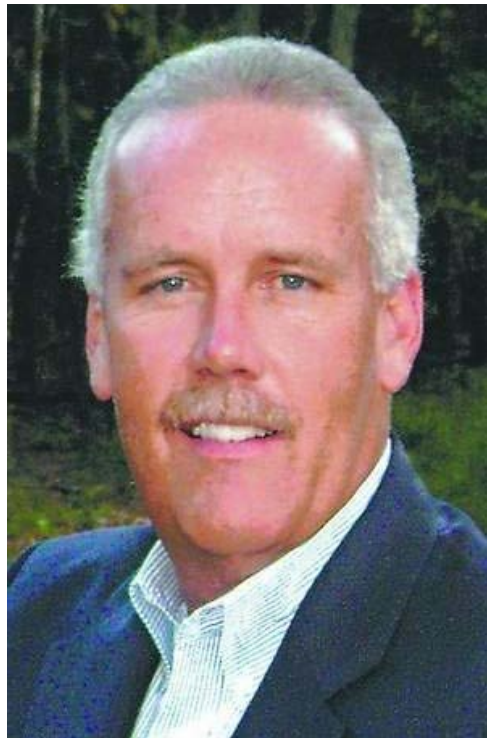


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# TN lawmaker puts illegal immigration bill on hold

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Rep. Joe Carr says he shelved proposal until

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The Tennessean

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A state House bill that would allow law enforcement to check the immigration status of someone pulled over or detained was put on hold last week, at least for the moment.

The Lawful Immigration Enforcement Act was moved behind the budget by a House finance subcommittee Wednesday morning. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Joe Carr, R-Lascassas, acknowledged that the move, made until an estimated \$3 million can be generated to implement the measure, slows its progress.

"Putting it behind the budget doesn't kill it," he said. "It basically parks it."

The bill would allow law enforcement to check someone's immigration status if an officer reasonably suspects a person already stopped or detained isn't a citizen or legal

The bill also would create a training program for law enforcement about immigration laws.

"We are prioritizing the state's stance on illegal immigration based on the financial resources we have," Carr said.

'Very targeted approach'

Eben Cathey, communications coordinator for the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, is pleased by the bill's

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delay — although he would have rather seen the subcommittee defeat the “discriminatory legislation” outright.

“This Arizona copycat bill doesn’t reflect the values and priorities of Tennessee voters,” he said. “It takes some of the worst aspects of these bills and tries to implement them in Tennessee.”

The bill’s move does not signal a change on Carr’s stance on illegal immigration. Carr also believes the bill’s limited reach compared with immigration laws passed in Alabama and Arizona makes it more feasible.



Immigrant rights advocate Eben Cathey would like to see bill killed.

“Backing off, no. Prioritizing, yes,” he said. “We’ve got a very targeted approach to tackle illegal immigration here in the state.”

Carr believes the bill only extends the reach of current laws.

“All (it) really does is extend it to the patrol officers on the beat,” he said. “It allows law enforcement to do what jailers are already required to do.”

A similar state Senate bill has not been discussed since last year.

### Harboring bill advances

Separately, the House Judiciary subcommittee advanced a measure that would make it illegal to transport or harbor “illegal aliens,” even though its sponsor offered to withdraw the measure.

House Bill 2191, has drawn fire from some nonprofits and churches, which say it could open them to prosecution if they take in homeless immigrants or transport them to functions.

But its sponsor, Rep. Tony Shipley, R-Kingsport, said his intention was only to punish human trafficking by criminal groups engaged in the drug trade, prostitution and slavery.

Shipley told the subcommittee’s chairman, Rep. Jim Coley, R-Bartlett, that he was willing to withdraw the proposal because it was redundant with other anti-human trafficking measures. But Coley asked the subcommittee to advance it to the full committee anyway so it could be discussed further.



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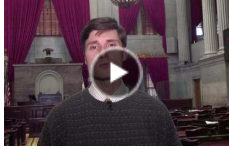
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