

It has been suggested maybe that would only apply to nominations, but as Senator ALEXANDER and I pointed out last week, of course, that would not be the case. The next time the other side had a majority—my side—I would have a hard time arguing to my Members we should confine a 51-vote majority to simply nominations, and I would be under intense pressure to say: Why not legislation. Senator ALEXANDER and I laid out what some of the top priorities would be that he would recommend to me—and many of them I agree with—for an agenda I would be setting instead of the majority leader. These are things such as the national right-to-work, repealing ObamaCare, establishing Yucca Mountain, the national nuclear repository. One gets the drift. These are many things the current majority would find abhorrent.

I hope this crisis will be averted. All it requires from my friend the majority leader is simply an acknowledgment that he intends to keep his word.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### STUDENT LOAN RATES

Mr. REED. Mr. President, July 1 is less than 1 week away. We need to reassure students who will be taking out loans for school this fall that their interest rates will not double.

It is safe to say most of us on both sides of the aisle would want to see a long-term approach to setting student loan interest rates rather than a temporary extension of the current rate. We have been working, Senator HARKIN, Senator KING, Senator MANCHIN, Senator BURR, Senator COBURN, Senator WARREN, and many others about finding a way forward.

Unfortunately, all of the proposals that are on the table today would leave students worse off in the future, frankly, worse off than simply allowing the interest rate to double. There is a year or two, perhaps, where interest rates would stay below the rate of 6.8 percent. Then looking at rate trends, it looks quite convincing that these rates would surpass the current fixed rate and go higher.

We can not enact a long-term solution that is going to be bad for students. In fact, student groups and advocates have urged us to reject the so-called deals that are circling around with variable rates that are not capped that could lead to very high interest rates for students in a very short period of time.

One thing we have all been aware of for the last week or two is the dramatic movement of rates based on comments by the Federal Reserve with respect to their elimination of the quantitative easing program. The future looks as though we are going to see increased rates.

If we let them rise on students without any type of cap, I think we are going to, in a very short period of time,

regret that we didn't take more time—be more thorough, and look at not just issues of rate structure but also incentives to keep costs down in college, and at refinancing options, because it is a staggering debt load already on students. We haven't done any of this.

As a result, today, I introduce, along with many of my colleagues, the Keep Student Loans Affordable Act. I wish to thank Senators HAGAN, FRANKEN, WARREN, HARKIN, STABENOW, BOXER, and many other colleagues.

This legislation will simply extend the current rate at 3.4 percent, the rate we have today for need-based loans. These are the subsidized loans that go to low- and moderate income students. It would extend them for 1 more year so we do have the time, and let's say we should and must take the time to thoughtfully develop a long-term approach to the student loan program. It is not just coincidental that we must reauthorize the Higher Education Act this Congress. We can use this time properly to ensure that we do, in fact, have a comprehensive solution that will make students better off, not just in the next several months but in the long run.

Instead of charging low and moderate income students more for their student loans, our legislation would extend the 3.4-percent interest rate by closing a loophole in the tax laws, which allows fairly wealthy individuals to defer taxes on their IRA or 401(K) type accounts. This provision would save taxpayers \$4.6 billion over 10 years, which will more than cover the cost of extending the rate on subsidized student loans.

We are moving forward on a basis where we are not increasing the deficit. What we are doing is giving students another chance to maintain an appropriate loan level at 3.4 percent for an additional year. We have to take action to stop the interest rates from doubling.

Student loan debt is the next big financial crisis facing this country. We already understand from analysts that people in their twenties are putting off home purchases, automobile purchases, and are not doing what their parents' generation did because they have so much debt. They cannot move into the economy as their parents did. It is the second most outstanding household debt behind mortgage debt in the country. It surpassed credit card debt. It is affecting the trajectory of young people's lives.

Again, my generation thought by their late twenties they would own a home, in fact, perhaps moving on, fixing up, and looking at second homes. This has all changed.

Today students are caught between a rock and a hard place as they have all this debt they must carry forward.

The other thing that is so interesting is we are scrambling around here trying to figure out ways to deal with this issue. It turns out, in fact, the Congressional Budget Office has projected the

loan program is actually generating revenue more than \$50 billion this year and over \$180 billion between now and 2023. We are actually making money on these loans. Frankly, if we don't look at the program and fix it, the irony will be students will pay more and the government will take in profits. In the long run, I think we will be worse for it because we will be depriving a whole generation of the kind of education opportunity they need.

I think we have to do more. I introduced a long-term solution in April, the Responsible Student Loan Solutions Act, which will set student loans based on the actual cost of financing and administering the program. It will also protect students with a cap. I think that is essential. We have to understand the interest rates might rise to a point where we need to cap them to protect students. It would also allow refinancing, which is something that has not been seriously discussed. We frankly need more time to discuss that. We need the time; let's take the time.

I urge my colleagues to join me. Let's take up and pass the Keep Student Loans Affordable Act. Give students the chance to go to school this fall with a 3.4 percent subsidized interest rate. Give us not only the chance but give us the incentives and give us the marching orders to fix this problem comprehensively.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, the bill before us, S. 744, 1,200 pages, is promoted with high ideals, but it does not do what is promised. It is fatally flawed. If passed, it will not work—not because of the goals it states to have but because it won't work.

This flawed bill did not come about because of inadvertent errors that were a part of it, chance, ignorance, or mistake. The policies reflected in this piece of legislation came about as a direct result of the fact that the forces that shaped it had goals that were important to them, but these goals are not coterminous with and are not in harmony with the interests of the Nation as a whole.

The real *politique* Gang that put it together seems fine with that. They openly reported for weeks that these interests were in meetings in some room in secret, working through this legislation and their differences. Soon, they said, the Gang of 8 would have a bill that, having been blessed by these powerful special interests they had invited to the meetings, would be delivered to the Senate floor, masters of the universe that they are, all for us to adopt without complaint and with celebration.

They were so proud of this process that the eight would stick together all for one and one for all and defeat any amendment that dared to alter the delicate agreement they talked about. They would consider amendments, of course, oh, certainly. We will consider

amendments, but nothing serious that impacts the fundamental agreement that we have. One would not want to disturb that delicate balance, of course, of those very sensitive forces that were in the meetings. The folks who came together only for the common good—who understood the real needs of working Americans who are out of work, who have seen their paychecks decline, who have their spouse, their husband, their wife not able to find a job, their children not able to find a job, their grandchildren not able to find a job—they weren't thinking about them.

They included Mr. Richard Trumka, the top union boss; Mr. Tom Donohue, the top Chamber of Commerce boss; the agribusiness conglomerates; the activist group La Raza. Also there were the immigration lawyers association, high-tech billionaires, having delivered magnificent computers, who now desire to deliver public policy; and the meat packers.

One must know, friends, that when the Gang of 8 said there was a fragile balance, a delicate agreement, they weren't talking primarily about the agreement they had among themselves as Senators. That was secondary. The agreement they were referring to was the special interest forces that were in that secret room writing that bill.

Those interests, those forces, had signed in blood. The Gang of 8 then signed in blood to fight off any serious objections or ideas that would violate that agreement.

Although the Gang and the cabal that had confederated and combined together to set the immigration policy for the United States of America were desperate to keep it secret, there was another dominant force involved in the legislation, and that was President Obama. His team was there every step of the way. His team, which has done more to undermine law enforcement in the immigration area than any President in history, was there every step of the way. They were surely providing much of the drafting work, the legal work, and the support to get the detail done, which the Senators, of course, didn't have time to do. They didn't have time to study all the language of the bill.

We know about this because this week Ms. Munoz, President Obama's top immigration official, formally a top official in La Raza who said it was immoral for businesses to be checked as to whether they were hiring illegal workers—she couldn't keep it a secret. She made sure to reveal to the New York Times that she and President Obama were there every step of the way, writing the bill, being engaged in it. All of this was, of course, much to the discomfort of the Gang, especially the Republicans, who had been anxious to declare the bill was written by the job creators, entrepreneurs, and the Chamber of Commerce.

It went to the Judiciary Committee for a markup, and a very favorable Ju-

diciary Committee it was. Four of the Gang of 8 are on the committee. They started executing their plan. Senator SCHUMER on occasion would give Republican Gang members on the committee a pass. He was overheard on the mike saying to a staffer that Republicans can have a pass on this vote. They could break ranks—the Republican Gang members—and vote with the people on an issue that came up in Judiciary Committee as long as there were enough votes otherwise to kill that pesky amendment—and so it was in committee.

One other important thing, the money. There would be money to run campaign-like ads all over America to promote the bill, to promote the Senators, and to protect the Senators from criticism. And who knows, maybe to provide some political contribution sometime in the future for those who vote right.

The combine had it all rolling until last week on the floor of the Senate when the wheels almost came off. Senators and the American people saw that S. 744 had more holes than Swiss cheese. Clearly, the bill lacked the simple conviction that after the amnesty occurred, the lawlessness must end. There was not a conviction anywhere displayed in that legislation that the people who wrote it had a determination not to do more than provide the amnesty and actually provide a lawful system in the future to ensure that lawlessness would not be a part of our future. You can see it in hundreds of different places.

For example, the metrics—the standards for enforcement at the border in the bill—were weakened. Current law had higher standards of enforcement at the border than the new bill, which promised to be so tough—toughest bill ever, those TV ads said. Tough as nails, Senator SCHUMER said. But it weakened the standards for enforcement at the border.

The E-Verify system for the workplace, which can be effective in eliminating the hiring of illegal workers, was pushed back for five years, and a whole new system was designed instead using the one currently in existence. It can occur now. The system is 99 percent effective now. Why would we want to wait 5 years, unless we really weren't interested in seeing it happen?

Interior enforcement was diminished. The ICE officers have written us and told us this will make it worse. They are diminished in their ability to enforce the law. All kinds of discretion is given that will allow lawyers to block deportations and allow politicians to avoid the carrying out of the law.

