeman told him he was no longer welcome in Alabama.

"I am afraid to drive to church," a 54-year-old poultry plant worker named Candelaria said, adding, "The lady that gives me a ride to work said she is leaving. She said she felt like a prisoner."



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Hispanic children are, as well, “vanishing” from schools, the [Associated Press reported](#). “Scores” of illegal alien families, it said, “have withdrawn their children from classes or kept them home this week, afraid that sending the kids to school would draw attention from authorities.”

That’s because the law requires school to check the immigration status of students.

The schools, apparently, don’t know how many have left, “[b]ut several districts with large immigrant enrollments — from small towns to large urban districts — reported a sudden exodus of children of Hispanic parents, some of whom told officials they planned to leave the state to avoid trouble with the law, which requires schools to check students’ immigration status.”

[According to](#) the AP, 200 Hispanic children have left schools in Montgomery County.

“In tiny Albertville, 35 students withdrew in one day,” [the news agency reported](#). Hispanics are 22 percent of that school district’s 4,200 students, and “about 20 students in Shelby County, in suburban Birmingham, either withdrew or told teachers they were leaving.”

Local and state officials are pleading with immigrant families to keep their children enrolled. The law does not ban anyone from school, they say, and neither students nor parents will be arrested for trying to get an education.

The exodus occurred despite one school official’s assurance on television, speaking in Spanish, that the schools are merely compiling statistics. The law does not ban illegal-alien children from attending public schools.

Oddly, [the AP reported](#), Alabama may have undermined its own law by sending schools “sample letters” they in turn can send to parents explaining the new requirements for enrolling children. “In an attempt to ease suspicions that the law may lead to arrests,” the [AP said](#), “the letter tells parents immigration information will be used only to gather statistics: “Rest assured,” the letter states, “that it will not be a problem if you are unable or unwilling to provide either of the documents.”

Jobs Open for Americans

[The Times observed](#) that the law is having the intended effect of putting American citizens and legal aliens back to work. [The paper](#) quoted Republican Sen. [Arthur Orr as saying](#) that there were already signs that the law was working, pointing out that the work-release center in Decatur, about 50 miles to the northwest, was not so long ago unable to find jobs for inmates with poultry processors or home manufacturers. Since the law was enacted in June, Orr noted, the center has been placing more and more inmates in these jobs, now more than 150 a day. The *Times* continued,

On Monday morning, one of the poultry processing plants in Albertville had a job fair, attracting an enormous crowd, a mix of Hispanic, black and white job-seekers, lining up outside the plant and down the street.

“This needed to be done years ago,” Shannon Lolling, 36, who has been unemployed for over a year, said of the law.

Mr. Lolling’s problem seemed to be with the system that had brought the illegal-immigrant workers here, not with the workers themselves.

“That’s why our jobs went south to Mexico,” he said. “They pay them less wages and pocket the money, keep us from having jobs.”

Judge Sides With Alabama — Mostly



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In upholding six of the 10 sections the Obama administration and its leftist cohort attempted to dismantle, [Judge Blackburn ruled](#) that the law, [HB 56](#), did not conflict with or otherwise intrude upon the federal government's control of immigration.

Nor does it, [she repeatedly wrote](#), interfere with American foreign policy interests, despite the protests of 16 nations that [filed briefs](#) opposing the law, and it does not place an "undue burden" upon immigrants.

Indeed, Blackburn sided with a judge who dissented from the ruling on Arizona's [SB 1070](#). She [heartily supported Judge Carlos Bea's opinion](#) that Congress [fully expected](#) close cooperation of the states in enforcing immigration law.

In August, [Blackburn blocked](#) the law until she could study it and mull the Obama administration's arguments against it. The [administration claims](#) HB 56 trespasses federal prerogatives on immigration, as well as the Fourth Amendment by permitting unlawful search and seizure. The administration also argues that the law unconstitutionally bars illegal-alien children from entering public school, even though the law merely requires the state to count them.

The administration's supporting legal team included the usual leftist organizations: the [American Civil Liberties Union](#), the [National Immigration Law Center](#), and the discredited [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), the latter an organization which smears anyone with whom it disagrees as a "racist" or "hater."

Those appeals to illogic and emotion formed a major part of the radical left's campaign against the law, which "[perpetuates bigotry](#)" and legalizes "[racial profiling](#)," they warned. [They argued](#) that the framers of HB 56 are "racist" and "mean-spirited," adding that Alabama is "once again on the wrong side of history," a reference to long-dead segregation laws.

[Blackburn's decision](#) is nearly the mirror opposite of that in the [case against](#) Arizona's law, SB 1070, where the Obama administration and radical left prevailed. They appealed the decision on Sept. 30, asking the federal court of appeals for the [11th Circuit](#) to block the law.

Photo: Migrant worker Jose Gonzalez gestures as he joins other farmers in a meeting with State Sen. Scott Beason, R-Gardendale, to discuss the Alabama immigration law in Steele, Ala., Oct. 3, 2011: AP Images



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