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CONTACT: Henry Varela
henryv@mattchandler2010.com
(505) 306-8202

In Case You Missed It

King Continues Defense of Licenses for Illegals

“I have certainly said that one of the arguments for driver’s licenses for anybody, including immigrants, is that we have an obligation in New Mexico to make sure people driving on the roads have a basic set of competency so that they’re not causing automobile accidents.” Gary King 8/25/10

Albuquerque— Yesterday, during a debate hosted by the NETWORK, between attorney general incumbent Gary King and Republican challenger Matthew Chandler, King continued his defense of New Mexico’s policy which allows those who are in the United States illegally to obtain a driver’s license. In addition to defending the fundamental position of the state’s licensing law, King also claimed his job was merely to uphold existing law not weigh in on laws which are already on the books. Ironically, however, during the debate King mentioned several other initiatives he wished to address before the lawmakers during the legislative session.

Chandler, on the other hand, unequivocally stated his position on the law: “I am opposed to issuing driver’s licenses to illegal immigrants; I think it’s wrong. I think it creates a breeding ground for crime. I think it attracts illegal immigrants to New Mexico to obtain a driver’s license.”

This is the second time King is on record defending the state’s policy. On an Albuquerque radio program in June, [King made similar remarks.](#)

[View King’s defense of NM’s driver’s license law.](#)

Transcript:

Moderator of NETWORK debate: This is a question about immigrants' drivers' licenses... Could you please comment on your position on this issue?

GARY KING: Well, he's [Chandler] right on that one, we do disagree. I have certainly said that one of the arguments for driver's licenses for anybody, including immigrants, is that we have an obligation in New Mexico to make sure people driving on the roads have a basic set of competency so that they're not causing automobile accidents. And I think that having a driver's license is the key. That's what states do to make sure that people have that competency.

So if he [Chandler] doesn't think it makes any difference for traffic safety to make sure that we have people out there without going through the driver's license exam, I am really concerned about that.

We're in an interesting position on this question because I haven't really said whether I am personally am for or against it because I am the state's chief law enforcement officer and he [Chandler] accurately quoted the law which is on the books which says that we will do that, and so, uh, it actually would be more or less inappropriate for me to say that I was opposed to a law that was on the books because I am the guy who enforces the laws that are on the books.

[Listen to all of King's comments on this issue.](#)

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