

to change the formula and lower benefit increases.

Maybe they will go back to their long-term dream of privatizing Medicare and converting it into a voucher program, which will say to the elderly in this country: Here is a check for \$8,000. You go out and find private insurance on your own. I would say good luck to any elderly person in this country who is struggling with heart disease or cancer. You see what kind of insurance program you are going to get with a check for \$8,000.

I would remind my colleagues that many of these proposals were included in the budget resolution the Republicans voted for right here on the floor of the Senate. This is not speculation; these are issues and items that Republicans already voted for. They already voted for a \$1 trillion cut to Medicaid, which would throw some 15 million Americans off of health insurance. They have already voted in the budget to cut Medicare by \$473 billion. In my view, the last thing we should be doing is giving tax breaks to billionaires while cutting programs for the most vulnerable people in our country.

During the campaign, Donald Trump, as a candidate, promised he would not cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. He made that promise over and over again. I have some charts. Let me quote some of the tweets and some of the things Donald Trump said on the campaign trail.

This is what he said: "I was the first & only potential GOP candidate to state there will be no cuts to Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid."

On another occasion, he said:

I'm not a cutter. I'll probably be the only Republican that doesn't want to cut Social Security.

That was January 24, 2015.

It's my absolute intention to leave Social Security the way it is. Not increase the age and to leave it as is.

That was Donald Trump on March 10, 2016.

Here is another quote:

You know, Paul [Ryan] wants to knock out Social Security, knock it down, way down. He wants to knock Medicare way down. And, frankly—well, two things. Number one, you're going to lose the election if you're going to do that. . . . Now, I want to get rid of waste, fraud, and abuse. I want to do a lot of things to it that are going to make it much better, actually. But I'm not going to cut it, and I'm not going to raise ages, and I'm not going to do all of the things that they want to do. But they want to really cut it, and they want to cut it very substantially, the Republicans, and I'm not going to do that.

Before I go on to the next quote, I want to tell Donald Trump that, as a candidate, man, he was exactly right. This is what he said on March 29, 2016. He said that the Republicans wanted to cut Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid.

Well, Candidate Trump, you were exactly right, because that is now what we will see in a few weeks or a few months.

Another quote from Donald Trump as a candidate:

Social Security faces a problem: 77 million baby boomers set to retire. Now, I know there are some Republicans who would be just fine with allowing these programs to wither and die on the vine. The way they see it, Social Security and Medicare are wasteful 'entitlement programs.' But people who think this way need to rethink their position. It's not unreasonable for people who paid into a system for decades to expect to get their money's worth—that's not an 'entitlement,' that's honoring a deal.

Well, there it is. Candidate Donald Trump said over and over again that he would not cut Social Security, that he would not cut Medicare, that he would not cut Medicaid. In fact, quite correctly, he predicted that the Republicans would try to do exactly that.

Now I would like to talk directly, if I might, to the President of the United States.

Mr. President, on the campaign trail, over and over again, you said that you would not cut Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. Today, I am asking you nothing more than to keep your word. Don't lie to the American people.

Millions of people voted for you because you said you would not cut Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Keep your word. Tell Senate Leader MCCONNELL and tell House Speaker PAUL RYAN that you will veto any legislation that cuts these programs.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the postcloture time on Executive Calendar No. 495 expire at 4 p.m. today, December 5; and that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:40 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 2:36 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ENZI).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PORTMAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SECURE ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to make a few brief remarks regarding the introduction of the Security, Enforcement, and Compassion United in Reform Efforts, and we have selected the acronym SECURE for this piece of legislation we are introducing today. This bill promotes and protects the interests of the American people in a lawful immigration system and provides a fair and equitable solution on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and everyone in the Senate knows that by the acronym DACA. It is the product of several months of hard work between this Senator and Senators CORNYN, GRAHAM, TILLIS, LANKFORD, PERDUE, and COTTON. I think, before the day is out and the Senate closes down, you will hear from almost all of those folks on their approach to this legislation and their support for it.