The citizenship process is deeply damaged and unable to function effectively, according to the Citizenship and Immigration Services officers who process these applications. They say there is no way they can process these applications.

An amendment I offered to have at least face-to-face interviews with many

of the people—at least those who may pose some risk—was voted down. They are not even going to have interviews with the people who apply for legal status under this bill.

The entry-exit system, which provides that an individual must be clocked in when they come into the country and clocked out with a biometrics—fingerprint—system, that system was destroyed. Current law requires a biometric entry-exit system at all land, sea, and airports. This bill weakens that dramatically, makes it utterly unenforceable by changing biometric to electronic, whatever that means, and only requiring it to be at air and seaports.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent to have 1 additional minute, Mr. President.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. So, Mr. President, I would say this bill fails at point after point after point after point. It is not a bill that reflects a commitment to a lawful system of immigration in the future. We will admit dramatically more people than we ever have in our country's history at a time when unemployment is high. The Congressional Budget Office has told us that wages, average wages, will go down for 12 years, that the gross national product per capita will decline for 25-plus years, and that unemployment will go up.

This is not the right thing for us to pass because the amnesty will occur, but the enforcement is not going to occur and the policies for future immigration are not serving the national interest.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on cloture, to not let this bill pass today but require that it be subjected to more amendments and more study at a time to come when we can pass legislation that will actually work. This cannot work as it is. We should not let it go to final passage today.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I understand I have 10 minutes allotted; is that correct?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. CORKER. I want to thank my friend from Alabama, who has been down here vigorously and shows a lot of stamina. I have a sense he is not going to support this legislation.

I do want to talk, though, a little bit about this legislation this morning. I was asked yesterday by a reporter about the folks back home in Tennessee and how they feel about the legislation. No doubt there is a lot of controversy around this legislation. There have been a lot of statements made that, candidly, don't pass the trying-to-get-it-right test.

What I said to this reporter was that I have a lot of faith in Tennesseans. I believe Tennesseans, at the end of the day, will look at this legislation and study it, not just listen to what has been said by numbers of bloggers and people who are trying to spin things in such a way as to create confusion. At the end of the day, I believe when Tennesseans see what is in this legislation, the majority of them, the large majority of them, will believe this legislation improves the conditions from where we are today. I believe they will believe that.

Of course, it is my job to go back home to explain to Tennesseans directly, as I do on all controversial issues, why I support this legislation and why I think this is good for our country. But let me walk Tennesseans and Americans and people here in the Senate through, from my perspective, where we have been on this piece of legislation.

First of all, this bill was introduced to the Judiciary Committee months ago, and hundreds and hundreds of amendments were added in the process and dealt with during that judiciary markup. It went through regular order, something all of us around here have been hoping would occur with all legislation, which is that it goes through the committee process and comes to the Senate floor.

The bill has been on the floor now for 3 weeks, and I know a lot of people around here are complaining about the number of amendments. But let's face it, for a long time people on my side of the aisle would not let amendments be heard. It is just the truth. I mean, it is what happens with controversial legislation. A lot of times when people don't want to see something pass or see it improved, there are opponents to actually even hearing amendments.

So we had this ruse on the floor of the Senate yesterday about all this. Look, I would like to have 100 amendments on the floor. I am all for it. Bring it on. But the fact is, let's face it, both sides have been involved in keeping that from happening, and most recently it has been many of my friends on this side of the aisle.

Republicans gathered around the trigger that a Senator offered relative to border security, and it had to do with a 90-percent effectiveness trigger. That is where negotiations around this bill really hung up. But let me talk to people a little about this trigger.

When we look at the trigger that was in the border security bill, that I candidly supported, and many folks on my side did, the trigger was so subjective I would call it the Cheetos bag trigger or the granola wrapper trigger or the plastic bottle trigger. I want to make sure people understand the way this trigger was and why it wasn't acceptable to the majority of people in the Senate.

The way this trigger works is it uses something called sign cuttings. This is a term that is used to track people through the desert and track them through the mountains. It has been

used in the country for hundreds of years, especially in places that are less urban. So here is what was happening with that trigger.

Border Patrol agents were going to be able to look at a Cheetos bag or an empty granola bar wrapper or an empty Coca Cola can and say: I don't know, did 10 illegal aliens eat out of that Cheetos bag or did I? I don't know. And it was that very subjectivity that people realized was going to cause people to be able to move the goalpost.

I am making light of it, but it is just true. This is the way, believe it or not, we keep stats on the border right now, in this very subjective manner. How many people attempted to get through? We didn't see them, but we think maybe 10 people went up through that crevice.

It reminds me of when I go hunting once a year down in Albany, GA. I have a friend who allows me to hunt on his place, and when a covey of birds flies by, he says: I think there were 12, and he marks that down in his hunt log. Now, I am sure at the end of the year he gets somewhat close to how many birds were on his plantation, if you will, but we are looking at something that was going to matter as it relates to green cards, and it was subjective and was put in place, candidly, in such a way many people thought the goalpost was going to be moved.

So Senator HOEVEN and myself, working with a lot of others in the body, came up with tangible—tangible—triggers and not triggers some Border Patrol agent could fudge one way or the other. Not that anyone would attempt to, but one can understand, again, when someone is trying to guess how many people came through that they didn't even see—let me say that one more time.

One of the denominating factors was the Border Patrol agents were going to have to say how many people came through the border that they didn't see. Let's guess. By the way, let's make it exactly 90 percent.

So Senator HOEVEN and I came up with an amendment that everybody could understand with 20,000 Border Patrol agents, a doubling along the southern border—20,000 agents. Every American can know whether that has happened. We added \$4.5 billion worth of technology, and we listed the inventory. Every American can see whether that has happened. We have a fully implemented E-Verify. We don't want employers paying people under the table. We don't want people hiring folks who are here illegally. So that is fully implemented—fully implemented before a green card.

We also have an entry-exit visa program. I think many people know the reason we had the terrorist attack on 9/11. We had people who overstayed their visas. Americans don't want to see that happen. So we have a tangible trigger—a tangible trigger—of making sure we have an entry-exit visa program.

We also have another 350 miles of fencing. Now, a lot of people say that is

not required, but it is absolutely required. Anybody who would say that hasn't attempted to read the legislation.

So these are five tangible triggers. It is not a Cheetos bag trigger—not a Cheetos bag trigger but five tangible triggers that allow people to know whether we have actually met the goals that are in this bill.

There was a lot of discussion yesterday about an E-Verify amendment. As has been said, it is an amendment that could have easily been added to this legislation. It is a fine amendment. I would certainly be glad to support it. Candidly, I think it is an amendment, if it made it to the floor, that would be one of those 100-to-0 or 98-to-2 votes. Maybe it could pass by voice vote. It is not controversial. But the fact is the bill has a lot in there relative to E-Verify, and no doubt the House can make that even stronger.

Some of my friends are saying this is an amnesty bill. I don't know if people have looked at the provisions about people coming in out of the shadows and having to pay taxes—back taxes—and they will have to pay fines. They will have to pay taxes, by the way, into the U.S. system for 10 years and cannot receive a single benefit from the U.S. Government. That is the reason this bill scores so favorably from the standpoint of generating revenues into the Treasury.

But let me just say this. Nobody in this body has offered an amendment that would round up everybody in this country who is here illegally and deport them out of this country. Not a single soul has offered an amendment to do that.

Basically, what we have is a situation where we can cause people to come in out of the shadows, pay fines, pay taxes and receive no benefits and go to the back of the line. Everybody who came here properly or who has applied properly would be processed first. It is going to be a minimum of 10, maybe 13, 14, 15 years before people even have the ability to get a green card.

The option is to vote against this bill and basically say we are not going to do anything about the people who are here; we are OK with employers continuing to pay them under the table; we are OK with them continuing to not pay taxes, because not a single one of my colleagues has offered an amendment to round up these 11 million people in our country and ship them out. I call that *de facto* amnesty.

Some people have talked about the process. One of my closest friends in the Senate said, I don't like the process. We should have been working with the House from the very beginning.

I am not a Member of the Gang of 8, but we had eight Senators who worked for a long time to create a bill. The same thing is happening in the House right now.

The ACTING PRESIDENT *pro tempore*. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. CORKER. I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORKER. The process is that the House passes legislation, if they so choose. They may not choose to take up immigration. My sense is they will not take up this bill; they will take up their own bill. The way the process works is we conference those, and we end up with a better piece of legislation.

Fiscally, if this bill passes, we are spending a lot of money on border security—and some people have said it is too much. But, again, I have had no amendments over here trying to lower the standards that were put in place by the Hoeven-Corker amendment. The fact is we would be spending \$46 billion on border security to have these five tangible things occur, and we would be getting \$197 billion back in the Treasury if we do this. I have never been able to vote for a piece of legislation that had this much fiscal benefit for our country that didn't raise anybody's taxes. Then we have seen the whole issue of the economic growth that is going to be created for our country if we pass this bill.

I believe voting against this bill is voting against border security. What that means is that things are going to stay exactly as they are. We are going to have porous borders, no entry-exit visa program, no E-Verify system. I think voting against this bill is voting for the status quo, which is, in essence, *de facto* amnesty.

I believe this bill takes a step forward. I believe it is good for our country in every single way I can imagine, and later today I plan to support this bill. I hope it is improved in the House.

I cannot imagine there is anybody in this body who believes where we are today is satisfactory. I came here to make progress, to solve problems, and I appreciate those involved in allowing me to help with that process.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all quorum calls prior to the votes at 11:30 a.m. today be equally divided.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NOMINATION OF ANTHONY FOXX

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I rise to say a few words about Anthony Foxx, the President's nominee to head the Department of Transportation that we will be voting on later this morning. While I am going to be sad to see him leave our local government in Charlotte, I am pleased the entire country will soon benefit from his leadership.

