



Perino Calls Local Efforts 'Patchwork'

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Two days after county fathers in Prince William County, Virginia voted to deny certain services to illegal immigrants and create a special police unit to deal with those in the country illegally, the White House reacted negatively to the efforts of local communities to grapple with the rising tide of illegal immigrants.

At Thursday morning's gaggle(early morning briefing for reporters)at the White House, I asked Press Secretary Dana Perino if the President is watching moves on the issue by localities such as Prince William, and does the President regret not pushing border security only in the comprehensive immigration legislation that died in the Senate earlier this year.

"No," replied Perino without hesitation, restating the Administration's support for the controversial immigration package that dealt somewhat with border security and created a path to citizenship for the estimated 12 million already in the U.S. illegally. "The President feels strongly that the best way to solve the immigration problem was to solve all the problems at once through a comprehensive bill."

As for what Prince William and other localities are doing, the President's top spokesman said: "We are aware of the reports about a patchwork of immigration laws being passed throughout the country, through either state, local or city laws. The President is concerned about the immigration problem for the impact that it has on national security; that's why he advocated for more border security first [italics added] -- a statement sure to arouse skepticism (to use a polite term) from proponents of border security.

Perino went on to say that "[f]or the people that really wanted to have border security improved, they should have voted for comprehensive immigration reform, because that's where the President's focus was, not only just on the border, but also on ensuring enforcement and cracking down on employers. So we are trying to do what we can through administrative means and we've also asked Congress to continue to take a look at it. But we're not going to wait for them."

Referring to the recent decision by a U.S. District judge striking down the Administration proposal to punish employers when the records of workers do not match up with their Social Security numbers, Perino went on to say that "the President believes that this is one of the problems of not having a federal national[sic] program to deal with the comprehensive immigration reform problems that we have. He proposed a comprehensive solution, and border security was a large part of that."