



The News-Herald
Letters to the Editor
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Monday March 17, 2008

Note: I had an 'Other Viewpoints' letter published in November, 2007

Letter to the *News-Herald*:

In an 'Other Viewpoints' column several weeks ago Barbara Garwood criticized local leaders for allowing Painesville to become a 'sanctuary city'. Schools, hospitals, banks, libraries, nurseries, landlords, judges and police, according to Garwood, are fostering a population of illegal immigrants through deliberate inaction and leniency. In reality, our community is responding in a pragmatic and compassionate manner to a national problem that remains unaddressed by our leaders in Washington. Our area has seen wave after wave of immigrants over the years, some of whom remained for generations in tight-knit ethnic communities. It is unfair that legal residents in the local Hispanic community, many of whom own homes and businesses, are often denied the respect they deserve. Personally, I am proud of our local leaders and institutions for choosing to deal with Hispanic residents as human beings.

Clearly there is a problem, a crisis, when 14 million undocumented people are living in our country. Yet Congress failed to act last year on comprehensive immigration reform, AgJobs legislation, the Farm Bill and raising the H2B cap. The nursery-landscape industry is one of the largest employers in Ohio with 70% of those jobs held by Hispanics. We want a long-term immigration solution that provides legal semi-skilled seasonal workers for years to come.

The reprehensible inaction is taking place in Washington, not in Painesville.

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