Anthony Foxx earned an undergraduate degree in history from Davidson College in North Carolina and blazed a trail as the school's first African-American student body president. He then received a law degree from New York University and held positions in all three branches of the Federal Government. Beginning as a judicial clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, he served ably as a lawyer for the Department of Justice and counsel for the House Judiciary Committee.

In 2005, Anthony was elected as an at-large member of the Charlotte City Council. During his 4 years of service as a councilman, he chaired the Transportation Committee and was a member of the Economic Development and Planning Committee. Since 2009, he has served as mayor of Charlotte, one of the country's fastest growing cities.

When taking office, Charlotte's unemployment rate was almost 13 percent. Through his tireless efforts, Mayor Foxx helped attract and create more than 8,400 new jobs. Most important, Mayor Foxx has been a true champion of transportation and infrastructure development, securing forward-looking investments in Charlotte's roads, airports, and mass transit. Under his leadership, I-485 has been approved for expansion; he secured funding toward the completion of the Blue Line Light Rail Extension Project, and oversaw the opening of the third runway at Charlotte Douglas International Airport. All of these projects occurred as we worked—and are still working—to climb out of the recession.

These smart investments in infrastructure and transit-oriented development are continuing to fuel Charlotte's economic growth.

Light rail has played an important role in sustaining this growth, with more than 19 million riders since it opened in 2007 and an average of 15,000 riders every day. The light rail is helping to revitalize Charlotte's historic South End neighborhood, which saw the city's first railroad line in 1850. The neighborhood is now home to more than 750 businesses and 11 new residential districts.

Investments at Charlotte airport are establishing the city as an international hub. With direct flights to London and soon Brazil, Charlotte and North Carolina are increasingly connected to businesses across the globe.

The I-85 Corridor Improvement Project, which has been a top priority for the State for many years, I am pleased to say, is finally moving forward. This improvement project relies heavily on support from local leaders, including Mayor Foxx, and is expanding and improving this integral roadway so it can meet the needs of businesses and residents for years to come.

Anthony's direct experience working with the transportation departments at the Federal, State, and local levels and his proven record of success make

him well prepared to serve as the next Secretary of Transportation.

I have worked closely with Mayor Foxx during my time in Washington, and I have the utmost confidence he will serve in this role with great distinction. I thank him for his dedication and willingness to step up when service is needed, and I am pleased the Commerce Committee approved Anthony Foxx's nomination with unanimous bipartisan support.

Mayor Foxx is a true champion of transportation and infrastructure development, and I encourage my colleagues to support his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the Gang of 8 in their framework for comprehensive immigration reform said the following:

Our legislation will provide a tough, fair, and practical roadmap to address the status of unauthorized immigrants in the United States that is contingent upon our success in securing our borders and addressing visa overstays.

It sounds good, doesn't it? They said their plan would be contingent upon success.

But the bill doesn't do that. The bill doesn't say the border has to be secured. It doesn't say that we need to see results. It only throws more money at the problem and puts more boots on the ground. Of course, that is a good start. But as we have seen before, that is not enough. It is not enough to ensure we will not be back here in the same place 25 years down the road, devising new plans. So I am going to take a few minutes to discuss the legalization program created in this bill.

Since I was here in 1986, I know that loopholes allowed people to gain legalization even if they weren't entitled to it. We had problems with fraud and abuse back then, and I am afraid it will be the same if the bill is passed in its current form.

Time and time again we have been told the bill will allow people here illegally to register and earn legal status, then become contributing members of society. Yet the bill fails to address how to prevent a continued influx of individuals who will replace those currently living in the shadows.

Take the CBO report as an example. CBO said illegal immigration would only be reduced by 25 percent. That is not acceptable, especially given the promise of the Gang of 8 that the bill would "be a successful permanent reform to our immigration system that will not need to be revisited."

The legalization program begins upon the mere admission of a strategy submitted by the Secretary of Homeland Security. So almost immediately, millions of people will come forward and be made lawful.

Remarkably, the bill virtually suspends enforcement during the 2½-year legalization application period. It prohibits law enforcement from detaining

or removing anyone claiming eligibility without any requirement to prove they are, in fact, eligible. Law enforcement is even required to inform those here illegally about legalization and give them the opportunity to apply.

Under the bill, undocumented immigrants already here can apply for and receive legal status, even if they have committed document fraud, provided false statements to authorities, and absconded court-ordered removal proceedings.

During this time, there is an enforcement holiday. Enforcement officers would be limited in detaining or removing any individual who merely claims eligibility for RPI status, regardless of whether there is proof to back that up.

Perhaps the enforcement holiday would be mildly concerning if we were dealing with individuals who only violated civil immigration laws. Unfortunately, the bill extends to those with criminal records. This includes individuals who have gang affiliations, even felony arrests, and even multiple misdemeanor criminal convictions.

Moreover, the bill permits individuals who attain legalization to continue criminal behavior, so long as their behavior and subsequent convictions remain below the eligibility threshold. In fact, the bill goes even further and—can you believe this—provides the Secretary with waiver authority in order to dismiss misdemeanor criminal convictions for purposes of determining eligibility for legal status.

The bill does not limit those outside the country from applying for legalization. The bill states that individuals who have previously been deported or otherwise removed from the country are ineligible for RPI status. However, one need only turn a few pages to discover that the Secretary has sole, as well as unreviewable, discretion to waive this provision and permit large classes of individuals to apply for legalization.

There is yet another way of providing and allowing individuals who have been removed or reentered illegally to apply for status, if they are fortunate enough to have a relative who does, in fact, qualify for legalization. This weakens and undermines even current law where Congress has already declared that individuals who reenter illegally are not entitled to immigration benefits.

Amendments to prohibit those ordered removed, those currently in removal proceedings, and those who have absconded and failed to show up for removal proceedings from applying or being granted legal status were voted down during committee considerations. An amendment to prevent spousal abusers, child abusers, drunk drivers, and other serious criminals from obtaining legal status was also rejected.

I know the public listening or reading these records will not believe that

Congress could do those things, that it is OK to have those people with that sort of criminal activity being legalized, but that is what the bill allows. These amendments also could have been voted on during floor debate, but the majority refused to allow their consideration.

Now, the process for obtaining legalization is ripe for abuse and potentially encourages crafty behavior for individuals to game the system.

Under the bill, individuals applying for legal status are permitted to file numerous amended applications in the event their initial application is denied for failure to complete properly or provide required documentation. In practice, one could continue to file numerous amended applications, knowing each application is incomplete, resulting in a perpetual limbo where an individual can remain here for an indeterminate time without any possibility of removal.

Another area of potential abuse permits otherwise ineligible individuals to remain indefinitely in the United States.

The bill provides for a stay of removal until a newly created administrative appellate review process of the application has been exhausted. One need only imagine the vast loophole created that will allow ineligible applicants to remain in the United States pending a typically extremely lengthy review process.

When combined with a never ending application process and an expansive, time consuming appeals process, individuals can remain here for years without ever obtaining legal status, and without any fear of removal.

Under the bill, people with RPI status must prove that they have been employed during the duration of their status. Yet, the bill allows people to prove that employment—which is required to get a green card—using merely a sworn affidavit.

We know from our 1986 experience that sworn affidavits are highly unreliable, and incentivize massive fraud. They are not verifiable or trustworthy.

A New York Times article from 1988 shows just how easy it was for immigrants to get false affidavits. During one investigation, the Immigration and Naturalization Service arrested seven people for selling fraudulent affidavits to new immigrants.

One of these seven fraudsters ran a scheme that sold affidavits to 1,400 people here illegally. They had thousands more applications filled out and waiting for others. In fact, while investigators were on site seizing the evidence, dozens of individuals arrived to purchase more fraudulent affidavits. Buying and selling fake documents was a thriving business and can be again.

According to the article, one person arrested had 364 fraudulent affidavits on her five-acre farm.

A third of these fraudsters went from farm to farm, offering false affidavits to farmers for prices from \$950 to \$3,000.

The Majority has rejected several amendments that would improve on the 1986 legalization. That is unfortunate. The bill will lead to further fraud. It is my hope these provisions can still be fixed before any bill is sent to the President.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the immigration reform bill that we are going to vote on soon. I want to bring a Minnesota perspective to this debate. I want to talk about how this bill will help Minnesota businesses and agriculture while also helping and protecting Minnesota workers. I also want to talk about how this bill will help Minnesota families and communities.

Minnesota was admitted to the Union in 1858. For the first 30 years after Minnesota's founding, no fewer than one-third of Minnesotans were immigrants born abroad. Our State did not suffer from that—it thrived. Our fields were first tilled by Swedish immigrants. Their crops filled 2 million acres. Our iron mines in the north depended on Finnish labor. Norwegians were critical to our logging industry, while the Danes, who came to Minnesota after the Civil War, made our State a leader in dairy farming.

Today, immigrants are about 7 percent of Minnesota's population. Most of them come from Asia, and Latin America, and Africa, rather than Europe. But the contributions of immigrants to Minnesota's economy and to our communities are no less important.

I am going to vote for this bill because of what it will do for Minnesota's economy. This is clearest when it comes to Minnesota's agricultural industry, particularly our dairy farms. Minnesota is the Nation's sixth largest dairy producer. Five percent of our nation's cows are in our State.

But for years, I have been meeting with dairy farmers and they told me they can't get the workforce they need. They can't find enough American workers—and the Nation's agricultural guestworker program is open only to seasonal workers. Unfortunately, you can't milk cows seasonally. If you did, they would just get cranky, the cows.

For years, I have been calling for an immigration bill to fix this problem by opening our guestworker program to dairy farmers. This bill does just that.

