There is a bit of humor there because I cannot for a minute believe that it is, I do not know how deep seated the feeling is. It does not matter. When Hillary Clinton says that, it sends a message pretty loud and clear to the rest of us that, politically speaking, we are on the right side of this issue.

The American public wants and demands immigration reform. They want an end to illegal immigration. They want a reduction of the number of illegal immigrants into the country, and we have understood, at least that that is the mood of the country and respond to it. That is the nature of the system. That is exactly what we are supposed to be doing here, and it is happening. I have certainly seen it, and I am glad of it.

I think perhaps the most significant event of which I am aware in terms of its impact on this debate was the passage of Proposition 200 in Arizona. Mr. Speaker, this was a fascinating sort of exercise in democracy. The people of the State of Arizona recognized that the Federal Government has essentially left them high and dry. The borders are undefended; they are the funnel. Arizona had become the funnel through which hundreds of thousands of people, in fact, millions of people, a year were coming across the borders of Mexico and the United States into this country. Their social services were being depleted. Hospitals, schools, all the things that we are concerned about, the rates of crime committed by people, illegal aliens was rising dramatically. Incarceration rates were therefore up.

So the people finally got a belly full of it, and they could get no satisfaction from the Federal Government. They could get no satisfaction from the State government. Most of the people there were afraid to touch this thing, and the people in government were afraid to touch it. In fact, every Member of Congress, everybody from the Arizona delegation opposed it, Republican and Democrat. The two Senators opposed it.

I should back up and say, as a result of being so frustrated, the people of Arizona put an initiative on the ballot. It said a number of things. One was that if you are not here in this country legally, you cannot get social service benefits in the State of Arizona. It also said that you are going to have to work for 16, 15, 14? You will find willing worker. You have willing worker. You have willing workers for $18 a day. Are you willing to bring them here and allow them to compete against an American worker? How about the guy who is presently employed here. The Federal Government has no role in this, I ask? No role in trying to control those borders and thereby, yes, prop up wages. Yes, it is true, propping up wages is a result of controlling your borders. That is true. But this is the difficulty we face here.

But as I say, Mr. Speaker, I think things are changing. I think Prop 200 shows that there is a bit of a fire hollered by many people who are politically astute, Hillary Clinton being one, of course, many others now who I see standing up and talking about this and going on television about it. It is great. I am happy to have the support of every single one of them. I will happily turn over the role of immigration reform leader to those who have positions of authority in this body which I do not have and probably never will.

I like to see a committee chairman on our side. I like to see people as prominent as Mrs. Clinton on the other side on this issue. It is fine with me because what it tells the rest of us is that it is politically acceptable now to move in the direction of immigration reform. And we will be moving that way I think tomorrow. We should have to keep our eyes on it.

The opponents will not simply walk away from the battle, but they know they are on the defensive, and they are becoming very concerned about that, as well they should because the tide is turning. And we will be, I think, able to say by the end of this legislative session that we have actually won some battles, that we have actually brought the issue to the fore and been successful in many different ways.

So I just want to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that every night when I do a Special Order and I go back, usually the fax machines are going and the e-mails are coming in and the phones are ringing from people who have felt strongly about this for a long time; and they come from all over the country, they come from every area of the country, north, south, east and west, small towns, large towns, people from people with Hispanic surnames, because it is just so true that this issue does in fact touch a nerve. Americans. It touches a nerve with Americans.

They want to keep America a place in which they can be proud, and they want to keep our borders secure, and they want to be able to keep this bit of America to their children and grandchildren, and of course, in that endeavor, I wish them and us all the best.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE
By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:
Ms. Eshoo (at the request of Ms. Pelosi) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness in the family.
Mr. Etheridge (at the request of Ms. Pelosi) for today on account of medical reasons.
Mr. Hinchey (at the request of Ms. Pelosi) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness.
Mr. Snyder (at the request of Ms. Pelosi) for today and the balance of the week on account of illness.
Mr. Stupak (at the request of Ms. Pelosi) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.
Mr. LoBiondo (at the request of Mr. Delay) for today on account of attending the memorial service of a constituent who was killed in the line of service in Iraq.
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SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. DeFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly, at 10 a.m., the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 9, 2005.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

604. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 15-702, “Closing of a Portion of a Public Alley in Square 2032, S.O. 02-31, 2005, the Section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.

620. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Establishment of Vaccination Clinics; User Fees for Investigational New Drug (IND) Influenza Vaccine Services and Vaccines (RIN: 0575-AC28) received January 19, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

608. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary for Rural Development, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department’s final rule — Establishment of Vaccination Clinics; User Fees for Investigational New Drug (IND) Influenza Vaccine Services and Vaccines (RIN: 0575-AC28) received January 21, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

609. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting a report, covering FY 2004, concerning surplus Federal real property disposed of to educational institutions, pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.


