

# **OBERWEIS CAMPAIGNS IN OPPOSITION TO BUSH'S PLANS FOR ILLEGAL ALIENS**

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## **Body**

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In one of his latest television commercials, Republican U.S. Senate candidate Jim **Oberweis** talks about foreigners coming to take American jobs as he flies in a helicopter over Soldier Field, which he says could be filled each week with **illegal immigrants**.

**Oberweis** is staking his hopes in his second **campaign** for the Senate on **illegal** immigration - an issue on which he has split from Republican President George W. **Bush**.

The dairy owner warns in two television commercials that 10,000 **illegal aliens** come to the United States each day to take jobs and get free health care, which he contends will be paid for by taxpayers. The ads, which began airing statewide Tuesday, have angered some immigrant rights groups.

"Jim **Oberweis** is a phony, and I hope people will see through it," said Joshua Hoyt, executive director of the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. "Two years ago, he ran as a moderate Republican. He lost. This time, he's coming back as a straight-talking conservative and picking on immigrants."

The ads also might be a sign of a growing conservative split over **Bush's plan** to grant legal status to millions of immigrant workers who are in the country illegally. He would offer three-year "temporary worker" status but not a chance at citizenship. Mike Lawrence, interim director of the Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University, said **Oberweis** is attempting to "develop an issue that will resonate with voters who typically vote in Republican primaries, and they tend to be more conservative than mainstream Republicans."

**Oberweis** spokesman Bill Kenyon acknowledged that the **campaign** hopes to get support from conservative Republicans but said the ads will resonate with all voters in tough economic times.

Steven Camarota, research director for the Washington-based Center for Immigration Studies, which favors greater controls on **illegal** immigration, said **Oberweis'** statistics are based on the number of people who try to cross the border each year.

U.S. Border Patrol officials say they catch one in three people who try to cross the border, and they catch about 1.2 million people each year, Camarota said. That totals more than 3 million people who try to cross, which breaks down to about 10,000 a day, he said.

About 8 million immigrants, and perhaps as many as 11 million, live in the United States illegally, according to most estimates. Illinois is home to about 500,000 of them.

## OBERWEIS CAMPAIGNS IN OPPOSITION TO BUSH'S PLANS FOR ILLEGAL ALIENS

A Chicago Tribune/WGN-TV poll released Monday showed **Oberweis** trailing investment banker Jack Ryan among likely GOP voters, 30 percent to 12 percent. **Oberweis** finished second in a three-way Republican primary for U.**S.** Senate in 2002.

## Classification

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