This bill will not just help agriculture. A lot of industry in Minnesota is in the high tech and medical sectors—companies like 3M and Medtronic. Unfortunately, our visa system works against these companies because, while the University of Minnesota is minting new Ph.D.'s in STEM fields, our system sends many of our top foreign graduates right back to their home countries.

Thanks to the work of my fellow Minnesota senator, Senator KLOBUCHAR, this bill will make it easier for Minnesota companies to recruit and

hire top minds, regardless of where they come from.

I am also proud that this bill includes two amendments that I wrote that will protect small businesses.

A major component of this bill is to create a mandatory electronic employment verification system called E-Verify. But small businesses in Minnesota were initially concerned about how E-Verify would affect them.

My first amendment creates a special office within the Department of Homeland Security whose sole job will be to give workers and small businesses quick, in-person assistance if E-Verify does not work the way it should. My other amendment will keep pressure on DHS to lower E-Verify error rates that, in the past, have caused major headaches for small businesses and employees alike.

While this bill will help our businesses, it also has solid protections for American workers.

In negotiations, the AFL-CIO demanded that before an American employer can hire a foreign guestworker, that employer has to aggressively advertise for and recruit American workers. If a business breaks these rules, it can get kicked out of the guestworker program. If the protections in this bill prove insufficient, I will fight to improve them. But for now, I think protections negotiated by the AFL-CIO are adequate for moving forward.

So this bill will protect workers today. But it will also help them for decades down the line by bolstering our Nation's safety net. Our changing demographics have put a strain on our Social Security system. More young workers paying into the Social Security system will help ease that, and that is precisely what this bill will provide: Census figures show that 48 percent of immigrants in the U.S. are between the ages of 20 to 44; for native-born workers, that figure is about 31 percent.

Finally, this bill will help our economy by helping our Nation's bottom line. According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, immigration reform will decrease our deficit by \$175 billion over the next decade, and an additional \$700 billion over the following decade. That's \$875 billion dollars—close to a trillion dollars in deficit reduction.

This bill will be a boon to Minnesota's economy, and to our Nation's economy too. But this bill is not just about economics. It is also about our values. It is about living up to the promise engraved on the base of the Statue of Liberty:

Give me your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tost [sic] to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Minnesota played a special part in that promise. For decades, Minnesota has welcomed more refugees and asylees than almost any other State.

We have welcomed the Hmong and Somalis and so many others because it

is the right thing to do. In the same way, a big part of this bill is about doing the right thing and helping the least of our brothers and sisters.

Last October I traveled to Northfield, MN, where I visited a program for Latino high school students called the "TORCH" program—that stands for Tackling Obstacles and Raising College Hopes. This is an amazing program that has more than doubled the high school graduation rate for Latino students.

During my visit I met many undocumented students who were brought here by their parents as young children—and who were thus undocumented through no fault of their own.

For years, these kids watched their classmates apply to college and plan for their careers, but they knew that was not for them—because they could not work legally or serve in our military.

Then, last June, the President took executive action to protect these kids from deportations and let them work legally. Their teachers told me what an enormous difference it made for these kids. For the first time, they could see they had a future—they could go to college or join the military. And that was just because an executive order that did not have the force of a statute.

With this bill, thanks to the inclusion of the DREAM Act, authored by Senator DURBIN, their hope for the future will be a certainty. Good for those kids. And you know what, good for us, because those kids are going to work wonders.

I am especially proud of a bill I wrote that also helps children and that is included in the larger bill we are debating, and that is the HELP Separated Children Act.

My bill was inspired by what happened in Worthington, MN in December 2006, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement carried out enforcement actions in 6 States and arrested hundreds of unauthorized immigrants. Tragically, those raids also left many children—most of them citizens—without their parents and with no way to find them. One 2nd grader in Worthington came home from school to find his 2-year-old brother alone and his parents gone. For the next week, he cared for his brother while his grandmother drove from Texas to meet them.

Over the past 2 years, more than 200,000 parents of citizen children were deported. These children are often abandoned at home or at school and can go for months without speaking with or visiting their parents. My HELP Separated Children Act will lay down basic humanitarian protections for children in immigration enforcement. It will make sure that parents and children can stay in contact, and will make sure that parents can participate in court proceedings relating to their children.

My bill was co-sponsored by Senators GRASSLEY, COONS, CORNYN, HIRONO,

CRUZ, FEINSTEIN, LEAHY and BLUMENTHAL. Of the 200 or so amendments that we debated in the Judiciary Committee, this was the only one that was passed on a unanimous 18 to 0 vote.

I am also proud that the bill includes amendments I proposed to help victims of domestic violence, as well as young children who are themselves involved in immigration proceedings.

We have a rare opportunity before us. We have a chance to vote on a bipartisan bill written by a bipartisan group and supported by both the AFL-CIO and the Chamber of Commerce. The bill will help our economy, secure our border, and give millions of undocumented people a tough but fair path to get right with the law. And on top of all of this, this bill will save the American people hundreds of billions of dollars. I am proud to support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to congratulate the members of the Gang of Eight—Senators SCHUMER, MCCAIN, DURBIN, GRAHAM, MENENDEZ, RUBIO, BENNET and FLAKE. This bill is an example of the Senate at its best. It speaks not just to the ability of the Senators in the Gang—but also to their courage.

I would also like to recognize Chairman LEAHY for managing this markup and this debate so expertly.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I just want to speak for a few minutes. I spoke at length earlier this week.

I thank Senator FRANKEN for his kind words and the work he has done on this bill, and also Senator LEAHY, as well as all of those involved with this bill. Managing the bill this morning, it is, again, awe inspiring to see all the work that has been done on both sides of the aisle—whether people will vote for the bill.

I expect we will have a strong bipartisan vote on this bill after the civil debate we have had. This is an incredibly big and important issue for this country. I have been involved in this debate since 2007. We have seen everyone come together from labor, business, farm groups, migrant workers, immigrant workers, and religious groups. We are finally going to get this incredibly important bill done.

As Senator FRANKEN noted, the piece that has been most important to me—in addition to the DREAM Act and all of the work that had to be done in law enforcement—was the work we have done to improve our legal immigration system. We are a country built on immigration. Thirty percent of our U.S. Nobel Laureates were born in other countries; 90 of our Fortune 500 companies were formed by immigrants. We cannot continue to compete in the global economy if we close our doors to those who think and make things and invent things. In part, that is what most excites me about this bill, the



work we have done to improve the legal immigration system.

I thank my colleagues, the Gang of 8, and our great Judiciary Committee that debated and marked up this bill into the night day after day. We should be proud of this bill, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

With that, I yield for Senator LEE.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, before beginning my remarks, I would first like to thank my friend and colleague, the distinguished Senator from Iowa, for his tireless efforts in managing this process from the Republican side. It has not been easy, and his effort has reflected a certain level of statesmanship that is to be commended.

I rise today in support of immigration reform. I support strengthening our borders and ensuring that they are secure before beginning a pathway to citizenship because it is the only way we can avoid the mistakes of the past.

I support robust interior enforcement and a biometric visa tracking system because without those things in place, we will not solve the problem of illegal immigration. I support modernizing and streamlining our visa system because we need an efficient process of legal immigration that meets the needs of our economy. I support immigration reform that is tough on those who have chosen to break our laws and fair to those who have obeyed them and have been patiently waiting their turn in line trying to come here legally.

Today there is reason for disappointment, but there is also great cause for encouragement. The bill we have before us is an enormous disappointment. The American people deserve better. As a matter of public policy, this bill fails to meet many of the goals we set at the beginning of the process.

It is full of promises to beef up border security, but it makes no assurances. This legislation cuts the American people out by cutting out any congressional oversight of the opening and progression of the pathway to citizenship. It remains grossly unfair to those who have languished in our current legal immigration system, unable to get answers for decades in some cases. It transfers enormous authority and discretion to the executive branch, exacerbating an already widespread problem within our Federal Government.

It also fails perhaps the most important test. According to the Congressional Budget Office, this bill will reduce illegal immigration by just a mere 25 percent over the next 10 years. This should be reason alone to scrap the entire bill.

As a matter of process, Members of this body should be embarrassed about how this bill has moved through the Senate. From day one the country was misled about what was in the bill. The talking points never matched the reality of what was in the bill.

We were told if we didn't like what was in it, we would have an oppor-

tunity to fix it. But that wasn't true either. During the committee markup, Democrats and the Gang of 8 Republicans voted as a block to defeat virtually all substantive amendments proposed to improve the bill.

They said there would be regular order on the floor of the Senate, but that turned out to be a false promise as well. For a 1,200-page bill, the Senate, including the 92 Members not on the Judiciary Committee or the Gang of 8, was allowed exactly 10 rollcall votes before the process was shut down.

By contrast, during the 2007 debate on immigration reform, the Senate voted 32 times to amend the bill. Some would argue even that was too small. But certainly 10 votes on a 1,200-page bill does not suggest that the proponents of the bill are interested in regular order.

For the grand finale, at nearly the end of this process, the proponents substituted what is effectively a brandnew bill in place of the one we have been debating for over 2 months. They gave us very little time to read it before we had to vote on it. Once we were on the new bill, they did not allow a single vote on any amendments.

This is an embarrassment to this institution, and it is an assault on the principles of democracy, but like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, from this low point in the Senate springs an encouraging path forward for those who, like me, truly want immigration reform.

First, this exercise has laid out in front of the American people all the problems inherent in passing massive pieces of legislation presumed to fix all of our problems at once. The so-called comprehensive approach has been utterly discredited. From denying votes to buying votes with special interest carve-outs, our experience over the last 2 months only reaffirms why the vast majority of Americans don't trust Washington.

The special interests had a huge hand in writing the bill, while the American people had none. Almost all of the discussions and negotiations took place in secret backroom deals. Rather than debate policy differences, the debate was a daily fact check on misleading and outright false claims made by some of the bill's proponents.

