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Lawmakers: Immigrant tuition is low on list

By Nancy Reardon Stewart

Patriot Ledger State House Bureau

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BOSTON — In-state tuition rates for illegal immigrants may be part of Gov. Deval Patrick's 2011 agenda, but many South Shore lawmakers say it doesn't belong there.

Several newly elected lawmakers — both Republicans and Democrats — from the region said they have no desire to tackle the issue when the new session starts in January.

"We've got many challenges and some real opportunities for further economic development," said state Rep. Thomas Calter, D-Kingston. "I don't understand why the governor would choose this as his top priority."

At a luncheon attended Tuesday by about 100 immigration advocates, Patrick vowed to push for the in-state rate, which is lower than what out-of-state students are charged, and to implement remaining reforms from an advisory panel's 2009 list of 130 recommendations.

State residents pay \$6,909 in tuition and fees at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, compared with \$13,198 for out-of-state residents. The in-state rate at University of Massachusetts at Amherst is \$11,732. The out-of-state rate is \$23,628.

The recommendation to offer in-state tuition rates to illegal-immigrant students has drawn loud criticism.

It's also something that Patrick supported throughout his first term as governor.

Tackey Chan, a Quincy Democrat elected as state representative in the 2nd Norfolk District earlier this month, said he does not support the governor on this matter.

Chan said illegal-immigrant students should not be denied access to public schools or higher education, but offering them the better rate is a different story.

"They can go, but they have to pay the full tuition rate like everyone else," Chan said.

One of Chan's soon-to-be House colleagues, Geoff Diehl, also opposes the tuition plan.

"There are savings to be realized if we eliminate funding of programs for illegal immigrants," the Whitman Republican said. "My district was very strongly in favor of eliminating waste, especially in this area."

Diehl isn't alone in believing that the governor's take on the issue doesn't jibe with public opinion.

"I think the governor is completely out of touch with residents of the commonwealth who have clearly spoken out on this very definitely," said state Sen. Robert Hedlund, R-Weymouth. "Even House Democrats voted against it."

Hedlund was referring to a House budget amendment this past summer that would have implemented several crackdowns on state-funded benefits for illegal immigrants, including making the in-state tuition rate off-limits to them.

Many Democrats crossed party lines to vote for the package, but it failed by four votes.

A similar amendment put forward in the Senate by Republicans was approved, but it was removed from the budget later by a conference committee.

Both amendments would have prohibited illegal immigrants from being eligible for the in-state tuition rate.

"You have a combination of Democrats in the Legislature who think it's a bad idea and Democrats who probably like it but feel it would be damaging to them," Hedlund said.

Calter said Wednesday that he's "not far from where the Republicans are."

"There are people on both sides of the aisle who have a clear understanding of the work ahead of us," Calter said. "I don't think it's a political or ideological divide as much as it's perhaps a different point of view on what our priorities are."

Material from the Associated Press was used in this report. Reach Nancy Reardon Stewart at nreardon@ledger.com.

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Comments (13)
Buzz Killington
1 day ago
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[Redacted comment box]

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'You wash my back, I'll wash yours'. Gov. Deval is returning the favor for all the illegals voting for him. They answered the call of 'get out and vote for us to have a chance'.

seriousordelerious

24 hours ago

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once again proving how out of touch deval always was/is/will always be...

thanks m****s...

ABOUTBOOKS

24 hours ago

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What part of illegal is it that they don't understand ?????? It is illegal to drink and drive , it is illegal to kill someone , it is illegal to assault a person , illegal immigrants get a discount on what legal citizens pay full for !!!!!

No liberals

23 hours ago

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Deval does more for ILLEGAL aliens than he does for law-abiding, tax paying citizens of this state. Truly despicable.

Kahn Bluhm

23 hours ago

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[Redacted comment box]

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All these conversations, tuition rates, etc. are just a diversion from the central issue. Illegals should be arrested and deported. Period. Any public official who condones illegal behavior by anyone is anti-American.

missremembered

22 hours ago

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[Redacted comment box]



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So If I renounce my citizenship(which I have been considering), will I be able to get my MBA for free?

missremembered
22 hours ago

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Report Abuse

So If I renounce my citizenship(which I have been considering), will I be able to get my MBA for free?

archstanton
21 hours ago

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We should consider ourselves lucky that the Governor waited almost two weeks after the election to re-embark on his 'screw the law-abiding citizen policy'. They seem to think we should feel privileged to support all of the layabouts and illegals with all of these handouts.

I agree with Buzz Killington, that what re-elected these Democrooks was nothing short of wholesale voter fraud. Every one of these illegals showed up at the polls and voted a straight Democrat ballot on behalf of some recently deceased citizen... probably several times.

