Immigration is as old as America. It continues to be, as it has been for most of the past two centuries, debated in the cloakrooms and halls of Congress. However, as the demographics have shifted and national immigration policy failed, the discussion has noticeably moved to the nation's family rooms as citizens feel discouraged by Congress’s inaction, threatened by the incease in the numbers of immigrants, and fearful of what a nation of illegal aliens would mean for their economic and social futures. The result has been a new and intense political interest in immigration—at the federal, state, and even local levels.

Immigration in Tennessee and throughout the nation is a topic of much passion and intense debate. As evident in the current presidential campaign, immigration is a policy issue that both positively and negatively impacts the business community. It is an issue we cannot ignore. Lawmakers and candidates hear about it frequently from their constituents, and polls show it is of great interest and concern. Employers are no different, knowing this is a highly salient issue and that bad public policy could have harmful consequences.

The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the state’s largest broad-based statewide business and industry trade association, works proactively to find legislative solutions dealing with immigration issues.

by Bradley Jackson

The Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the state’s largest broad-based statewide business and industry trade association, works proactively to find legislative solutions dealing with immigration issues.

A POLICY AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Bradley Jackson

Bradley Jackson is vice president of governmental affairs with the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and Industry.