The good news is the House appears to have learned this lesson and wants no part of this. Already the Speaker has said the Senate bill is dead on arrival. So today's vote is largely symbolic.

The House Judiciary Committee has recently passed two significant pieces of immigration reform—the one on interior enforcement and another dealing with agricultural workers. It proves that reform can be passed in a step-by-step process. Indeed, the only reason immigration reform is so controversial is because the Senate refuses to pass it one piece at a time. There is simply no legitimate reason we have to pass a one-size-fits-all, 1,200-page take-it-or-leave-it bill.

Although it is likely this bill will pass today, I strongly encourage my colleagues to consider where we started, where we are now and, most importantly, what lies ahead of us. They said it would secure the border; it does not. Congress has been fooled by false promises before. We should not go down that same path again.

They said illegal immigration will be a thing of the past. Under this bill, it will not. The Congressional Budget Office confirmed that under this bill, there will be 6- to 8-million illegal aliens in the country 10 years from now. They said it would be good for the economy. It isn't.

CBO also confirmed that it would lower wages and increase unemployment. They said it would be tough but fair. It is neither. It is not tough on those who have broken the law, and it is not fair for the people who have been trying to come here legally.

If this bill passes today, it will be all but relegated to the ash heap of history as the House appears willing to tackle immigration reform the right way. The sponsors of this bill had the best of intentions but, in my opinion, intentions are not always enough.

As I said at the outset, I stand here today strongly in support of immigration reform, but this bill is not immigration reform. It is big government dysfunction, and that is why I cannot support it and urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, how much time remains on this side?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 21 minutes remaining.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I yield myself up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Utah in many of his remarks, if not all of his remarks. I come here to speak on the pending immigration bill more in disappointment than in anger because of the lost opportunity we had in the Senate to come up with a bill that would actually do the job of restoring legality and order to our broken immigration system, create a system of legal immigration which would benefit our economy, and reflect our basic values.

It has been 5 months since the Gang of 8 first released their framework of principles for immigration reform. At the time, they were saying many of the right things—things that gave me great encouragement that we would come up with a better product than we have today. They promised their bill would secure our borders once and for all.

I live in a border State with 1,200 miles of common border with Mexico. We know that border permits not only illegal entry into the United States because of inadequate resources and personnel there, but also it is a benefit to

the United States because of the legitimate trade that passes through the ports of entry that create and support up to 6 million jobs in America.

They promised a tough but fair legalization program. They promised that permanent legalization would be contingent on border security. This is a recurring theme in my remarks because I actually was so naive to believe the representations made by the Gang of 8.

In January 2013 Senator DURBIN, the distinguished majority whip, said: A pathway to citizenship needs to be contingent upon securing the border. That is what he said in January. Instead of a delivery on that promise, what we got was his statement 6 months later in June of 2013: The gang has delinked the pathway to citizenship and border enforcement.

So the American people have been asked to extend an act of common generosity and compassion that is typical of the American people, but what they get in return is no assurance that the system has been restored to order or that the border has been secured. Unfortunately, once again, it is business as usual in Washington, DC.

The promises the Gang of 8 made were encouraging and they raised hopes in me and others that we truly would have a bipartisan immigration bill voted out of the Senate that was worthy of the name. But, unfortunately, the bill now bears little resemblance to the initial promises of the Gang of 8.

I know we talked a lot about border security, but in addition to a national security issue this is a matter of restoring the public's confidence that the Federal Government will actually do its job.

The fundamental problem with this legislation is that it demands border security inputs but not outputs or results. In other words, the idea is—and the Washington Post editorial seemed to get it today—if you promise to buy enough stuff, then somehow the job will miraculously get done.

This bill asks us to believe that quadrupling the size of the Border Patrol and expanding the border fence will solve the problem of illegal immigration. I certainly agree that what the Border Patrol calls tactual infrastructure or fencing—and particularly in urban areas—can be a tool that is effective. I certainly believe that additional Border Patrol—my proposal was that we add about 5,000 Border Patrol—would be helpful. Once the technology identifies people crossing the border illegally, they have to have somebody go pick them up.

I actually agree with Senator McCAIN when he initially opposed my amendment to add 5,000 Border Patrol agents, when he said he thought the answer was mainly in the area of improved technology. I agree with that. But imagine my surprise when Senator McCAIN and Senator SCHUMER, the two main advocates of this surge in the underlying bill for border security, said:

We think 5,000 Border Patrol agents is a budget buster, only to come back a few days later and offer 20,000 Border Patrol agents at an increased cost of at least \$30 billion.

So without a coherent strategy or mechanism for ensuring results, adding 20,000 Border Patrol agents—assuming that it ever actually happens—and a few hundred miles of additional fencing could turn out to be a massive waste of taxpayer dollars. Again, there is something fundamentally wrong with the idea that if we throw enough money at the problem, it will somehow miraculously be resolved.

What we need is a plan, and what we need to know is how we can invest in this plan to accomplish measurable results, and this bill does not produce that.

So if a person believes the Federal Government is going to hire 20,000 additional Border Patrol agents and spend all this money over the next 10 years, well, as the song goes, I have some oceanfront property in Arizona I would like to sell you.

My colleagues don't have to take my word for it. In recent days experts from across the political spectrum have told us this bill takes the wrong approach to border security. And contrary to what my good friend from Tennessee says, it is not "this bill or nothing." This is not the only alternative. So one could say this bill is flawed and doesn't accomplish the job but still be for immigration reform and a solution, which I am.

The former Commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Doris Meissner said the border security provisions in this bill are detached from reality. Former Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Robert Bonner, also formerly head of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said the bill "is simply throwing a phenomenal amount of money at a problem to gain political support"—which it apparently has done—"but is not likely to solve the problem."

Meanwhile, former DHS official John Whitley has reminded us that we should be focusing on border security outputs instead of inputs. In other words, we should be looking at not just what is put into this but what it actually produces in terms of results. That makes sense. Just spending a lot of money on stuff we are going to buy without any plan and without measuring outputs isn't going to get the job done.

An output-based trigger would assure the American people that we will not grant legal status until after our borders are secured. And the reason is because this is not a punitive measure; this is a way of realigning all of the incentives so that Republicans, Democrats, Independents, liberals, and conservatives can all pressure the executive branch and the bureaucracy to actually accomplish the promises set out in the bill rather than just throw money at it.

The Presiding Officer has heard me say that the amendment I offered would have made legalization contingent on 100 percent situational awareness of the U.S.-Mexico border and full operational control of the border. I have been criticized by some of my friends who say that is an unreasonable requirement and then ask: Where in the world did you get those figures? Well, I got that out of the Gang of 8 proposal. The difference is that mine would have guaranteed accomplishing the goal; theirs merely promises it but will never keep that promise.

I would have also made it contingent on a nationwide biometric entry-exit system—something this Federal Government has been promising for 17 years since President Clinton signed that requirement into law, but that promise hasn't been kept either.

I also included in my amendment nationwide E-Verify, which is a way for employers to verify the eligibility of workers who apply for a job, that they can legally work in the United States.

As I said, ironically, the Gang of 8 promised all of these same things, but the only mechanism I have seen that would have actually guaranteed it to happen was the amendment I offered that was tabled.

What I have described is a real border security trigger, not just another promise—the kind of trigger that will be necessary to get bipartisan immigration reform not just out of the Senate but out of the House of Representatives and on to the President's desk. I don't think we should be so short-sighted as to pat ourselves on the back and say: Hey, the Senate has passed an immigration reform bill, only to find it dead on arrival in the House of Representatives and to make it harder, not easier, to get a consensus bill on the President's desk for him to sign. That is not success.

Not surprisingly, the Congressional Budget Office reports that this bill will have only the slightest impact on illegal immigration.

The American people are not fooled. A recent Rasmussen poll says that only about 28 percent of Americans actually believe this bill will secure America's borders. The American people have been fooled in the past, which is another reason they are skeptical now, and they don't believe this bill will get it, and I don't either.

In short, we are about to vote on a bill that repeats the mistakes of the past and does not learn from them, offering merely promises but no results. But it also makes a few new mistakes as well.

Despite earlier promises of a tough but fair legalization program, this bill grants immediate legal status to people with multiple drunk driving convictions and people with multiple domestic violence convictions. And for people who have actually already committed these crimes and been deported, this bill would allow them to come back and register for RPI status.



I simply do not understand, nor has anyone attempted to explain, how we can in good conscience support legalization, of violent criminals. I am not talking about just people who have come here to work and otherwise been law-abiding citizens; I am talking about people who come here and, in contempt of our laws, have committed crimes of violence, and they are now going to be rewarded under this bill with probationary status and a pathway to citizenship. A few days ago I challenged my colleagues to come to the floor and explain or perhaps defend these provisions. I didn't find any takers.

I also mentioned the tragic stories of husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters who lost their lives after being hit by an illegal immigrant drunk driver. Just to give some perspective, in 2011 alone Immigration and Customs Enforcement deported nearly 36,000 people with DUI convictions. This bill legalizes people who have committed driving under the influence offenses as well as people with multiple domestic violence offenses.

Some might argue that multiple misdemeanors aren't that big of a deal, but tell that to the family of a loved one who has lost their son, their daughter, their mother, their father, their brother, or their sister because of drunk driving by people who have illegally entered our country. It is worth remembering that the difference between a misdemeanor and a felony can be just 1 day in custody.

These are not minor offenses. It is worth remembering that, particularly in a domestic violence context, a felony is often pleaded down to a misdemeanor because of challenges getting cooperation from the complaining witness, who frequently lives with the defendant.

No fewer than 23 States classify certain domestic violence offenses as misdemeanors. In Minnesota, misdemeanor domestic violence even includes domestic abuse with a deadly weapon. That law may call it a misdemeanor, but it is a serious crime.

