

By Congressman Steve King

The Obama administration has gone a few steps further, literally, in its efforts to aid illegal immigrants. Not only does the Obama Administration refuse to enforce immigration laws against illegal workers, it is actively aiding and abetting law-breakers with a "catch and drive them to work" policy for illegal immigrants. Most Americans have to get to work on their own.

Earlier this year, the Obama administration identified 60 illegal immigrants on their way to work to shovel snow at Gillette Stadium in Massachusetts. Instead of detaining the illegal immigrants and setting up a speedy deportation hearing, the Obama administration merely processed them for future court dates and unbelievably gave them a ride to work!

While President Obama tours the country claiming he is creating and saving jobs, his administration refuses to consider the most obvious job creation solution: enforcing laws that reduce the number of illegal immigrants holding American jobs. The impact of illegal immigration on American workers is devastating.

Consider facts revealed in a recent report from the non-partisan Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR): There are 25.8 million unemployed, underemployed or "discouraged" American workers.

The overwhelming consensus of experts is that the wages of less-educated, low-skill workers have been most negatively impacted by illegal immigration. The wage rates of these workers have declined while their unemployment rates have increased.

That's why I introduced H.R. 3580, the Illegal Deduction Elimination Act (New IDEA). New IDEA denies wages paid to illegals as a business expense.

Rather than a tax deduction, employers of illegals would have a tax liability. An IRS audit of an employer who pays illegals \$10 an hour would result in a cost to the employer of an additional \$6 per hour.

New IDEA would immediately reduce America's unemployment and result in the hiring of millions of unemployed Americans. It is a violation of federal law for an illegal immigrant to work without authorization. But millions do. The New IDEA Act will crack down on employers and illegal workers and level the playing field for

law-abiding American employers and employees.

We know this strategy will work.

As FAIR found in its report, after workplace enforcement actions during the Bush administration, the jobs vacated by illegal immigrants were filled by Americans and legal immigrants, including refugees. And the wages and conditions at the plants where the raids occurred have improved markedly.

This is a great example of how immigration enforcement can work to the benefit of citizens and legal immigrants. But the Obama administration insists on the opposite approach, making the Obama administration an accomplice in illegal immigration.

Who pays the price? The American people pay the price, including the 15 million who are currently on unemployment or the 10.8 million who also yearn to have a job. Half of them could have jobs if illegal immigrants did not have them instead!

Take the construction industry. According to the FAIR report, construction is now the second largest sector of the labor market employing illegal aliens. That's inexcusable.

I can attest with first-hand experience having founded and operated a construction company for 28 years that many Americans are willing and interested in doing these jobs. It is hard work, but it is good, honest work. Yet, there were an estimated 1.7 million illegal immigrants working in the construction industry in 2008 who have displaced American workers and driven down wages industry-wide.

And, as we get into the summer months, our children are also victims. According to the FAIR report, illegal immigrants take entry-level, low-skill jobs that used to introduce American teens to the job market. Today the unemployment rate for all American-born teens aged 16-19 is a whopping 25 percent.

A policy of non-enforcement undercuts the integrity of a nation built on the Rule of Law. It is an injustice to the American people, including all the legal immigrants who followed the law to come here. And it creates an unimaginable conflict for federal law enforcement officers who were sworn to uphold our nation's immigration laws but are instead told by the Obama administration to ignore the

laws and serve as chauffeurs for illegal immigrant job-holders.

President Obama now has the answer to the jobs problem. He could create eight million jobs for citizens and legal workers simply by enforcing immigration laws already in place and supporting New IDEA.

The ride illegal immigrants should be getting from federal law enforcement officers is not a ride to work - it should be a one-way trip to their home country. By doing the opposite, the President is stacking the deck against unemployed Americans at arguably the worst time in history.