

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Ariz. Gov. Considers Immigration Law

PHOENIX (AP) — Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer is asking legislators to consider whether they should change the state's immigration law in the wake of a judge's ruling blocking enforcement of parts of it.

Brewer spokesman Paul Senseman confirmed Friday that the governor called top legislative leaders to broach the possibility of changing provisions of the law on Thursday, a day after U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton issued a preliminary injunction putting on hold parts of the new law that would have required officers to dig deeper into the fight against illegal immigration.

Senseman said the possibility of having legislators meet in special session to consider changing the law is merely being explored. He said Brewer is still pressing ahead with her appeal of Bolton's order.

"The governor believes that the law is constitutional and she is obviously going to pursue the appeal," Senseman said. "What she is looking at are legislative improvements that can be made ... given the current ruling on an injunction."

"It's very preliminary," he said. "There is no specific language or proposal."

Reps. Spar Over Bill To Aid 9/11 Responders

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House's rejection of bill that would have provided up to \$7.4 billion in aid to people sickened by World Trade Center dust has opened a sharp rift between two New York congressmen, Republican Peter King and Democrat Anthony Weiner.

The verbal jousting came on the House floor Thursday night as the vote neared. The results fell largely along party lines, with 12 Republicans joining Democrats supporting the measure, but it failed to win the needed two-thirds majority.

Arms flailing and his voice rising, Weiner took sharp aim at King, a Long Island Republican.

"The gentleman is providing cover for his colleagues rather than doing the right thing," bellowed Weiner, who represents parts of Brooklyn and Queens. "Republicans wrapping their arms around Republicans rather than doing the right thing on behalf of heroes. It's a shame, a shame."

King, a key backer of the bill, had moments earlier accused Democrats of staging a "charade."

Activist: Iranian Woman Tormented

LONDON (AP) — An Iranian woman whose sentence of death by stoning was lifted earlier this month says she's grateful for the international support she's received, but remains heartbroken at the separation from her children and tormented by the fear she could still be executed, a rights activist said Friday.

Iranian officials have said Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani will be spared stoning, which in Iran involves being buried from the chest down and pelted with rocks. The announcement came after international outrage over plans to execute the mother of two for adultery — an offense her supporters say she confessed to under duress.

Germany-based activist Mina Ahadi, who helped publicize the case, said Friday that Ashtiani remains locked up in Tabriz prison in northwestern Iran and could still be hanged. Many others on Iran's death row still face the prospect of being stoned, Ahadi said.

"You're talking about the Middle Ages," she told journalists in London, speaking through a translator. "Stoning is a form of terrorism."

Ahadi read out a message from Ashtiani in which she spoke of her shock at the sentence and said that "part of my heart is frozen."

"The day they sentenced me to stoning, it was as if I fell into the bottom of a well, and I lost consciousness," the message read.

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U.S. State Department Investigates Threats Against Mexican Consulate

BY OLIVIA TORRES
Associated Press Writer

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico — The U.S. State Department said Friday it is evaluating threats surrounding the consulate in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez as hundreds with appointments for visa applications and other services stood outside the shuttered office wondering what to do.

U.S. officials gave no details on the threats that prompted an indefinite closure Thursday. The consulate is the only place that processes immigrant visas in Mexico.

"It is a very significant facility for us," said State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley. "There is some threat information that we received that we are evaluating. It is hard to know or judge whether the threat is related to the broad area where the consulate is or to the consulate itself."

Even as the State Department increases protection for employees and their families from the intensifying violence on the Mexican border, closing the Juarez consulate is the most drastic step to date — coming four months after drug gangs killed three people tied to the office.

About 300 people who arrived Friday morning — many from long distances — were surprised and irritated.

Maria Concepcion Morales traveled with two children 16 hours by bus from Zacatecas

to be on time for her 7:45 a.m. appointment for a tourist visa.

"What am I going to do?" she said. "I don't have enough money to stay until Monday, when they're saying they will reopen."

Many complained of the lack of support for those stranded by the sudden closure.

"I told them I was outside and they said they had no information and hung up. What kind of help is that?" said Martha Lara Munos, who came from the central state of Morelos with two children and her mother to apply for a resident visa.

The U.S. Embassy said it would reschedule appointments for visa applications through its call center, and provided a number that U.S. citizens could call for passport appointment and other services.

The Ciudad Juarez consulate processed 124,145 immigrant visa applications in 2009, plus about 120,000 travel visas, the state department said.

The governor of Chihuahua state, where Ciudad Juarez is located, offered security help to reopen the consulate because of the volume of Mexicans who need services and who cross the border there. Gov. Jose Reyes Baeza noted in a statement that the Mexican Army, by bilateral agreement, can respond to security requests from the consulate.

A turf battle between the Juarez and Sinaloa drug cartels has made Ciudad Juarez one of the world's most dangerous cities. More than 4,000 people have been killed in the city of 1.3 mil-

lion since the beginning of 2009.

A U.S. employee of the consulate, her husband and a Mexican tied to the consulate were killed March 13 when drug gang fired on their cars as they left a children's party in the city across from El Paso, Texas.

Earlier this month, Mexican federal police said that a jailed drug-cartel enforcer claimed that the U.S. consulate employee, Lesley Enriquez, was killed because she had helped a rival gang obtain American visas.

But a U.S. federal official, who was not authorized to speak publicly about the case and spoke on condition of anonymity, said an investigation into possible corruption surrounding Enriquez came up with nothing.

On July 15, a car bomb killed a federal police officer and two others in Ciudad Juarez. Traffickers claimed responsibility.

The U.S. State Department has taken several measures over the past months to protect consulate employees and their families. It has authorized the departure of relatives of U.S. government employees in six northern Mexican cities.

The Consul General in Monterrey on Thursday said it is restricting American employees and their families from traveling outside San Pedro Garza Garcia, where they live, between midnight and 6 a.m.

Two weeks ago, the consulate in the border city of Nuevo Laredo warned U.S. citizens there to remain indoors as drug gangs fought gunbattles and blocked streets with hijacked vehicles.

Paperwork Nightmare: A Struggle To Fix New Law

BY STEPHEN OHLEMACHER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Talk about a paperwork nightmare: Tucked into the massive new health care law is a demand that nearly 40 million U.S. businesses file tax forms for every vendor that sells them more than \$600 in goods.

House Democrats now want to repeal it. Republicans, too. But nothing is that simple in an election year.

The House on Friday rejected a bill that would have repealed the filing requirement.

Democrats and Republicans disagreed on to make up the lost revenue.

The goal of the provision was to prevent vendors from under-reporting their income to the Internal Revenue Service. The government must think those vendors are omitting a lot

of good records in case the total exceeded \$600 in a year.

Companies would also have to get vendors' tax identification numbers to include in the filings.

"Tax paperwork and compliance are already major expenses for small businesses," a coalition of 80 business groups wrote in a recent letter to lawmakers. "This new and expanded requirement means that almost every business-to-business transaction is potentially reportable to the IRS."

Lawmakers have heard the complaints.

"This 1099 reporting was a well-intentioned provision to try to catch people who were cheating on their taxes," said Rep. Scott Murphy, D-N.Y. "But it has some unintended consequences in my opinion that will create a lot of extra work and hassle for our small businesses."

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Christopher A. Hathaway, MD, Ph.D graduated from the University of South Dakota School of Medicine and completed his residency in Urology at the Medical College of Georgia. He joins Dr. Joseph Boudreau in practice at Yankton Urological Surgery, Prof., L.L.C.

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