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Businesses fret over AZ immigration bill

Arizona is deciding whether or not to veto the country's toughest immigration bill. Some business leaders worry it force some businesses to leave the state. Jill Barshay reports.

TEXT OF STORY

BILL RADKE: Arizona's Governor needs to decide by tomorrow whether to veto the toughest immigration bill in the country or let it become law. Some business leaders there worry this anti-immigrant bill will make Arizona's economy worse than it is, as Jill Barshay reports.

JILL BARSHAY: This Arizona bill would require the police to check the status of people they suspect to be illegals. About 2 million, or 30 percent, of Arizona's residents are Hispanic. Most of them -- more than 1.5 million -- are here legally.

John Boyd runs The Boyd Company. He advises big corporations on where to locate their facilities. He says the timing could not be worse.

JOHN BOYD: We're in a recession. Arizona businesses have enough problems right now.

Boyd worries that businesses like food processors will stop coming to Arizona.

BOYD: It was certainly advantage to have access to cheap workers to do jobs that no one else wants to do. This bill may interfere with that in-migration and hurt the diverse rich labor market and increase operating costs.

Boyd says business leaders are bracing for a drop in tourism and for national Hispanic groups to organize boycotts. Republican Governor Jan Brewer has a pro-business reputation. But she's also up for re-election this November.

I'm Jill Barshay for Markeplace.

COMMENTS

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By bruce ackman
From richmond, VA, 04/23/2010

Mr. Barry,

Your comment does not take into account the effect on the legal Hispanic community. I would not locate my business where I thought the authorities would harass my employees. I would not locate somewhere I thought the authorities might disrupt my business while hunting for illegals.

By Brian Barry
From Manhattan Beach, CA, 04/23/2010

Your peice did not mention the mayhem and anarchy along the border. It didn't mention that a significant number of the immigrants aren't coming here to work. Unless your business model is dependent on a steady flow of desperate illegal aliens for you to take advantage of, the new law in Arizona shouldn't bother you. Considering the current levels of unemployment and the fact that the migrant population has bankrupted states like California I found your commentary to be revolting.