

Dole Urges Illegal-Immigrant Curbs; In California, Candidate Pushes for Law Letting States Deny Education

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Byline: Thomas B. Edsall, Washington Post Staff Writer

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Body

Robert J. **Dole** today intensified efforts to draw a clear distinction between his stand and that of President Clinton on immigration, the issue that propelled Republican Pete Wilson from underdog to landslide victor in this **state's** 1994 gubernatorial contest.

Dole, the presumptive GOP presidential nominee, endorsed an amendment to pending immigration legislation that would allow **states** to refuse to provide public **education** to children who are **illegal immigrants**.

"It's not that we are not compassionate," **Dole** said, but "where do you draw the line?" Illegal immigration "represents a drain on public resources, again with a disproportionate impact on **California**," he said, costing taxpayers in this **state** \$ 2.6 billion for **education**, health and incarceration costs.

The sponsor of the amendment, Rep. Elton Gallegly, a Republican who represents a part of Los Angeles, spoke before **Dole**, saying, "It's time to stop making apologies for putting Americans first."

Dole faces an uphill struggle in forcing a battle on the Gallegly amendment. The House passed the provision, but it was not included in the Senate version of immigration reform. A House-Senate conference committee is expected to take up the legislation soon, but 47 senators, enough to sustain a filibuster and keep the bill from coming to a vote, have written to the Senate leadership to declare their opposition to the amendment. If they are successful blocking congressional action, Clinton will not have to choose between vetoing or signing the legislation, which he favors without the Gallegly provision.

The measure, in addition, does not have unanimous Republican backing. Texas Gov. George W. Bush has indicated that he would not take advantage of the option of **denying education** to **illegal immigrants** if the measure was passed, while Wilson has been a strong backer of the Gallegly provision.

Clinton campaign aides argued today that passage would have the unintended side effect of increasing crime and delinquency by forcing large numbers of children out of schools into the streets.

That position has the backing of a number of law enforcement officials and groups. Yesterday, the Clinton campaign released statements of opposition to the Gallegly amendment from a wide range of groups, including the Fraternal Order of Police, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, the International Union of Police Associations, the National Black Police Association and the Chicago superintendent of police.

"Putting hundreds of thousands of additional children on some of the toughest streets in our country translates into a windfall of potential new victims for the predators who work those streets," Gilbert G. Gallegos, president of the

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274,000-member Fraternal Order of Police, wrote in a letter to Dole before the candidate's resignation from the Senate.

Nelson Warfield, Dole campaign spokesman, replied that eliminating access to schools will reduce the incentives of foreigners to enter the country illegally. "If you take responsible steps to decrease the allure of coming to this county, then illegal aliens will act in their self-interest and not come here in the first place," he said.

In addition to Dole, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) has sought to turn the Gallegly amendment into a Republican confrontation with the White House. "Offering free, tax-paid goods to illegals has increased the number of illegals," Gingrich said during House debate. "This used to be the land of opportunity; now it's the land of welfare."

Dole argued that the cost of providing public education to illegal immigrant children in California, which he estimated at about \$ 1.8 billion annually, could be used to provide legal citizens and residents with a host of benefits.

In an accompanying news release, the Dole campaign said the money could pay for the hiring of 51,000 new teachers, allowing the state to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio to less than 20-1, to build 2,340 new classrooms annually, or to buy five computers for every classroom in the state.

Staff researcher Barbara J. Saffir contributed to this report.

Graphic

Photo, afp/david ake, Finishing a three-day California swing, Robert J. Dole signals a thumbs-up at a campaign rally in Woodland Hills.

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