

GEORGIA 2006; The issue: Illegal immigration; Candidates for governor answer questions about a topic that affects not only immigrants' lives, but the state's economy and tax-supported services. Libertarian candidate Garrett Michael Hayes did not respond.

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Body

Note: The responses have been edited for space.

Should employers be punished for knowingly hiring **illegal immigrants**?

Sonny Perdue, Republican, incumbent

I believe all citizens who knowingly break the law should be held accountable. However, I don't expect employers to do the job of the federal government and INS and become experts in document verification. We need to secure our borders, create fraud proof documents, and then we can start talking **about** what role private business needs to play.

Mark Taylor,

I think there should be tougher penalties for those employers who knowingly hire **illegal** aliens, but there must be intent to break the law. Employers who unknowingly hire **illegal immigrants** should **only** be subject to existing laws regarding employment and taxation.

A bill **supported** by the president would provide a path to citizenship for people illegally in the country --- some have referred to this as an amnesty provision. Do you **support** such a proposal?

Sonny Perdue, Republican, incumbent

The first step is to secure the border. Period. After our border is secure, we can talk **about** a sensible policy that integrates legal workers into our **economy** as they are needed. I **do not** believe that any new **immigration** policy should allow **illegal immigrants** to break line in front of people that have been following the law and waiting to enter our country legally.

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Mark Taylor,

We should avoid any provision that rewards illegal behavior; providing amnesty will only encourage more illegal immigration.

The Georgia National Guard is currently helping patrol the U.S.-Mexico border. How long should they continue to serve in this role?

Sonny Perdue, Republican, incumbent

I was proud that the members of our Georgia National Guard answered the call when I asked for volunteers to help secure the U.S.-Mexico border. It is my expectation that this is simply a stop-gap measure and that the federal government will take more permanent steps to safeguard our border.

Mark Taylor,

If asked to deploy more Georgia troops to protect our borders, I would support the president, provided they were rested from any overseas duty. With an illegal immigrant population that has increased by 114 percent, we have to do everything possible to stop this gigantic influx.

Do you think the influx of illegal immigrants into Georgia has held down wages for people legally in this country?

Sonny Perdue, Republican, incumbent

I am a facts-based kind of guy. I wouldn't want to speculate on such a comment without seeing some reliable facts on the topic. But one can generally assume that laws of supply and demand work in the workforce as they do in the rest of the free market. If supply is affected then demand (and therefore wages) could be as well.

Mark Taylor,

Wages have suffered in this country because many of our well paying jobs have been outsourced to foreign countries. I support policies that will keep and create jobs for our hard working Georgians such as raising the minimum wage and providing incentives to companies that bring well paying jobs to Georgia. We already have a guest worker program that allows immigrants to work in this country legally, but condoning illegal labor is not fair to our hard working citizens.

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Graphic

Photo: Sonny Perdue

Photo: Mark Taylor

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