So for one last time, I will issue my challenge: Are there any supporters of this bill who will come to the Senate floor and tell the American people why drunk drivers, domestic abusers, and already deported criminals should be given immediate legal status under this bill? Well, I won't be holding my breath. No one has taken me up on that yet.

I have just a few final points. We have been told this bill reduces the Federal budget deficit over the next 10 years. Amazingly, in some sort of Washington-style accounting, we can spend about \$50 billion and still save money. That is amazing. It is magical. And it is pure fantasy. We were told that previously on the Affordable Care Act, but we know this bill is premised on accounting tricks. The reality is that it will actually increase the on-budget deficit.

This is the amazing thing to me. We have some of our colleagues who are some of the most effective deficit hawks in this Chamber—those who have been champions fighting against special spending projects that tend to corrupt the political process—yet they support this bill and seem to have turned a blind eye to the on-budget deficit and the fact that this bill is littered with de facto earmarks, carve-outs, and pet spending projects.

We have been told this bill modernizes the southern border. Yet it does absolutely nothing to facilitate the flow of lawful trade and commerce across our border and to allow law enforcement to focus on the criminal element, which would represent a tremendous step in the right direction.

I wish to reiterate that I agree with the Gang of 8 and those who support some aspects of this bill that we need a nationwide E-Verify system. I know Senator PORTMAN from Ohio, for example, had an E-Verify improvement amendment, but, like 45 other amendments denied an opportunity to be heard as part of this process wherein we have only seen 10 votes on amendments, he was unable to offer that improvement to this bill.

I agree with the Gang of 8 and those who say we need stricter penalties on employers who hire illegal immigrants. I agree with those who say we need to increase the number of visas for highly skilled immigrants with advanced STEM degrees. I agree with the goal of unifying families. All of these measures enjoy broad bipartisan support, and I want to offer my congratulations to the Gang of 8 for including them in this bill.

However, I can't support a bill that repeats the mistakes of the past by making a promise of future action that will never be kept, particularly on border security, and one that repeats the mistakes of 1986. I certainly can't support a bill that offers immediate legal status to drunk drivers, wife-beaters, and violent criminals.

I was disappointed when my RESULTS amendment was tabled, and I am disappointed that today we are about to pass deeply flawed legislation that will not be taken up by the House of Representatives. But I take some comfort in knowing that while the initial Senate debate is ending, the broader nationwide debate is just beginning. In the weeks and months ahead, I want to continue to play an active and constructive role, particularly working with our colleagues in the House of Representatives, to pass real immigration reform that promotes security and prosperity for the American people.

I note that one of our colleagues in the House called this bill a runaway train in the Senate, but that train is getting ready to slow down, and I think the American people will benefit from the Congress taking its time to make sure that we not simply pass a bill but we pass a good bill, one that reflects our values and one that also benefits

our economy. I think they will benefit from a careful discussion and dialog between the Senate and the House about what ultimately will be the bill that goes to the President's desk.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. CORNYN. I will.

Mr. DURBIN. I have noticed on several occasions the affection my friend from Texas has for this poster board that contains this reputed quote from me. I wish to ask the Senator from Texas, since he has used that repeatedly on the floor, is he aware of the fact that when I was asked about the relationship between the path to citizenship and border enforcement, it was in the context of the Cornyn amendment which established a percentage requirement as part of border enforcement? Is the Senator aware that the bill itself includes a dramatic commitment to resources on the border of the Senator's State with the nation of Mexico—literally doubling the number of Border Patrol agents and billions of dollars being spent to make sure we stop as much as humanly possible illegal immigration—and that before the path to citizenship, the bill requires an E-Verify system as well as an exit-entry visa system? Is the Senator aware that is not included in that reference he has made to my statement?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to my good friend, the assistant majority leader, I am aware of the promises that are made in the underlying bill. My point is there is no mechanism to guarantee the goals the Gang of 8, on which the assistant majority leader has served—the promises that are made in terms of 100-percent situational awareness and operational control—there is absolutely nothing there that will guarantee the American people that promise will be kept, which is a serious problem, which is the reason why, when I saw the bipartisan framework for comprehensive immigration reform, I was encouraged. Because I could support a bill that did make a pathway to legal permanent residency contingent upon a certification that these goals have been met. But I cannot based on sad experience dating back to 1986 and 1996, and other times in the past, where Congress has made repeated promises of future performance—promises that are never kept.

I would say, in conclusion, the American people are asked to be extraordinarily generous here in terms of providing probationary status and the possibility of legal permanent residency, and maybe even citizenship in the future. That is an act of extraordinary generosity and compassion they are being asked to demonstrate. But to be given just promises that will not be kept by throwing money at the problem, without any real plan to make sure it is going to be effective, this bill falls way short of its promises.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would notify the assistant Republican leader I will be making a unanimous consent request in a few minutes after my remarks. I do not want him to be surprised by that.

Members representing all corners of this great Nation have been working hard on amendments to improve this comprehensive immigration bill. For a week now we have been trying to negotiate a package of noncontroversial amendments to be included in this legislation.

In my experience over the years, both in the majority and in the minority, for whatever bill you had before the Senate, when you have a list of noncontroversial amendments, they are simply agreed to by everybody and put in a managers' package so as not to take up a day voting on things that are going to pass anyway.

Last week I filed a managers' package of amendments. I removed from this list the ones that have been objected to by other Members. Instead, though, the Republican minority has taken the position that in order to even clear a few noncontroversial amendments—which includes both Republican and Democratic amendments—the majority must agree to vote on dozens of highly contentious measures, including amendments being offered by Senators who have said that no matter what happens they are going to oppose the legislation. In my experience, under both Democratic and Republican leadership in the Senate, that has never been considered reasonable.

Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle have complained we have not had more votes on this bipartisan immigration bill, and I share that frustration. From the outset, Republicans have delayed the bill's consideration and the ability of Members to file amendments by filibustering the motion to proceed to the bill. We all know the bill is going to get cloture, but they still filibustered the motion to proceed—just as one more delaying tactic. In fact, 15 Members refused to even cut off a filibuster, not for a vote on the legislation, but just to bring it on the floor so we could begin to debate it—delay after delay after delay.

Then once we overcame the filibuster and we could debate the legislation, I offered an amendment, and then I agreed to set it aside so Senator GRASSLEY could call up a Republican amendment—again, the comity we usually have in this place. Well, then, when the next set of amendments was ready to be made pending, the Republicans, instead of doing what we Democrats did—allowing them to come up—objected to setting aside the pending amendment and prevented the next two amendments from becoming pending and ready for a vote. Then they objected to time agreements on votes. They even objected to allowing the leader to modify my amendment late last week, last Thursday night.

They complain about delays—why aren't we voting? Every time we try to vote, they object.

The lack of cooperation on this bipartisan bill has been frustrating for Senators on both sides of the aisle. I have had a lot of Republican Senators who have come to me saying they do not agree with these delays. It has been clear since day one that a small minority of Republican Senators is going to do anything to thwart this bill's passage. It is hard to sympathize with those who complain they cannot get a vote on their amendments, when they have objected to even the most minor consent agreements to make progress on the bill. The expression “crocodile tears” comes to mind.

We have tried to find a way forward for votes on both sides, but it has been thwarted. It makes one wonder whether some would rather have the ability to complain about process rather than take votes to improve the bill. I had hoped we could agree to a reasonable number of votes this week.

Unfortunately, some people here want to vote maybe. They do not want to vote yes or no. We are elected to vote yes or no, not maybe.

Yesterday we proposed votes on 17 Republican amendments and a smaller number—15—of Democratic amendments, but Republicans objected. It is a shame we have not been able to continue the momentum of bipartisan cooperation that marked the Judiciary Committee's process that has brought this bill so far.

In the Judiciary Committee we had 301 amendments filed. We approved around 140 amendments. All but two or three were passed with bipartisan votes—both Democrats and Republicans. And when we finished all those, I asked if anybody wanted to bring up any further amendments. They did not. And we passed the bill out with a bipartisan majority. But we voted. Sometimes we voted a dozen times in 2 hours.

We still have a chance to move a package of noncontroversial amendments. Instead of insisting the Senate vote on dozens of controversial amendments designed to harm the careful balance in this legislation, Republicans should clear the noncontroversial and good ideas on which many Republican and Democratic Senators have worked so hard. The amendments included on my manager's list have widespread support. They have been filed by Senators—both Republicans and Democrats—over the past 3 weeks. Many have already been discussed at length here on the Senate floor.

I will take some examples. This package of noncontroversial amendments contains bipartisan amendments to improve oversight of certain immigration programs. It contains entirely technical amendments to the bill. It contains a bipartisan amendment by Senators NELSON and WICKER to provide for maritime security, as they have so correctly pointed out on this

floor that we have a long border—not just our land border; we have very long borders on two oceans. It contains an amendment by a group of northern border Senators, led by Senator HEITKAMP, to ensure border security measures at the northern border. There are several amendments from our colleagues from New Mexico to help facilitate cross-border travel and commerce.

The list includes an amendment by Senator BROWN to ensure that the border fence is constructed of materials made in America. Who could vote against that? The list contains an amendment by Senator COCHRAN and Senator LANDRIEU. She is the chairwoman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security. It requires increased reporting on the EB-5 program—something that should be a no-brainer. The list contains two amendments championed by Senators COATS, KLOBUCHAR, and LANDRIEU to ease the process for international adoptions—a humanitarian measure that should get strong bipartisan support. But these are just a few examples of what we have in here that we have all agreed should be able to be passed.

