

Finally, Mr. President, for all the good work that we have done here over the past 2 weeks, it can be eliminated in a heartbeat when we go to conference with the House. We have seen it happen so much these last few years where the minority is eliminated from decisions made, public conferences are not held, items that the Senate supports are stripped, and there is nothing to prevent the same thing from happening on this bill but for the good faith we have in moving forward.

We should know the dark clouds are forming on the horizon. Influential Members of the House of Representatives in the Republican leadership are still pushing for the bill they passed, a bill that makes felons out of millions of immigrants and those who assist them, such as a member of the clergy, a health care worker, a social worker. In fact, the House Majority Leader, my friend, JOHN BOEHNER, yesterday, was quoted as saying:

Trying to find a pathway that is acceptable to the House and Senate is going to be very difficult.

I acknowledge and say that is true. But the words we have heard from the House leadership are not encouraging.

The one thing we fought for was to have a fair balance on the conference committee, and we have gotten that. I express my appreciation to the majority leader. We have the ability to name conferees on our side who I think are going to be just fine. Knowing the Republicans who are going to be part of this conference committee, it is going to work out well. We have people who are going to work hard to uphold the position of the Senate.

But we also need the active involvement of the President. I appreciate what he has done to this point. I said that on a number of occasions before. But his biggest work is ahead of him if he wants comprehensive immigration reform.

Yes, this bill includes border security. It includes help for guest workers. Mr. President, 45,000 to 50,000 hotel rooms are going to be built in Las Vegas in the next 4 to 5 years. I just had a meeting in my office with the head of the MGM Hotel, a man who has 80,000, 90,000 employees and was part of the group who got me interested in this legislation. The hotel owners, the Chamber of Commerce in Las Vegas, and the unions have said unless we get some help on guest worker programs, we can't find people to work in those 45,000 to 50,000 hotel rooms. That is in this bill.

Another thing that is in it I am proud of, and we should be proud of, is a pathway to legalization for people who are in America and are undocumented: Pay your taxes, have a job, learn English, stay out of trouble, pay your penalties and fines, go to the back of the line—but you can come out of the shadows.

Then, finally, what we have in this legislation is better—better employer sanction enforcement, and we need that.

We are authorizing things, but they are not worth anything unless we appropriate the money to do them. All the measures we have relating to security, they must be favored with appropriations bills, as with everything else in this bill. I hope we will have the carry-through to do that. This is a two-step process from this point forward. We have to have a conference and then we have to have appropriators who will do the right thing.

Again, I feel so good today. This is what the Senate is all about. I spent 24 years of my life in the Congress of the United States, 20 of them here in the Senate. This is the way it used to be. This is the way it should be in the future. I have every hope and belief that we can make it that way.

I appreciate the courtesy of all my colleagues here allowing me to have this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COLEMAN). Two minutes remain in opposition to the Ensign amendment. Who yields time? The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the votes occur in the order in which the amendments were offered, provided further that following the disposition of amendments, the Senate proceed to an immediate vote on the managers' amendment. I also ask that there be 2 minutes equally divided between the votes and that all votes after the first be limited to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. ENZI. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, from what I understand we just got the managers' amendment. It is 115 pages. I think the Senator from Arizona is one of the first ones to acknowledge getting a managers' amendment with 115 pages, and then agreeing to a time agreement would be a little unreasonable. So if you would take out the agreement to have a vote directly on the managers' amendment until we have a little bit of time to go through it, I think the unanimous consent would be agreeable.

Mr. SPECTER. I modify the unanimous consent request to that effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modified request? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent Senator MCCAIN be recognized for 7 minutes, the managers be recognized for 7 minutes, and the leader will speak at the conclusion on leader time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, after several weeks of extensive debate and consideration of numerous and complicated amendments, the Senate is about to move to final passage of S. 2611, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act. This legislation addresses

comprehensively one of the most important and complex issues facing our country. Our Nation's immigration system is broken. I don't think there was one Member of the Senate to argue that fact. Without enactment of comprehensive immigration reform as provided for under this bill, our Nation's security will remain vulnerable.

That is why we must pass this bill and reach a meaningful final product through conference deliberations. Our failure to produce a final comprehensive measure is an unacceptable proposition.

I want to first thank the President for his leadership on this issue. The President's speech to the Nation last week, which I thought was inspired, was greeted by 74 percent of the American people overnight favorably, including his absolute determination to see the Congress send him a bill which has a comprehensive approach to the issue which we as a Congress and a Federal Government have ignored for too long.

I also commend the Senate leadership on both sides of the aisle for their efforts to ensure that the Senate address this important issue and give us more than adequate time for a thorough debate.

I think this is a proud moment for the Senate, as we have conducted good work and returned to orderly traditions of the legislative process as envisioned by our Founding Fathers.

I also again recognize Chairman SPECTER for his work in leading us to this point in the legislative process. He and all the members of the Judiciary Committee deserve our appreciation for the considerable effort they have taken on this issue during this Congress.

Of course, I commend Senator KENNEDY, who is perhaps the leading expert on this difficult issue. He and I spent many months working to develop a comprehensive, reasonable, workable legislative proposal, much of which is contained in the bill before us.

I also thank Senators BROWNBACK and LIEBERMAN and GRAHAM and SALAZAR, MARTINEZ, OBAMA and DEWINE for their shared commitment to this issue, in working to ensure this bill moves successfully intact through the legislative process.

Throughout this debate we were reminded that immigration is a national security issue, and it is. It is also a matter of life and death for many living along the border. We have hundreds of people flowing across our borders every day, coming here only in search of better lives for themselves and their families. They come to fill the vacant jobs at businesses and farms that struggle with real labor shortages that impact our economy negatively.

This Nation is calling for our borders to be secure, for an overhaul of our immigration system, and that it be done in a humane and comprehensive fashion. Vote after vote after vote taken in this body reaffirms that fact.

The new policies as provided for in this legislation will increase border security and provide for a new temporary worker program to enable foreign workers to work legally in this country when there are jobs that Americans will not fill, and will acknowledge and address in a humanitarian and compassionate way the current undocumented population.

As many have noted, there are over 11 million people in America today who came here illegally. They live in our cities and towns and rural communities. They harvest our crops, tend our gardens, work in our restaurants, and clean our houses. They came as others before them came, to grasp the lowest rung of the American ladder of opportunity, to work the jobs others won't, and by virtue of their own industry and dreams to rise and build better lives for their families and a better America.

Some Americans believe we must find all these millions, round them up, and send them back to the country they came from. I don't know how you do that, and I don't know why you would want to. Yes, in this post-9/11 era America must enforce its borders. There are people who wish to come here to do us harm, and we must vigilantly guard against them, spend whatever it takes, devote as much manpower to the task as necessary. But we must also find some way to separate those who have come here for the same reasons every immigrant has come here from those who are driven here by their hate for us and our ideals.

We must concentrate our resources on the latter and persuade the former to come out from the shadows. We won't be able to persuade them if all we offer is a guarded escort back to the place of hopelessness and injustice that they have fled.

Why not say to those undocumented workers who are working the jobs the rest of us refuse: Come out from the shadows, earn your citizenship in this country. You broke the law to come here, so you must go to the back of the line, pay a fine, stay employed, learn our language, pay your taxes, obey our laws, and earn the right to be an American.

SSgt Riayen Tejada immigrated to New York from the Dominican Republic. He came with two dreams, he said, to become an American citizen and to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps. He willingly accepted the obligations of American citizenship before he possessed all the rights of an American. Staff Sergeant Tejada, from Washington Heights by way of the Dominican Republic, father of two young daughters, died in an ambush on May 14, 2004. He had never fulfilled his first dream, to become a naturalized American citizen. But he loved this country so much that he gave his life to defend her.

Right now, at this very moment, there are fighting for us in Iraq and Afghanistan soldiers whose parents are not yet American citizens but who

have dreamed the dream that their sons and daughters risked their lives to defend. They should make us proud to be Americans. These people have come for the very same reason immigrants have always come to America. They came to grasp the lowest rung of the ladder, and they intend to rise. Let them rise. Let them rise. We will be better for it.

For America—blessed, bountiful, beautiful America—is still the land of hope and opportunity, the land of the immigrant's dreams. Long may she remain so.

I yield the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, when Oscar Handlin, the eminent historian at Harvard, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1952 for his history of immigration "The Uprooted," he said he had set out to write a history of immigrants in America, but "discovered that the immigrants were America."

With passage of this legislation, we reclaim that America. We lift once again the lamp beside the golden door.

This is the most far-reaching immigration reform in our history. It is a comprehensive and realistic attempt to solve the real-world problems that have festered for too long in our broken immigration system.

It strengthens our security and reflects our humanity. It is intended to keep out those who would harm us and welcome those who contribute to our country. It has the potential to build a stronger, better, fairer America for the 21st century.

It protects our security through stricter enforcement, tamper-proof immigration cards, and high-tech border controls.

It protects American jobs and wages by bringing immigrants out of the shadows and requiring employers to pay fair American wages.

And it enables decent men and women who work hard and play by the rules to earn the privilege of American citizenship.

That has been America's story. And it's a story we must live anew with each new generation if we hope to continue as a vibrant land of liberty, progress and opportunity—a land of people who want to do better, who love their families, embrace our Nation, and are proud to be American citizens.

Wisdom in immigration policy doesn't just happen. It is a choice between a future of progress as a nation of immigrants or a future defined by high walls and long fences.

Clearly, we still have much to do before this legislation becomes the new law of the land. Some believe that enforcement is the only path to take.

I would urge them to remember that from the beginning to the present day, immigrants helped build our country, and made us strong.

They worked in our factories and toiled in our fields, and we are stronger for it.

They built the railroads that took America to the West. Even today, it is said that under every railroad tie, an Irishman is buried.

Immigrants have loved America and fought under our flag, and we are stronger for it.

And if we enact this bipartisan comprehensive reform, we will be stronger for it too.

As we close this debate, I commend our two leaders, Senator FRIST and Senator REID, for their skill in enabling this debate to take place. At a time of heated political division in Congress, the debate we have seen these past 2 weeks is unique in recent times. Senators of both parties have come together for the common good. This opportunity would not have been possible without our leaders, and I hope it is a precedent for other major issues in the weeks ahead.

I commend President Bush for putting this issue before the country and for helping Americans understand the need for comprehensive reform.

I commend the chairman and ranking member of our Judiciary Committee, Senator SPECTER and Senator LEAHY, for their strong support throughout this process.

I thank those of our bipartisan group who stood together to make this legislation possible—Senator GRAHAM, Senator SALAZAR, Senator MARTINEZ, Senator HAGEL, Senator DURBIN, Senator LIEBERMAN, Senator BROWNBACK, Senator OBAMA, and Senator DEWINE.

And most of all, I express my appreciation to my colleague, Senator MCCAIN, who made all this possible from the start. He'd probably prefer I didn't say this, but he's been a profile in courage once again, and I commend him for his leadership.

I'm also grateful to the many staff members who helped to get us to this point. I'm grateful to Ron Weich and Serena Hoy of Senator REID's staff; to Bruce Cohen, Tara Magner and Matt Virkstis of Senator LEAHY's staff; to Joe Zogby of Senator DURBIN's staff; to Jennifer Duck and Montserrat Miller of Senator FEINSTEIN's staff; to Felicia Escobar of Senator SALAZAR's staff; to Tom Klouda and Alan Cohen of Senator BAUCUS' staff; to Kevin Landy of Senator LIEBERMAN's staff; to Danny Sepulveda of Senator OBAMA's staff; and to Chris Schloesser of Senator MENENDEZ' staff.

This was a truly bipartisan effort, and I'm grateful to staff from the other side of the aisle as well: Juria Jones, Joe Jacqot, and Michael O'Neill of Senator SPECTER's staff; to Clay Deatherage, Brian Walsh, and Nilda Pedrosa of Senator MARTINEZ' staff; to Jill Konz and Steve Taylor of Senator HAGEL's staff; to Matt Rinkunas of Senator GRAHAM's staff; to Steve Robinson of Senator GRASSLEY's staff; to Ajit Pai and Bryan Clark of Senator BROWNBACK's staff; and to Brook Roberts of Senator CRAIG's staff.

And special thanks, of course, to Senator MCCAIN's staff, with whom we've

MEL MARTINEZ
FLORIDA



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 28, 2007

The Honorable Barack Obama
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Obama: *Barack*

Thank you for your support of the Immigration Reform Bill. While it failed, your backing of this important legislation meant a lot to me personally.

I know that standing firm in the face of extreme pressure has not been easy, and again, I thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mel Martinez', written in a cursive style.

Mel Martinez
United States Senator