

This weekend, Republicans from across Georgia converged on the Gwinnett Center to attend the 2007 GOP Convention. Other than electing a great new Chairman, Sue Everhart, and a very competitive election for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman, it was one of the most low-key conventions ever attended.

Since 1988, I have been actively involved in the Republican Party. Various issues tend to grow and dissipate during different years and election cycles. I can honestly say that I have never seen the absolute frustration and intensity that has risen from the issue of immigration. During the last month, I have been in 12 of the 15 counties. In addition, I have attended party meetings in seven of those counties. It is safe to assume that Georgians are ready, and eager, for an honest and open debate regarding immigration and illegal immigrants.

Regardless of your position on the issue, we can all agree that something must be done to secure our nation's borders. Many of you recently read of the recent success in preventing a terrorist plot against United States troops on United States soil. Three of the "Fort Dix Six" were in the United States illegally. The issue of immigration addresses more than just an economic impact; there are social, cultural, legal, security, and yes, moral, concerns as well.

When I was running to become your Chairman of the 9<sup>th</sup> District GOP, I stated repeatedly that we needed to applaud our elected officials when they were correct and encourage them to do the right thing when the principles and ideals of our party could potentially be at risk. On immigration, the time has come to engage our elected officials. To assist you, I have provided contact information for the key players that you helped elect in Washington:

President George W. Bush 202-456-1414  
Vice President Dick Cheney 202-456-9000  
U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson 202-225  
Saxby Chambliss 202-224-3521

US Senator Saxby Chambliss Washington (202) 224-3521 and/or Atlanta 770-763-9090  
To email your opinion to Senator Chambliss, visit the following weblink:  
<http://chambliss.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContactUs.ContactForm&CFID=51392169&CFTOKEN=14703251>

US Senator Johnny Isakson Washington (202) 224-3643 and/or Atlanta (770) 661-0999  
To email an opinion to Senator Isakson, visit the following weblink:  
<http://isakson.senate.gov/contact.cfm>

While Congressman Nathan Deal is not in the Senate where the bill is being debated, his contact information is also available:

Congressman Nathan Deal Washington (202) 225-5211 or Gainesville (770) 535-2592  
<http://www.house.gov/deal/contact/default.shtml>

While immigration is primarily a federal issue, the Georgia General Assembly passed one of the most stringent laws in the entire country last session. While he is a state senator, Senator Chip Pearson has forwarded a proposal to Washington that would essentially require illegal immigrants to leave the United States prior to being eligible to qualify for a job permit. Whether you agree or disagree with his proposal, it would appear that rule of law could be partially restored through his approach. To view additional information, please visit the following link:

[http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/shared-blogs/ajc/politicalinsider/entries/2007/05/21/pearson\\_send\\_12\\_million\\_back\\_b.html#jump](http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/shared-blogs/ajc/politicalinsider/entries/2007/05/21/pearson_send_12_million_back_b.html#jump)

For the good of the Republican Party, we must encourage our leaders in Washington to listen to the people prior to taking a vote on this critical issue. More importantly, we must focus on the immediate, as well as long-term, impact that any comprehensive piece of legislation of this magnitude will have on our nation. Our beloved nation, and its very soul, is at stake. This is what leadership is all about.

Kevin J. Harris