I wish the list were longer. Early yesterday morning, I learned there were Republican objections to a number of Democratic amendments that had been on my list, including several that have Republican cosponsors. I was surprised to hear there are concerns about several of these amendments. One of those that has apparently raised Republican concerns is an amendment by Senator HAGAN to authorize a border crime prevention program and reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Program to protect law enforcement officers. The Bulletproof Vest Program is from the days when Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell and I first introduced it, and it has gotten overwhelming support because of all the lives of police officers it has saved.

I hope those who are objecting to it will—the next time we have a police memorial here on the Mall in remembrance of those police officers who have died—explain to those police officers in attendance why they are opposed to them having bulletproof vests.

Yet another is an amendment Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator CORNYN, and others have championed to provide the judiciary with the resources to handle the large number of immigration cases.

I do not understand why these are considered controversial. I was disappointed we had to remove the Feinstein-Cornyn amendment from this list because Republicans objected to the Feinstein-Cornyn amendment on resources for the judiciary.

Nonetheless, I took these off, even though I thought they would be noncontroversial. I liked the Feinstein-Cornyn amendment, and the others—the bulletproof vest amendment—but we took them off because Republicans objected.

So now I am going to propose a list—and I want to make sure the Republican leader is on the floor—that contains 32 sensible, noncontroversial amendments that strengthen the bill and makes it better. They deserve to be adopted. I recognize and share the frustration of many Senators who have worked on their amendments and want their chance to influence the bill. Amendments that have broad support should not be held hostage by the partisanship that has impeded our work.

I am going to offer now—incidentally, before I do, I note there are 32 in here; the majority of them—17—have Republican support.

I ask unanimous consent the following amendments be called up en bloc; that the clerks be authorized to modify the instruction lines, where necessary, to match the intended page and line numbers of the committee-reported substitute, as amended; and the Senate then proceed to vote on adoption of the amendments en bloc: Baucus-Tester No. 1512; Boxer No. 1240; Brown No. 1597; Cardin-Kirk No. 1286; Carper-McCain No. 1558, as modified with changes that are at the desk; Carper No. 1590; Coats No. 1288; Coats No. 1373; Coburn No. 1509; Coons No. 1715; Flake No. 1472; Heinrich No. 1342; Heinrich No. 1417; Heinrich No. 1559; Heitkamp No. 1593; Klobuchar-Landrieu-Coats-Blunt No. 1261; Klobuchar-Coats-Landrieu-Blunt No. 1526; Landrieu-Coats No. 1338; Landrieu-Cochran No. 1383; Leahy No. 1454; Leahy No. 1455; Murphy No. 1451; Murray-Crapo No. 1368; Nelson-Wicker No. 1618; Reed No. 1223; Reed No. 1608; Schatz-Kirk No. 1416; Shaheen-Ayotte No. 1272; Stabenow-Collins No. 1405; Toomey No. 1236; Udall of New Mexico No. 1241; and Udall of New Mexico No. 1242.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I want to compliment the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee for the open process he conducted in committee to process amendments on both sides of the aisle and the open and transparent way that was done. That stands in stark contrast to what has happened here on the floor, where we have only had 10 amendments that have had rollcall votes, compared to 46 rollcall votes the last time we debated comprehensive immigration reform in 2007.

I would point out for my distinguished colleague that of the 32 amendments that are being offered now by unanimous consent to be voted upon, 27 of them are Democratic amendments and 5 of them are Republican amendments.

Senator LEAHY noted that one of my amendments was excluded. Actually all of my amendments have been excluded, including the one that would prohibit legalization of drunk drivers and spouse beaters and other criminals, as well as one that is designed to root out fraud in the program.

On behalf of my ranking member, we object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I appreciate the compliments. But I am thinking of Shakespeare, "I came here not to praise Caesar, but to bury him." Unfortunately these amendments have been buried by the objection.

I would note that yesterday we offered 17 Republican amendments and 15 Democratic amendments to be voted on. That was objected to. Those were offered by the distinguished majority leader. It is frustrating.

I know we are about to go to executive session. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Hawaii, Ms. HIRONO, have 2 minutes before the executive session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I have talked about how this bill treats immigrant taxpayers, specifically the restrictions on access to Federal safety net programs. The bill prohibits immigrant taxpayers from using programs they helped to fund with the hundreds of billions of dollars of taxes they pay. This is truly unfair. I filed an amendment to correct this unfair treatment. This amendment is No. 1317. My amendment simply says immigrant taxpayers who are lawfully present and working and who have paid all of their tax liabilities should be able to use the Federal programs their taxes pay for. This is simply common sense.

I ask unanimous consent that Senators BOXER, ROCKEFELLER, and SCHATZ be added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1317.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. I thank these Senators for their support.

This amendment is supported by over 180 organizations including the National Immigration Law Center, National Council of La Raza, the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, the AFL-CIO, U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare.

I have several letters from these organizations that attest to their support of my amendment. I ask unanimous consent that one of these letters, which is signed by 179 organizations, be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

I have also been working with many Senators on an amendment to provide additional opportunities for women in the new merit-based immigration system created in the bill. Amendment No. 1718 would create a new tier 3 category with 30,000 merit-based visas. Tier 3 is structured in a way that allows women a fairer chance to compete for these visas.

The Hirono-Murray-Murkowski amendment currently has 19 cosponsors. I ask unanimous consent that Senators WHITEHOUSE and SCHATZ be added as cosponsors of amendment No. 1718.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. Amendment 1718 is a modified version of amendment No. 1504. I made those modifications after working with Senator GRAHAM, and he has agreed to support this new amendment. I thank him for his support.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. HIRONO. I ask unanimous consent for 30 additional seconds.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. HIRONO. I also have letters from over 100 organizations in support of amendment Nos. 1718 and 1504. I ask unanimous consent that some of these letters of support be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

I thank UNITE HERE, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, We Belong Together, and the Asian American Justice Center for organizing these letters and for their support. I also thank the AFL-CIO and SEIU for their support.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JUNE 18, 2013.

To All Members of the U.S. Senate: We welcome the Senate's consideration of comprehensive immigration reform as the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744) proceeds to the Senate floor. As advocates for the health of the most vulnerable in our communities, we have deep concerns about provisions in S. 744 that would harm the health and well-being of aspiring citizens and their families. Immigrants on the roadmap to citizenship will be paying taxes, and as taxpayers, aspiring citizens should have access to taxpayer-funded programs like all Americans.

Senator Hirono (D-HI) plans to introduce an amendment to restore taxpayer fairness to aspiring citizens. The amendment provides that all immigrants who are lawfully present, employed, and have satisfied their federal tax liability shall not be prohibited from using any federally-funded program or tax credit solely on the basis of their immigration status. Allowing immigrants to use the programs they pay for will enable them to be more economically successful. We urge you to stand with Senator Hirono and others to correct the unfair restrictions on access to health, nutrition, and economic supports, thereby ensuring that the roadmap to citizenship allows immigrants equal opportunity to succeed in our country.

As currently proposed, S. 744 bars most individuals in RPI status from vital federal health coverage, nutrition assistance, and economic security programs for the entire period they are in provisional status, which would be at least 10 years. When RPIs become Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) and earn their green card, current law further restricts LPRs from accessing these vital federal programs for another five years. S. 744 also bars aspiring citizens in RPI status from the premium tax credits and cost-

sharing reductions that will allow them to participate in the new health insurance marketplaces established under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Individuals in blue-card and V visa status are similarly restricted from accessing safety net programs, premium tax credits, and cost-sharing reductions.

The restrictions in S. 744 mean that most aspiring citizens may have to pay into programs for 15 years before they can use them if their kids get sick or if they lose their jobs. For about half a million children who may soon be on the roadmap to citizenship, these restrictions could impact their development and ability to learn in school. For pregnant women, it could mean no access to prenatal care that is critical to the health of infants and women. For women with undetected breast or cervical cancer, a 15-year wait to see a doctor could be the difference between life and death. These restrictions will result in poorer health outcomes, wider health disparities, lower worker productivity, and higher costs to the healthcare system. The restrictions are also out of line with the views of most Americans: 63% believe those on the roadmap to citizenship should be eligible for Medicaid and 59% believe they should be eligible for affordability options under the ACA. Entrenching struggling parents and families in poverty prevents economic competitiveness and productivity; additionally, these programs exist so people can take economic risks like starting a business. Instead, better immigration policy will facilitate the integration of aspiring citizens into the social and economic fabric of our country.

Moreover, denying aspiring citizens access to the very programs that they pay into with their tax dollars is inherently unfair. Aspiring citizens currently pay \$11.2 billion annually in taxes. Already, immigrants have paid \$115 billion more in taxes into the Medicare system than they have used. As aspiring citizens move forward on the roadmap to citizenship, they will contribute even more to government revenue in fines, fees, and taxes.

Senator Hirono's amendment to restore taxpayer fairness to aspiring citizens will enable those on the roadmap to citizenship to succeed and will promote the health of our families, communities, and economy. We urge you to stand with Senator Hirono to ensure that the roadmap to citizenship is fair and allows aspiring citizens to live with health, dignity, and justice.

Thank you for your time and consideration to these issues.

Sincerely,

9to5, 9to5 Atlanta, 9to5 California, 9to5 Colorado, 9to5 Milwaukee, Abortion Care Network, ACCESS Women's Health Justice, Advocates for Women AFL-CIO, AIDS Alabama, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, AIDS United, Alliance for a Just Society, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Americans for Immigrant Justice, formerly Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Asian American Justice Center, Member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, Asian Law Alliance, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO, ASISTA Immigration Assistance.

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP), Breakthrough, California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, California Primary Care Association, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation, Campaign for Better Health Care, CASA de Maryland, Center for

Community Change (CCC), Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc., Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice at University of California Berkeley School of Law, Central Ohio Immigrant Justice, Children's Defense Fund, Church of Our Saviour/Iglesia de Nuestro Salvador, Civil Liberties and Public Policy, CLUE Santa Barbara, Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles.

