

Friends

The LI Immigrant Alliance is mobilizing against the latest anti-immigrant bill before the Suffolk County Legislature, IR 1105, and needs your help. Under guise of protecting the "law abiding" the bill is claimed to be a law & order attempt to locally enforce immigration policy by revoking Suffolk contractors' licenses..

At the hearing in the legislature on Tuesday, we saw the usual supporters of these anti-immigrant bills come out to testify how the undocumented bring crime, loitering, littering, murder and child molestation to the decent taxpayers neighborhoods; how the daylaborers are attacking the sacred lawns of Suffolk by urinating and defecating on them (I kid you not.) Minutemen testified at Tuesday's hearing how those who have cheated on their taxes drove them out of business.

One supportive legislator asked every person who testified against the bill if he or she approved tax cheating, as if this bill would address the massive unfairness of tax policy that make it perfectly legal to allow corporations and the wealthy thousands of ways to not pay taxes, seemingly the holy grail of Republican ideology.

Evidently the bill's sponsors do not have the votes to take it out of committee and are now trying to circumvent this legislative process by having it voted out of committee by the legislature. Ed Romaine and Jay Schneiderman, are sitting on the fence and have not indicated how they would vote. In the past while fencesitting on other anti-immigrant bills, they have finally voted with the nativists. They need to hear from us now that we do not need further division, further rancorous hostility to undocumented immigrants.

Instead of honoring these hard working people for contributing so significantly to our economic well-being, we risk making our towns even more inhospitable and threaten our own economic viability with labor shortages already severe in our tourist and agricultural sectors.. As everybody knows, without the labor of the immigrants our economy would tank and our taxes would soar.

We know our immigration system is broken and must be fixed by Congress, not petty, punitive discriminatory laws by our Suffolk County Legislature that only encourages our town boards to follow suit. IR 1105 is not about finding solution, but only agitating residents' fear and anxiety. Newsday, in its editorial on this bill, has called it "political pandering of the first order." Please call, fax, email write Jay & Romaine, asking them to show courage to go against the clamor of nativists and patriotic Minutemen and vote NO on IR1105.

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Thanks, Michael O'Neill