

# Action Item

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*To be completed by NASDA Staff:*

**Date Submitted:** September 8, 2011      **Committee:** Rural Development and Financial Security

Recommended by Committee       Recommended with Amendment by Committee       Not Recommended by Committee

Adopted by NASDA       Adopted with Amendment by NASDA       Not Adopted by NASDA

**Additional Notes:**

**Subject of Action Item:**

Border Security and Immigration Reform

**Submitted By:**

Commissioner Todd Staples, Texas Department of Agriculture

**Text of Action Item:**

In light of an increasingly insecure southwest United States border infiltrated by violent cartels smuggling illegal drugs, weapons and immigrants, combined with an increasing pressure on American businesses for legal workers, NASDA staff shall coordinate a new legislative strategy to enact comprehensive reform of border security and immigration policies. This shall be coordinated through a new Border Security and Immigration Reform Task Force of NASDA members appointed by the NASDA president.

**Background & Rationale:**

Ending illegal immigration must be the overarching goal of comprehensive immigration reform. This is done by securing our borders, enforcing our laws, and having laws that allow for legal avenues for businesses to obtain laborers to conduct all the jobs our economy demands, including those which American workers are unwilling to perform.

Border security and immigration reform are inherently linked. A secure border is critical for defending our nation against terrorism and transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) that traffic illegal drugs, weapons, and people. The federal government has failed to meet the evolving and constant threat posed by TCOs, as is being increasingly documented by private landowners and border state residents who live in fear. No immigration system can function without a secure border, but conversely the border cannot be fully secure when a growing criminal population threatens and violently attacks manpower and resources.

Our nation of laws cannot function with 11-20 million people living in the shadows. Federal policies must create unavoidable consequences and incentives for those living in the United States illegally to resolve their status in a limited time frame without affording amnesty to those who have violated American laws.

Just as it is important to have functioning laws that work for our economy, it is equally essential that the laws we have be enforced with consistency. Government must uphold its responsibility to prosecute crime.