



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*House of Representatives*  
*State House, Boston 02133-1054*

TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY, JR.  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
28TH MIDDLESEX DISTRICT  
SOMERVILLE - CAMBRIDGE  
ROOM 238, STATE HOUSE  
TEL: (617) 722-2380  
FAX: (617) 722-2847  
Rep.TimothyToomey@hou.state.ma.us

COMMITTEES:  
RULES  
PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY  
PUBLIC HEALTH

October 25, 2012

Somerville Board of Aldermen  
Somerville City Hall  
93 Highland Ave.  
Somerville, MA 02143

**Re: Support for a resolution to stop using the word “illegal” when describing undocumented immigrants**

Dear Board of Aldermen:

I am writing to voice my support for agenda item 6351, a resolution currently before the Board. This resolution would ask those in the City of Somerville to no longer use the term “illegal” when referring to undocumented immigrants. I believe that adopting this resolution will lead to a more inclusive City, a renewed commitment to strengthening families, and an official recognition that no human being is “illegal.”

This resolution is under consideration thanks to a year-long campaign by local youth groups, which in and of itself is a testament to the positive impact immigrants make on our community. These young people are standing up to claim their place at the table, and we should applaud them for their hard work and sense of civic responsibility. Like every other immigrant community, they are living out the promise of our founding creed and demanding the dignity to which we are all entitled.

All of our neighbors, no matter where they are from, deserve our basic respect and dignity. None of us are “illegal,” and the word “illegal” unjustly criminalizes large swaths of our law-abiding friends and neighbors. It is a hurtful, unnecessary word that for too long has been used to deride thousands of men, women, and children who share our community.

The use of the term “illegal” to describe undocumented immigrants is a relic of what is becoming a bygone era. The City of Somerville has proven itself to be a leader on a wide variety of issues, and I hope that it will continue that history of leadership by voting to adopt

this resolution. I offer my full and unreserved support for this resolution, and I urge you to vote in its favor.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.  
26<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District