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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2013

TODD ROKITA
4TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE
ADMINISTRATION

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE

ROKITA.HOUSE.GOV

Michael

Avon, IN 46123

Dear

Thank you for attending my Avon Town Hall event on September 3, 2013. I would like to address your suggestion to penalize companies that hire illegal immigrants.

As the House of Representatives considers immigration reform proposals this fall, one bill that has passed the House Judiciary Committee is the Legal Workforce Act. This bill strengthens the penalties of violating the employment provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act, including E-Verify.

Under the Legal Workforce Act, first time offenders receive a penalty of \$2,500-5,000 per illegally-employed alien (up from \$250-2,000); the second offense results in a penalty of \$5,000-10,000 per illegally-employed alien (up from \$2,000-5,000); and all subsequent offenses result in a penalty of \$10,000-25,000 per illegally-employed alien (up from \$3,000-10,000). If the employer demonstrates a pervasive pattern of hiring illegal immigrants, the existing laws do allow for imprisonment of up to five years. I support the strengthening of these penalties.

Our top priority in any immigration reform bill must be to secure our borders. It is critical we stop the flow of undocumented immigrants. We must enforce the laws of the land and utilize technology to strengthen border security. A more efficient approval process could be a part of this solution. Furthermore, immigration reform must deal with undocumented immigrants that are already here. While I do not believe that deportation is a feasible or appropriate solution, neither is amnesty. Individuals in the United States illegally have committed a crime. **I strongly believe the punishment must fit the crime.**

Immigration reform must produce a system that supports the economic needs of our nation. Many of the undocumented immigrants in the U.S. now are productive members of society, contributing to our economic growth. We should also focus on highly skilled immigrants, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The process to immigrate should be clear and concise because is the first impression of the American government for new immigrants. With smart immigration policies, we can remain economically competitive with other nations.

Our immigration system is in serious need of reform. The solutions will not be easy, but action is necessary to secure our borders, address the undocumented immigrants currently in the U.S., and maintain our economic competitiveness. It is my hope that Congress can develop a workable solution that honors the rule of law and promotes the American values that have made our nation exceptional. Please be assured, as Congress considers immigration reform proposals, I will keep your views in mind.

Again, thank you for attending my Avon Town Hall event. Please stay in touch.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Rokita". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "T" and a cursive "Rokita".

Todd Rokita
Member of Congress

TR/sd