

## Castle seeking ICE resources for Sussex law enforcement (The Sussex Countain)

By Adam Huber Sussex Countian Wed Jun 25, 2008, 10:41 AM EDT

CENTRAL SUSSEX - Dealing with undocumented immigrants can sometimes leave local law enforcement agencies in a quagmire. Rep. Mike Castle shares their frustration.

Castle (R-Delaware) last week sent a letter to U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director Julie Myers asking for guidance with respect to the growing number of criminal cases involving undocumented immigrants in Sussex County.

In asking for help with training local officers in language skills, document fraud recognition and victims' services, Castle used the letter to highlight concerns from Sussex law enforcement officials, including increased incidences of human trafficking, counterfeiting and violent crime.

"While these issues are not unique to Sussex County, they are amplified by the increased involvement of undocumented aliens," Castle wrote in the June 17 letter.

"Despite the hard work of Sussex County's state and local law enforcement officers, government leaders, and non-profit groups, it is clear to me that additional attention is needed to ensure these individuals have the tools and resources necessary to investigate crimes and keep communities in Sussex County safe."

Georgetown community leaders and the town's police department have been meeting for several months now to discuss ways of encouraging undocumented immigrants to report crimes, and Georgetown Police Chief William Topping has emphasized his department's desire to stop crime, not to report victims to immigration officials.

Castle met with Topping and several other local chiefs last month to discuss immigration issues, and Topping, for one, applauded the representative's efforts.

"We need funding sources to create more programs to help us deal with the extensive problems we're having in the immigrant community," Topping said, adding that a number of Sussex police departments would like to organize a local database. "We spend a lot of Georgetown money dealing with illegal immigrants."

Castle has also authored legislation - the Accountability in Immigration Repatriation Act (AIR) - that would streamline the deportation process and insist that countries repatriate undocumented immigrants.

According to Castle's office, he realizes the issues raised in the letter to Chertoff and Myers may require Congressional action, and Castle plans to "lead the fight to fund state and local police departments" as the House begins the fiscal year 2009 budget process this month.