Before I discuss what the bill does, I want to explain the process we used to reach this point. On September 5, 2017, Attorney General Sessions announced that President Trump had decided to rescind former President Obama's unlawful Executive amnesty program. Because almost 700,000 young people relied on President Obama's false promise, the Trump administration called upon Congress to do what the President doesn't have the legal authority to do and to find the only real type of long-term solution to this issue. Obviously, we are here because that is a legislative solution and not something the executive branch thinks up and tries to put in place.

Starting in September, I have held multiple meetings with Senators CORNYN, GRAHAM, TILLIS, LANKFORD, PERDUE, and COTTON to determine how best to fix DACA. Our aim was to find a solution that not only is fair for DACA recipients but also promotes the interests of the American people. The immigration policies of the previous administration carried consequences that weren't always in our best interest. For example, President Obama allowed thousands of people to illegally cross our borders and to stay in our country, including dangerous gang members, sex offenders, and violent criminals. So robust border security is crucial to bring integrity back to our Nation's immigration enforcement.

The enforcement policies of the previous administration enabled dangerous, unauthorized criminals, individuals like Kate Steinle's killer, to have free rein in our country, risking the safety of innocent Americans. The

flagrant disregard of so-called sanctuary jurisdictions unfairly takes tax dollars from hard-working Americans, only to ignore the rule of law and their own people's public safety.

In crafting our bill, we also considered the inherent unfairness in our Nation's immigration court and asylum adjudication systems and how hundreds of thousands of aliens wait in backlogs for years at a time. That is wrong. It hurts the people who are stuck in the backlog, and it is unfair to ask the American people and legal immigrants to bear the burden of supporting these people while they wait.

Finally, thanks to the leadership of Senators GRAHAM, PERDUE, and COTTON, we discussed in our small group of Senators the need for a merit-based immigration system, one where we bring people to this country based on what they can contribute and not simply because they have some attenuated family relationship to a legal immigrant who is already here.

So after having these discussions and after meeting with the President to get his input and his support, we have come up with a plan. This plan is fair to all parties. It is pro-American, and it is a solution to DACA.

Our plan, as I said, which goes by an acronym, the SECURE Act of 2017, provides a solution to all of the issues we discussed. First, building off of the hard work and leadership of Senator CORNYN, we are putting days of porous, uncontrolled borders behind us. We are doing this by mandating the construction of tactical and technological infrastructure at the border. We are also beefing up our law enforcement and judicial resources, and we are putting more boots on the ground in the border States so that we can better apprehend and prosecute those who enter our country illegally.

Our plan takes meaningful steps to end the lawlessness and tragedies at the hands of dangerous criminal aliens throughout our country. We do this by cracking down on sanctuary cities, ending the misguided catch-and-release policies of the previous administration, and finally taking real steps to address intentional visa overstays.

In recognition of the many Americans who have lost their lives to criminal aliens, we included Kate's law, named after the person murdered by a criminal felon who came back into our country five times—Kate Steinle. So it is Kate's law. This legislation enhances penalties for repeat illegal border crossers and expands the inaccessibility and expedited removal of terrorists, gang members, aggravated felons, and drunk drivers. We also provide a fix to the disastrous Zadvydas decision so that the government doesn't keep releasing dangerous criminals onto our streets just because of the refusal of their home countries to take responsibility.

Our bill takes steps to eliminate many of the "pull" factors that encourage people to immigrate illegally.

We do this by permanently authorizing the E-Verify Program and providing immunity and other incentives to encourage small businesses to participate in that E-Verify Program. We also take meaningful steps to reduce immigration court and asylum adjudication backlogs by hiring more judges and personnel, limiting the number of continuances an immigrant can receive, and imposing new safeguards to combat well-documented fraud and abuse.

Again, thanks to the leadership and advocacy of Senators GRAHAM, PERDUE, and COTTON, our bill eliminates the phenomenon known as chain migration. From the day this bill becomes law, immigrants will be able to bring only their spouses and minor children into the country. This bipartisan, pro-American worker reform, which the President strongly supports, is an important first step toward creating the merit-based, economically productive immigration system that both Democrats and Republicans want.

