

Barletta to tackle illegal immigration on TV

Hazleton's controversial Illegal Immigration Relief Act to be focus of Thursday's WVIA call-in show.

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Anyone who wants to pose a question about illegal immigration directly to Hazleton Mayor Lou Barletta will have a chance to do so on Thursday.

Barletta will be a guest on WVIA-TV Channel 44's "State of Pennsylvania" with



Barletta

Act, which has been both applauded and berated nationally as one of the toughest, local anti-illegal immigrant laws in the country.

Kelly said the show will focus on the

Suzanne Kelly.

The program titled "Hazleton's Mayor Lou Barletta: Right or Wrong?" is a good indicator that the mayor will spend part of the show defending the city's Illegal Immigration Relief

Act, which has been both applauded and berated nationally as one of the toughest, local anti-illegal immigrant laws in the country. Kelly said the show will focus on the constitutionality of the city's immigration law, "but also on the impact it has had on the entire community, especially the Latino community."

Of all the people interviewed for the show, no one - Latinos included - said they thought illegal immigrants should be welcomed, Kelly said. However, most Latinos say "the way the mayor is going about it is wrong," with some calling it a "witch hunt."

Several Latinos interviewed said they have experienced potential profiling, discrimination and harassment since the law

was proposed. One Latino woman who is a professional in the community said on tape that her life has been threatened, Kelly said.

Kelly said she will present statistics showing that 2,000 legal Latinos have left the city since the law was introduced.

The show begins at 7 p.m., and viewers may call 1-800-326-9842 to present comments or questions to Barletta.

In addition to working for WVIA, Kelly is the Times Leader's commercial print manager and Newspapers in Education coordinator.