

Colbert's testimony

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

September 24, 2010

When the United Farm Workers announced their "[Take Our Jobs](#)" campaign this summer, I put it in my "maybe blog about this" folder and never came back to it. It's a clever idea—legal residents are invited to replace migrant farm workers in the field—but the news media [didn't write a whole lot about it then](#), either.

[They are today](#). That's because today Stephen Colbert testified—in character—before the immigration subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee. After the late-night host accepted the UFW's invitation to spend a day as a farm worker, subcommittee chair Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) invited him to testify. While taking questions after his prepared statement, Colbert eventually got serious. (He even quoted [Matthew 25](#), progressive Christian that he is.) But the statement itself was [full of shtick](#)—"Apparently, even the invisible hand [of the market] doesn't want to pick beans"—much of which bombed in the bizarre context of the hearing room.

Not that he minded. Colbert's genius isn't in finding comedy gold in outrageous places, [though he's done that](#). It's in his deep awareness of how completely the distinction between news and entertainment has dissolved. Some people wring their hands over this; Colbert exploits it to bring attention to an issue he cares about. Good for him.

Here's the video: