

long as they have been married. In Nevada, Maria and Jorge have a large and vibrant family. They have two daughters and a son, and now they have an 8-month-old grandson as well. They have loving friends and a tight-knit community. In Mexico, the country where they were born, they do not know a single soul except a really old relative.

Because Maria and Jorge are undocumented immigrants, they live with the fear every minute of every day—and sometimes as they awaken at night—that they will have to leave the country they love, the United States. Maria lives with the fear that she will have to say goodbye to their children and her grandson. Here is what she said yesterday:

When you lose your mother or your father, you are an orphan. When you lose your husband, you are a widow. What do they call it when you lose a child, when you are separated from a child? There is no name for that.

Maria and Jorge's family members are all legally present in the United States. Maria and Jorge's youngest daughter, a freshman in college, was born in the United States. So was their grandson.

A directive issued last year by President Obama allowed their two oldest children, both of whom are married to U.S. citizens, to obtain their legal residency. The President's directive suspended deportation for 800,000 DREAMers—young people brought to America illegally when they were children and in many instances just babies. But millions of family members of those young DREAMers do not qualify for legal status or an earned pathway to citizenship. Millions of mixed-status families worry every day that a loved one—a parent, a spouse, a sibling—will be torn away from them at any time. That is why it is crucial that Congress pass this bipartisan legislation.

This is reform legislation that protects and preserves families. We need to do it right now. I am happy the Senate will pass such a bill this week. A permanent, commonsense solution to our dysfunctional system is really in sight. It is my hope our colleagues in the House will follow the Senate's lead and work to pass bipartisan reform and do it now because whether we serve in the House or Senate, whether we hail from red States or blue States, we should all be able to agree that the current system is broken. We should all be able to agree that congressional action is necessary.

I have seen firsthand the devastation caused by our broken system. But each time I have an opportunity to speak with Nevadans about the urgent need for action on immigration, I am reminded that this issue is personal to them also. It is personal, as I have indicated, to me, but it is just as personal to Maria and Jorge. It is personal to 11 million other undocumented immigrants and tens of millions of their U.S. citizen relatives, whose eyes are turned toward Washington and whose hearts are filled with hope.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

WAR ON COAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday morning I made a prediction about a speech the President was expected to give later in the day. I said we could expect him to announce a plan to impose the will of some of his most radical backers on the American middle class. I said he would be undeterred by Congress's rejection of his national energy tax even when Democrats held commanding majorities in both Houses. I said he would announce his intention to push through job-crushing regulations anyway but this time largely through the back door over the objections of many working-class Americans rather than through the regular democratic process. Lo and behold, that is essentially what he did.

I was surprised by one thing, though, and that was his continued effort to play politics with the Keystone Pipeline jobs. Remember, we all know that the oil this pipeline would carry is going to come out of the ground either way. It is going to come out of the ground whether or not he approves it. In other words, whether he gives approval to the pipeline or not, the oil is coming out of the ground. The only question is whether that energy and those jobs will go to America or whether they will be allowed to travel across the Pacific to governments that harbor terrible environmental records to begin with.

That is just one reason why the Keystone Pipeline has enjoyed such broad bipartisan support here in the Senate. Even Big Labor—a sector that is usually supportive of the President—is all behind the Keystone Pipeline. Yet, yesterday, when the President had the opportunity to side with the working-class families across the country by approving the pipeline, he took another pass—just took a pass.

Sometimes you have to wonder about this administration. In making decisions such as these, you have to wonder if they truly understand the worries most Americans have to contend with in the Obama economy. I have long warned, for example, that the White House was determined—determined—to wage a war on coal. They denied it, of course, but only just long enough to get through the last election. So it is not a coincidence that the President did not give his speech before the election or that he gave it at a university that symbolizes the DC elite rather than somewhere in coal country. He should have made this speech down at Morehead State University in my State or the University of Pikeville in my State. That would have been the place to make the speech, not here in town.

Now the President's supporters seem all too happy to admit there is a war on coal. Just yesterday an adviser to the White House said, "A war on coal is exactly what's needed." You have to give him points for candor.

Look, Republicans are all for developing the fuels and the energies of the future. We are all for that. We just think it should come about as part of an all-of-the-above strategy, which is exactly what the White House said it supported too back before the election. But now with the election year over, the truth comes out.

In truth, the administration seems to adhere to a dogma that could best be described as "none of the above"—not "all of the above" but "none of the above, except a couple of things that make our base happy." I would note that such an approach is basically nonsense since it ignores what is necessary to keep our country's growing energy needs met in order to move toward a future where renewables look set to play a greater role because it simply tries to pretend that it will not take years, if not decades, for these other types of energy to come online in a way that will truly meet our energy needs.

In a phrase, it is a strategy that subordinates almost everything to politics. That is why Republicans believe a true all-of-the-above strategy means developing wind, solar, natural gas, oil, and coal, and embracing American jobs that come along with producing American energy.

Here is what we believe it absolutely does not mean: It does not mean picking out a class of vulnerable people and declaring war on them. There is a depression in central Appalachia, which includes eastern Kentucky, because of the government itself, this administration. Sometimes people in Washington forget the decisions here actually affect the lives of others. I am often left to wonder, do they not care?

Of course, coal is an important industry to my State, and I am going to defend Kentucky workers from out-of-touch Washington attacks, but it is pretty naive to think it is just about Kentucky, West Virginia, or Pennsylvania. As I said yesterday, a war on coal is actually a war on jobs. Coal is important to our entire country. It is critical to the growth of manufacturing, and it is important to our national economy.

One can say a coal miner in Kentucky relies on coal for their well-being, just as a line worker in a manufacturing plant that uses coal relies on it too. Pretty much everyone who lives or works in a building with electricity relies on coal in some way. That is why even some in the President's party are trying to distance themselves from his approach.

As one of my Senate Democratic colleagues put it yesterday:

The fact is clear: our own Energy Department reports that our country will get 37 percent of our energy from coal until 2040.

Removing coal from our energy mix will have disastrous consequences for our recovering economy.

I couldn't agree more with our Democratic colleague.

It is time for the White House to stop pivoting from job-destroying policies to campaign-stop PR pitches for jobs right back to job-destroying policies. It is time for the administration to get serious about pursuing a truly workable strategy for this country, for energy, for the economy, and for jobs.

SENATE RULES

Briefly, on another matter, another day has gone by. We are still not clear that the majority leader is going to keep his word given back at the beginning of this Congress that the issue of the rules for the Senate of this Congress have been settled. They have been settled as a result of bipartisan discussions that occurred back in January leading to the passing of two rules changes and two standing orders, after which the majority leader had said it had been settled, that we had the rules for this Congress.

Later we learned that maybe we didn't, and there were these implied threats issued to groups around the country that he would exercise a so-called nuclear option. The definition of the nuclear option is to break the rules of the Senate in order to change the rules of the Senate.

The minority, and I suspect a reasonable number of the majority, are waiting to find out whether the majority leader intends to keep his word. Your word is the currency of the realm in the Senate. His word has been given. We expect it to be kept.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

BORDER SECURITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMMIGRATION MODERNIZATION ACT

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 744, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 744) to provide comprehensive immigration reform, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Leahy modified amendment No. 1183, to strengthen border security and enforcement.

Boxer/Landrieu amendment No. 1240, to require training for National Guard and Coast Guard officers and agents in training programs on border protection, immigration law enforcement, and how to address vulnerable populations, such as children and victims of crime.

Cruz amendment No. 1320, to replace title I of the bill with specific border security requirements, which shall be met before the Secretary of Homeland Security may process applications for registered immigrant status or blue card status and to avoid Department of Homeland Security budget reductions.

Leahy (for Reed) amendment No. 1224, to clarify the physical present requirements for merit-based immigrant visa applicants.

Reid amendment No. 1551 (to modified amendment No. 1183), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 1552 (to the language proposed to be stricken by the reported committee substitute amendment to the bill), to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 1553 (to amendment No. 1552), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I have expressed my frustration many times, and more often in the last week, about the lack of progress on getting votes. We have been on this bill for 3 weeks. Yet we have only dealt with nine amendments. It is unclear if any more amendments will be debated and voted on. We have provided a list to the majority on amendments that we believe will make the bill better. It seems as though the only amendments that will be made in order before we vote on final passage will be the Schumer-Hoeven-Corker so-called grand compromise. This is the one that was concocted behind closed doors for days, stalling progress we wanted to make in the public. In other words, we lost a lot of time while this grand compromise was being concocted behind closed doors. Even while that was going on, we could have been debating amendments and voting on amendments.

Not only is the amendment before us, meaning the Schumer-Hoeven-Corker amendment, loaded with provisions that some would call earmarks, but it continues to promote false promises that the border will be truly secured. We get the impression from hearing the authors debate their amendment that tomorrow we are going to have a secure border. This is not going to happen, and I will explain that in a moment.

Let's get back to basics. We are a Nation based upon the rule of law. In that concept, every Nation has a right to protect its sovereignty. In fact, it has a duty to protect the homeland. Any border security measures we pass then must be real and, more importantly, immediate. We can't wait 10 years down the road to put more agents on the border or to implement a tracking system to track foreign nationals. We have to prove to the American people today that illegal entries are under complete control and the visa overstays are being punished. Being punished means leave our country when your visa says you are supposed to leave the country.

Unfortunately, too many people have been led to believe the bill before us, and this grand compromise amendment, will force the Secretary of Homeland Security to secure the border. The fact is, it doesn't do that, but we are led to believe that tomorrow the

border will be secure. The amendment basically is a continuation of the basic premise of the underlying bill—legalization first, enforcement later, if ever.

It is very simple and it is wrong. People will be legalized merely on the submission of a plan by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

Will that plan secure the border? Who is going to know until a long way down the road. In the meantime, you have legalization and possibly enforcement, but you aren't going to know. Then you end up making the same mistake I made by voting for the bill in 1986. I don't intend to make that mistake again.

We are saying the Secretary puts forth a plan. This very same Secretary is the one who thinks the border is already strong enough, the same Secretary who has refused to even answer questions we submitted to her 2 months ago about how she might interpret some of this legislation. She obviously hasn't been forthright in answering what those department policies would be.

The amendment puts additional agents on the border, yes. It does it, quite frankly, in opposition to people on the other side of the aisle. Some of the sponsors of the bill have argued already that more agents aren't necessary. Maybe I should be satisfied we are going to have more agents. The point is, it is so far down the road—don't sell this amendment to me as border security.

Let's be honest with the American people. This amendment, this grand compromise concocted behind closed doors, may call for more Border Patrol agents, but it surely doesn't require it until the undocumented population, who are now RPIs, apply for adjustment status or a green card, and that is down the road several years.

I am all for putting more agents along the border, but why should we wait? It ought to be enforcement now, legalization later. Why allow legalization now and simply promise more agents in the future?

Even then, who believes the Secretary, like the one we have today, will actually enforce the law? When I say like the Secretary we have today, I mean the policy. She says the border is secure.

In this amendment there is the issue of fencing. One of the conditions that must be met before the Secretary can process green cards for people here illegally is the southern border fencing strategy has been submitted to Congress and implemented. This fencing strategy will identify where 700 miles of pedestrian fencing is in place. Note that this is not double layered, as in current law, so current law is weakened.

The amendment states the second layer is to be built only if the Secretary deems it necessary and appropriate. This is another delegation of authority to a Secretary who says the border is already secure.