Coalition for Peace Action of Monroe Township, Coalition on Human Needs, COFA Community Advocacy Network, COMGARIGUA, Community Action Partnership, Connecticut Multicultural Health Partnership, CT Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, Direct Care Alliance, DRUM—Desis Rising Up & Moving, El Concilio/Council for the Spanish Speaking, Empire Justice Center, Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), Families USA, Farmworker Association of Florida, Feminist Majority, First Focus Campaign for Children, Georgia Rural Urban Summit, Hawai'i Coalition for Immigration Reform, Hawaii State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Health Care for All Philadelphia, Health Care for America Now, HealthyPacific.Org, HIKITTI Community, HIV Prevention Justice Alliance, Housing Works.

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health, International Tribunal of Conscience, Jewish Community Action, Jewish Labor Committee Western Region, Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Koolauloa Health Center, Korean Community Center of the East Bay, La Clinica del Pueblo, La Raza Centro Legal, Latin American Association, Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, Latino Commission on AIDS, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Leadership Conference of Woman Religious, League of United Latin American Citizens, Lifting Latina Voices Initiative/FWHC, Lowcountry Immigration Coalition, LUMA, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Methodist Federation for Social Action, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Micronesian United Big Island, Ministry of Health, Moloka'i Community Service Council, MomsRising.Org, Ms. Foundation for Women, National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, National Association of Counsel for Children, National Center for Law and Economic Justice, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Center for Transgender Equality, National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc., National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of La Raza (NCLR), National Employment Law Project, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund, National Health Care for the Homeless Council, National Health Law Program, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Immigrant Justice Center, National Immigration Law Center.

National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, National Organization for Women, National Physicians Alliance, National Senior Citizens Law Center, National Women's Health Network, National Women's Law Center, NCJW—Maine Section, Nema Hawaii Community Association, New Economics for Women, New Mexico Voices for Children, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage, Ni-ta-nee NOW, North Dallas Chapter of the

National Organization for Women, Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Northwest Health Law Advocates, OneAmerica, Pacific Islander Health Partnership, Pennsylvania Council of Churches, PHI PolicyWorks, Physicians for Reproductive Health, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Pohnpei Fellowship Ministry.

Political Asylum Immigration Representation Project, Project Inform, Raleigh Episcopal Campus Ministry, Ramirez Group, Reformed Church of Highland Park, NJ, Refugio del Rio Grande, Religious for Immigration Reform, Reproductive Health Technologies Project, RESULTS, Rockland Immigration Coalition, Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, Salvadoran American National Network, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Silicon Valley Alliance for Immigration Reform, Single Stop USA, Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Justice Team, South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), South Cove Community Health Center, The Black Institute, The Center for APA Women, The Children's Advocacy Institute, The Children's Partnership.

The Hat Project, Unitarian Society of New Haven, Immigration Rights Task Force, United for a Fair Economy, United Migrant Opportunity Services/UMOS Inc, United We Dream, Unity Fellowship Church NYC, University of Hawaii, Violence Intervention Program, Voces de la Frontera, Voices for America's Children, Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights, We Belong Together: Women For Common-Sense Immigration Reform, WI Council on Children and Families, Women Watch Afrika, Inc., Women's Law Project, Worker Justice Center, YWCA, YWCA USA.

JUNE 21, 2013.

Dear Senator: We, the undersigned organizations that advocate on behalf of women, children and families, urge you to support Hirono #1504, co-sponsored by Senators Hirono, Murray, Baldwin, Boxer, Cantwell, Gillibrand, Klobuchar, Landrieu, Leahy, Mikulski, Murkowski, Shaheen, Stabenow and Warren. Hirono #1504 goes to the heart of making the immigration system fair and inclusive by adding a new tier to the proposed merit-based system that is more inclusive of women's contributions.

We are all deeply committed to ensuring that any immigration reform bill treats women fairly and acknowledges the many specific situations and contributions of women. We believe that the proposed merit-based system for employment green cards in S. 744, as currently written, will significantly disadvantage women who want to come to this country, particularly unmarried women. Awarding points primarily for education and employment experience fails to recognize the lack of opportunities and barriers that women face in accessing both education and employment in their home countries, barriers that are significantly worse than for men. This, in effect, cements into U.S. immigration law barriers and inequities that women face in their home countries and inadvertently restricts the opportunities available to women across the globe.

Currently, approximately 70% of immigrant women come to this country through the family-based system. Employment-based visas favor men over women by nearly a four to one margin because U.S. immigration law places a premium placed on male-dominated fields like engineering and computer science. However, women perform essential work as primary caregivers, domestic workers, in-home health care workers and nurses. They also are often the backbone of families, taking care of those in an extended family who

are ill or unable to care for themselves. Economically, women are increasingly the primary breadwinners in immigrant families, making it more likely for the family to open a small business or purchase a home. Women are also the primary drivers of immigrant integration for the entire family, encouraging others to learn English and integrate effectively into the community.

We believe that Hirono #1504 is essential to ensuring that we do not inadvertently cement discrimination against women into U.S. immigration law. The amendment would establish a Tier 3 merit-based point system that would provide a fair opportunity for women to compete for merit-based green cards. Complementary to the high-skilled Tier 1 and the lower-skilled Tier 2, the new Tier 3 would include professions commonly held by women so as not to limit women's opportunities for economic-focused immigration. It would provide 30,000 Tier 3 visas and would not reduce the visas available in the other merit-based Tiers.

America has always held out hope and opportunity to millions of women across the world. Women move here to make life better for themselves and their families. They move seeking freedom and opportunity often denied in other places. As Americans, we honor and celebrate our unique commitment to protecting families and giving equal opportunities and respect to women and girls. We need our immigration system to reflect that commitment, and to provide opportunities to everyone, including women.

We urge you to support Hirono #1504 and help ensure fairness for women in immigration reform. If you have any questions, please contact Pramila Jayapal at We Belong Together: Women for Common-Sense Immigration Reform at [pjayapal@me.com](mailto:pjayapal@me.com) or June Zeitlin at The Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights at [zeitlin@civilrights.org](mailto:zeitlin@civilrights.org).

Sincerely,

18Million Rising.org, 9to5, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, ALIGN New York, Alliance for a Just Society, American Baptist Home Mission Societies, American Jewish Committee, Asian American Justice Center, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO, Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, Breakthrough, California Latinas for Reproductive Justice, Campaign for Community Change (CCC), Capuchin Justice and Peace Office, Carmelites, Vedruna ICJP, Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc., Chinese American planning council, inc., Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee and Immigration Ministries, Church World Service, CLUE Santa Barbara.

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights, Communication Workers of America, Conference of Major Superiors of Men, CUNY Law Immigrant Initiatives, Daughters of Wisdom, Dominican Sisters of Houston, DRUM—Desis Rising Up & Moving, Family Values @ Work Consortium, Farmworker Justice, Feminist Majority, Franciscan Action Network, Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights, Good Shepherd Immigration Study Group, Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, IHM Justice, Peace and Sustainability Office, Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, Immigration Equality Action Fund, Institute for Women in Migration (IMUMI), International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW).

Japanese American Citizens League, Justice and Peace Committee, Sisters of St. Jo-

seph of West Hartford CT, Korean Americans for Political Advancement (KAPA), LatinoJustice PRLDEF, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, MinKwon Center for Community Action, MomsRising.org, National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA), National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NLDON), National Domestic Workers Alliance, National Employment Law Project, National Federation of Filipino American Associations, National Immigrant Justice Center, National Immigration Law Center, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, National Women's Law Center.

OCA-NY Asian Pacific American Advocates, OneAmerica, Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters, PICO National Network, Presentation Sisters, Religious Sisters of Charity, School Sisters of Notre Dame JPIC Office Atlantic-Midwest Province, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community, Sisters of St. Francis, Tiffin, OH, Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), Tahirih Justice Center, Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition, The Advocates for Human Rights, The Episcopal Church, The New American Leaders Project, Unid@s, Union of sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, US Province, United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society, United Methodist Women, Violence Intervention Program, West Michigan Coalition for Immigration Reform, We Belong Together Campaign, Women's Refugee Commission.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### NOMINATION OF ANTHONY RENARD FOXX TO BE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Anthony Renard Foxx, of North Carolina, to be Secretary of Transportation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes for debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I am chairman of the Commerce Committee. Mayor Anthony Foxx, who is absolutely superb, someone as a mayor, which I like, secondly as an expert on transportation, intermodal and otherwise. He understands the lay of the land and he has done it.

He was passed without a single dissenting vote of either party in the Commerce Committee. That is quite remarkable these days. He is a superb and qualified person who is very much needed to overlook our enormous transportation system which is in trouble. I hope my colleagues will support him.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. CORNYN. We yield back all time. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Anthony Renard Foxx, of North Carolina, to be Secretary of Transportation?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 165 Ex.]

#### YEAS—100

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Ayotte	Franken	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Baucus	Grassley	Paul
Begich	Hagan	Portman
Bennet	Harkin	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Heinrich	Reid
Boozman	Heitkamp	Risch
Boxer	Heller	Roberts
Brown	Hirono	Rockefeller
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Cantwell	Inhofe	Sanders
Cardin	Isakson	Schatz
Carper	Johanns	Schumer
Casey	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Chambliss	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chiesa	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Cowan	Manchin	Vitter
Crapo	McCaill	Warner
Cruz	McConnell	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wicker
Enzi	Mikulski	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	
Fischer		

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

#### BORDER SECURITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMMIGRATION MODERNIZATION ACT—Continued

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1552 AND 1553 WITHDRAWN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the pending amendments Nos. 1552 and 1553 are withdrawn.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, the pending business, then, is the committee-reported substitute amendment, with all postcloture time having been expired; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. REID. I raise a point of order that the Reed of Rhode Island amendment is no longer in order due to the adoption of the amendment No. 1183.