

U.S. Rep. Alexander opposes amnesty plan for illegal immigrants

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The Town Talk

Alexander, R-Quitman, in a column written to constituents, says, "In my opinion, and in the opinion of the majority of my constituents, whether or not to grant amnesty to the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants living in our country is not a question that requires debate. The answer is clear: The United States must not reward those who break the law."

Alexander represents the 5th Congressional District, which includes Rapides Parish and other parts of Central Louisiana.

He notes in his column that a group of senators introduced legislation to allow illegal aliens to remain in the United States by placing them on a "probationary" status and allowing them to continue working on a "Z" visa status. After several years, a "Z" visa holder would be eligible to become a perma-

nent resident and later a citizen, Alexander noted in his column.

"Proponents of the bill say this delay in citizenship does not equal amnesty, but they aren't fooling anyone -- not even us 'country folk.' Amnesty occurs when an illegal immigrant is not deported as required by law but is legalized and allowed to stay. So they can call it -- or not call it -- what they will, but I will not support amnesty in any form," Alexander said.

"Beyond amnesty, however, the bill contains many other flaws. For example, the Senate bill does not require 'Z' visa holders in probationary status to pay back taxes owed for the time they worked illegally in the United States," he added.

He said the proposed legislation is not tough enough on passport fraud and misuse.

"It actually weakens existing criminal laws prohibiting passport fraud and misuse by eliminating increased punish-

ments for violations intended to deter serious crimes such as drug trafficking and terrorist acts.

"This leads to the biggest flaw of all -- provisions that will weaken our national security," Alexander said.

"Foremost in the immigration debate should be our understanding that open borders make our nation extremely vulnerable to terrorism. Not all illegal immigrants come to America to work hard and create a better life for their families; many are terrorists who are entering our nation to cause us harm. Congress must take steps to guard against this threat; but the Senate, it seems, is taking backward steps."

He added, "I will continue to work with my fellow members of the House Immigration Reform Caucus to ensure that the House of Representatives does not pass this weak and injudicious legislation should it come before us for a vote."