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Gov. Owens signs remaining immigration bills

By Myung Oak Kim, Rocky Mountain News
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Gov. Bill Owens has signed into law the last of seven immigration bills passed by state lawmakers that will create an elite immigration unit in the Colorado State Patrol and will require state contractors to sign up for an online program that checks a worker's immigration status.

Senate Bill 225, sponsored by Sen. Peter Groff, D-Denver, pays for the creation of the state trooper unit that will be get special training in cracking down on human trafficking, when someone sneaks an illegal immigrant into the country for the purposes of forced labor or prostitution. This law takes effect immediately.

House Bill 1343, sponsored by Rep. Bill Crane, R-Arvada, requires state contractors to verify the immigration status of workers and allows the state to terminate contracts with employers who are found to knowingly hire illegal immigrants. The law takes effect in August.

Owens signed four immigration bills last week and a fifth bill May 1.

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