Finally and most importantly, we provide a bipartisan solution to protect undocumented young people brought to the United States as children by adopting a bill that goes by the acronym BRIDGE, Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy. Senator DURBIN called the BRIDGE Act "an opportunity for supporters and critics of DACA to come together and address a compelling humanitarian issue on a bipartisan basis."

We agree with Senator DURBIN. The BRIDGE Act is supported by Senators GRAHAM, DURBIN, GILLIBRAND, HELLER, MURKOWSKI, FEINSTEIN, NELSON, FLAKE, SCHUMER, and HARRIS. It would provide relief from deportation and work authorization to DACA recipients, allowing them to continue to fulfill their dreams, and they will continue to contribute to our economy.

As you can see, Mr. President, our plan has fair, bipartisan, and serious provisions. By listening to colleagues and adopting solutions that both sides can agree on, we are providing a real solution to the immigration issues our country is facing. Our plan protects the DACA kids, it cracks down on criminal illegal aliens, and it provides real long-term reforms to our Nation's immigration system that benefit the American people. It does so through the proper legislative process, in other words, by a constitutional way—unlike a previous President tried to do this—providing greater certainty for Americans and immigrants alike.

Importantly, it is also supported by the President. That is all the more reason to pass this bill and fulfill our promises to the American people and the DACA recipients.

Again, I want to thank the hard work of Senators CORNYN, GRAHAM, TILLIS, LANKFORD, PERDUE, and COTTON, and their staffs, especially, in developing the solution. I am looking forward to considering this measure in the new year and seeing President Trump sign it into law, as he asked us to do.

I see that two of my colleagues, Senator LANKFORD and Senator TILLIS, are here. I am giving up the floor, if you would like to speak.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his leadership on this issue and for his willingness to sit down and talk to a diverse group of people who think we have a problem that we should solve and that we must solve.

Senator GRASSLEY just did such a good job of describing some of the technical aspects of the SECURE Act and the BRIDGE Act and other legislation that actually came together to create the SECURE Act.

I want to back up and talk a little bit about what we are actually trying to do here. There are two key components to this bill and to efforts that have gone before the point at which we have introduced this bill that I think are very important.

The first one is the DACA Program. That is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The DACA Program is something that was implemented in 2012 by President Obama. What President Obama sought to do was to provide some certainty for young adults and children who were brought across the border—not through their own decisions but through the decisions of their parents or a guardian to cross the border illegally—and find themselves illegally present in the United States. Today, they are still protected because they are still protected under DACA, but the President announced on September 5 that on March 5 that program would end.

Now, you can imagine that there are hundreds of thousands of young men and women who are uncertain about their future status in this country. It is a problem we need to solve. The other side of the equation is something that is also equally important to me and to a number of people in this body. It has to do with our border security and interior enforcement.

Back in late winter, I spent a week down on the southern border. I went to the Rio Grande Sector and the West Texas Sector. I spoke with a lot of people at the land ports that hundreds of thousands of people cross every day. We listened to their concerns about things we need to do to better secure the border.

There are two debates in Congress right now. I don't actually embrace either of the two extremes. There is the one extreme that says build a big, beautiful wall that is 2,000 miles long. It is impractical and not necessary.

There is the other extreme that says we don't need borders; we need bridges. That is impractical and unsafe.

What we need is a solution to border security so that we know who is in this country and so that we have an orderly way to move between countries for someone who is in our country who

wants to come to work or visit the United States and return back in a legal fashion.

The other thing we have to look at in border security that I think is oftentimes overlooked is the humanitarian crisis with an insecure border. There is one of the numbers that stuck with me. There were so many that we covered when we were down with border security, but this stuck with me—actually, two numbers. This one is most heart-breaking: Over a 20-year period, 10,000 people have died crossing the border unsuccessfully. Ten thousand bodies have been recovered as a result of crossing the border and not finding their way to a safe place. About 1,000 of them were children. Unless we have the people, technology, and infrastructure on the border to know who is trying to cross, we can't protect them. Even if it means we are going to take them into custody and potentially deport them, at least they will be alive.

