

Washington, DC - Republican's continued their efforts to avoid true immigration reform by bringing additional piecemeal immigration legislation to the House floor for a vote. The House voted yesterday on H.R. 4830 - Border Tunnel Prevention Act, H.R. 6094 - the Community Protection Act and, H.R. 6095 - Immigration Law Enforcement Act.

Rep. Charles Gonzalez noted, "Republicans have repeatedly failed to address immigration reform. This summer they organized nearly 5 weeks of field hearings to talk to themselves about immigration reform rather than have a conference with the Senate. Talk about avoiding the subject".

The bills are variations of provisions of the House passed, H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, also known as the Sensenbrenner bill. Republican leaders early in September indicated they were going to recommit their efforts on immigration in a lead up the November elections.

Remarkably, none of the Republican 'enforcement only' bills deals with employer sanctions or worksite enforcement. The Congressman added, "I introduced a bill last year to address the lax enforcement of employer sanctions and not one Republican has asked to join the bill. That tells me they do not want to address this problem in any realistic way because if they did, they'd go straight for the culprit - employers who hire undocumented immigrants".

Republicans will attempt to attach these bills to the Homeland Security Appropriations bill in conference; Senate leaders have not indicated how they will handle these proposals.

Regarding the floor votes, Gonzalez stated, "Let's face it, no one here supports gang members or allowing underground tunnels to facilitate smuggling. The Republicans want to show they are about enforcement only but they have had six years to enforce the laws on the books and look at where we are."