

The Immigration Committee of the LWVBC has been following legislative proposals at the national level, in the states of Arizona, Colorado, and Utah, and in our own Boulder County:

**At the national level:**

- At the national level, President Bush supported Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) measures introduced in Congress in 2005, 2006 and 2007, none of which passed. These proposals called for stronger border enforcement and expanded guest worker programs while at the same time allowing a path to citizenship for the undocumented.
- The DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors), if passed, would allow youth of good character who entered the country as minors and graduated from a U.S. high school or earned a G.E.D. to apply for conditional legal residency. On completion of 2 years of college or military service, they would be eligible for permanent legal status. Stand-alone bills were introduced several times and the act was contained within the 2007 CIR proposal. A version passed the House in December 2010 but failed by a 5 vote margin to advance to debate on the Senate floor. Analysts from the Migration Policy Institute [estimate](#) that about 825 thousand individuals, 38% of potential beneficiaries, would likely obtain legal status through the DREAM act.

**In Arizona:**

- SB 1070 was signed into law in Arizona in April 2010. The act's stated intention is to "make attrition through enforcement the public policy of all state and local government agencies in Arizona." The bill's constitutionality was challenged in court and its implementation of some portions was blocked by the judge's injunction. Various groups have organized boycotts of Arizona in protest over the law's passage. The Immigration Policy Center (IPC) describes the [impact](#) this law has on residents of the state. A recent Washington Post [editorial opinion](#) piece points out some limitations of the IPC report while noting that the business community is closely watching developments in Arizona.

**In Colorado:**

- In the 2011 Colorado Legislature, bills were introduced which were similar to Arizona's SB 1070 but both bills died in committee.
- A Colorado Senate bill which has received a lot of publicity is SB-126, the ASSET bill (Advancing Students for a Stronger Economy Tomorrow). The bill would allow Colorado high school graduates who are illegal immigrants to attend a state college or university at the in-state tuition rate. As of 4/3/2011, this bill has been referred to the Senate chamber for a vote. There are currently 11 other states that provide in-state tuition to youth who meet conditions similar to those in the ASSET bill, including neighboring states of Utah, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico.
- HB-1149 would require that applicants for any state, local, or federal public benefit produce a social security card, in addition to identification requirements in current law. Each applicant would also be required to sign an affidavit stating that he or she is a citizen or legal resident.
- Under HB-1252, the Secretary of State would compare information in the statewide computerized voter registration system against other state and federal agency records to determine the citizenship status of registered voters. Following a review of available

evidence, a notice would be sent to any registered voter who the secretary believes is not a U.S. citizen. Registered voters receiving such a notice have 90 days to submit approved documentation to the secretary.

- The Colorado [General Assembly website](#) makes it easy to get updates on status of all bills making their way through the Colorado legislative process.

#### **In Utah**

- The governor has signed several bipartisan immigration bills into law. Supporters say the package of bills balances enforcement, compassion, and economic realities. Opponents have begun boycotts of Utah and are threatening lawsuits. One of these bills allows those who are now in the U.S. illegally to obtain a permit to live and work in Utah after passing a background check and paying a penalty of up to \$2,500. Their immediate relatives also would be able to live lawfully in Utah. The bill also holds employers accountable to verify the legal status of their workers and allows for enforcement against those who will not comply with the legislation. The bill requires a federal waiver before it can be implemented, as federal law prohibits the employment of undocumented immigrants. The bill includes a "trigger date" of July 1, 2013. In the event the federal government has not granted a waiver by that date, Utah will move forward with implementing their provisions.
- A separate Utah bill calls for a commission to be responsible for creating a pilot to study the feasibility of an exchange of workers between the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon and Utah. Another bill allows police the option of checking the immigration status of anyone stopped for a felony or serious misdemeanor.
- Information about Utah bills can be found on that state's [website](#).

#### **In Boulder county:**

- While at one time immigrants settled mostly in the entry cities on the coasts, today there are increasing numbers of foreign born throughout the country. Boulder county is no exception. A *Daily Camera* article explains that Census figures from American Community Surveys tell us the [neighborhoods](#) where immigrants are concentrated.