Cougar111

20 hours ago

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Why is any Massachusetts taxpayer surprised that Deval is once again aggressively pushing his New Americans Agenda and the 130 taxpayer funded entitlements it proposes be handed on a silver platter to ILLEGALS at the legal citizens' expense? This absurd agenda has never been a secret. Speak Up and Matter has been alerting people to Deval's planned robbery of the Commonwealth's legal residents for almost a year at: <http://speakupandmatter.blogspot.com/2009/12/say-no-to-illegal-aliens-benefitting.html>

Silence is acceptance. Please continue opposing these ludicrous agendas or you have nothing to complain about if Deval and his cronies get one after another pushed through regardless of what the legal, Massachusetts taxpayers find unacceptable. Join the over 2,500 of your fellow citizens who aren't quitting at:

<http://www.gopetition.com/petition/32890.html>

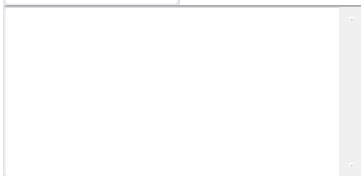
Patrick, fueled by the insanely powerful unions and guilt-ridden liberals in MA won a battle on Nov. 2nd . The taxpaying, legal citizens will lose the war only when they stop speaking up for themselves -- the illegals aren't stopping, neither should we!

Cougar100

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It may or may not be a priority for some but it certainly is for Deval Patrick -- that is, and always has been obvious.

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Bserious
20 hours ago
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This is a no brainer. Deval won't be running again. The local reps have to run every two years.

kiljoy
17 hours ago
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Idiot union voters. Good luck!

Brittanicus
17 hours ago
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THE DREAM ACT IS AN UNDISCLOSED ROAD TO AMNESTY AND MORE CHAIN MIGRATION

The Dream Act is not in the law books yet and never should it be? The Dream act is a very clever deception employed to give hundreds and thousands of children of illegal aliens, a financial advantage against out-of-State citizen children or legal residents. The cost will be yet another yoke upon the taxpayers as usual, that shows Liberals remain indifferent to the economic consequences of this law. Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada is the main mastermind of the Dream Act along with his hard-core Liberal Extremists like Nancy Pelosi, Barbara Boxer and other Liberals. (Some ethical group should question Nancy Pelosi, about the illegal aliens employed on her Central California plantations?) What the progressives are not telling the public is that they can guarantor their immediate family, of Mothers, Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Uncles and Aunts to live in America that taxpayers will finally have to subsidize? Then that immediate family can then sponsor other family members, which is called Chain Migration.

There is no finality to this matter and can reach into the future and adjoin millions to our populace. The Dream Act is a very artful piece of law, which is unfair to American school children. Why is it the children of foreign nationals should be given special preferences over the children of citizens? In Houston Texas there is a contentious battle materializing over Voter Fraud. The King Street Patriots are counter suing Democrats over the discovery of Voter Fraud in Harris County. Catherine Engelbrecht, filed a counter suit in Austin on last Monday, claiming defamation. This is because her group detected election abuses disclosed, documented, by the King Street Patriots which included multiple voter registrations, illegal aliens voter registrations, fraudulent voter information, counterfeit voter signatures and election officials and orally harassment of the electorate to either change their ballot choices or vote a straight Democratic label.

This includes the actual engineering the voting machines for the voters and elected officials. In addition to Democratic Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, campaigning directly outside polling places. The two organizations suing are Texans for Public Justice and Texans Together Education Fund. Both groups receive their money from the Open Society Institute (OSI). OSI was founded in 1993 by George Soros to 'Build Vibrant & Tolerant Democracies.' Learn more about the illicit philosophies of the billionaire George Soros, out to undermine and erode our freedoms and the US Constitution by researching the web. My thoughts are from Senator Reids state and in other places across the country; that there has been voter manipulation of voter machines without doubt that remains undisclosed. Votes should re-counted in States like California and Nevada, because there are millions of illegal aliens in these states and because of lax voting laws, that are very open to questionable practices.

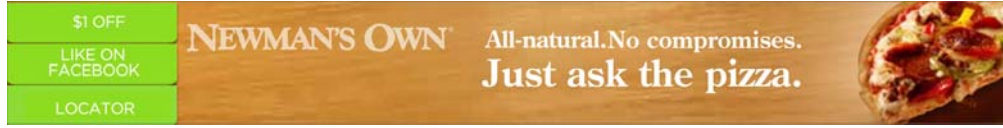
The electronic machine in Nevada was compromised by already furnished names as Sen. Harry Reid, when voters had not chosen as this Senator. These voting machines are maintained by the SIEU union technicians that must be questioned for irregularities. A must read is an investigation of Voter Fraud and in depth information about the most corrupt politicians in Washington at www.judicialwatch.org Their statement says it is nonprofit group of Promoting Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in Government, Politics and the Law. GOOGLE--illegal immigration costs of instant citizenship laws for babies born deliberately in America of illegal alien parents to permanently reside here. Google-- costs if an Amnesty is passed by either party. Google--'The dark Side of illegal immigration' Go to the website www.numberusa.com about the future consequences of out-of-control illegal immigration and a substantiated uncompleted border fence.

Finally this being 'politically Correct' is turning our country into a covering population, another ideology passed onto us by Liberal extremists. We should follow the example of the Israeli Airlines of asking questions and profile instead of using abusive body scanners or this strange sensual pat downs, which is against our civil rights. This 'Political Correctness' is not a strong deterrents against stopping foreign nationals with heinous intentions and instead we should use experienced profilers, racial or not and stop this abhorrent hogwash from radicals, who have infiltrated our government. Now is the time to release your fury on all members of Congress, by calling (202)224-3121 beginning this Thursday!

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