

Tough Immigration Law Prompts Mass Exodus From Oklahoma

Although no one knows for sure how many immigrants in our midst are illegal, a tough anti-illegal-immigrant law recently passed in Oklahoma has prompted some illegal aliens to “self-deport” themselves from the state. According to a recent report by KTUL TV in Tulsa, tens of thousands of Hispanics have fled the area in anticipation of the law, which does not take effect until November 1. Most illegal immigrants have gone to either Kansas or Arkansas, but how long they will feel secure in those states remains to be seen. Arkansas will soon enact a law much like Oklahoma’s, and Kansas is considering similar legislation.

Station KOTV in Oklahoma City reported divergent opinions about the new legislation, State House Bill 1804, which requires that every agency or political subdivision of the Sooner State verify the lawful presence in the United States of anyone 18 years of age

or older who has applied for state or local public benefits. State officials must verify legality by means of a birth certificate, visa, or citizenship papers. Legal immigrants, therefore, have nothing to fear from the law, but controversy reigns nonetheless.

“Over 20,000, at least, have already left, and that’s devastating to families, economies, businesses and churches,” claimed Reverend Victor Orta of the American Dream Coalition, which opposes the new law. But in what way is the exodus of illegal immigrants from Oklahoma devastating the state? Carol Helm of IRON, Immigration Reform for Oklahoma Now, opined: “I think the frustration of the [American] Dream Coalition and other organizations opposed to [House Bill] 1804 is that they refuse to uphold the rule of law. Their aim is to devise additional methods to break the laws.”