Another statistic was very important to me, too. It was in a discussion I had with border security agents down in Laredo, one of the big land ports where people cross every day. I am not going to get into a lot of the details, except to say that they confiscate about 400,000 doses of methamphetamine about every 48 hours in this one land port. That is where they confiscate it. By most estimates, it is only a minor percentage of all of the illegal drugs crossing the border. So we obviously need more people, technology, and infrastructure to be able to capture people who are crossing the border in various trucks and cars. They are finding ways to hide these drugs that are poisoning our Nation's youth and, really, people of all ages.

So there is a reason for border security. There is a reason to invest in people, technology, and infrastructure. There is a reason for us to have a productive discussion about how we can provide a compassionate, sustainable solution to the children and young adults who came to this country through not their decision but the decisions of their adult guardians.

That is what this bill, the SECURE Act, is setting forth. We are trying to get a productive discussion going with Democrats and Republicans who will come together and recognize that a balanced bill provides for border security, provides a sustainable solution for the DACA population, and get it done before March 5.

There are some people that want to, I think, play a little bit of brinkmanship. They have already set in their mind how they want this bill to look. What worries me about a bill where you use timing, maybe a year-end budget agreement, or some other device to get the bill done, is that that doesn't necessarily produce a bipartisan outcome that you can be sure of is always going to be on the books. Those types of bills—those types of quick “gotcha” sort of actions—are oftentimes the bills somebody will try to come back to and repeal or revise.

We want a sustainable solution. We want a solution that is going to work and give certainty to this DACA population for the rest of their lives. I think the provisions of the BRIDGE Act that are now in the SUCCEED Act do that.

I want to thank Senator LANKFORD. Senator LANKFORD and I filed another bill. We are full of acronyms here. I don't know, but sometimes they say we are full of other things, but we are full of acronyms. The SUCCEED Act is another bill, and I think that many of its provisions will be considered as we go through the negotiation process to get a bill to the President's desk. The bill that we sponsored is the called SUCCEED Act. It is the Solution for Undocumented Children through Careers, Employment, Education, and Defending our Nation Act. It is a lot like the BRIDGE Act, in that we go to the DACA population, and we know something about the DACA population that I think is oftentimes overlooked. It is a great group of people. There are a little bit less than 2 million. Many of them are working hard, going to school, and serving in our military. They deserve an opportunity and to be provided a way to be able to recognize they are legally present in this country.

That is what I think we are going to accomplish with this SECURE Act. This is what I hope my Democrat colleagues will do, those who actually endorse the BRIDGE Act. There are many of them. Senator GRASSLEY ran through the list. I will not do it again. Let's sit down and solve this problem. Let's accept that there are people at the far left who are going to stand on one issue at the expense of letting March 5 pass and have the DACA population at risk. Let's also tell the people at the far right who want nothing less than full deportation, that that is not going to happen.

Let the people in the center who want to come up with a sustainable, respectful, compassionate solution that is paired up with solid border security measures and interior enforcement, provide a solution for this population. I think my colleagues who have worked together in the working group that Chairman GRASSLEY has led are committed to working with Democrats to come up with a reasonable solution. I know that I am. I know my colleague, Senator LANKFORD, is.

I hope that everybody will sit down and recognize that, at the end of the day, this is for our Nation's security and the security and the certainty of the DACA population. If we set out about accomplishing those two goals, then I think we will be very successful. Then we can start building on that dialogue for so many other things we need to talk about when it comes to interior enforcement and immigration reform.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I am honored to be here with several other Members to talk about the issue of im-

migration. This has become a very contentious issue. As soon as you say the word “immigration,” there is a whole group of people who immediately start screaming amnesty on every part of the conversation. Another whole group starts screaming “jack-hooded thugs” trying to take grandmothers out of their homes, and the whole conversation diminishes, and we lose the policy issues that are in place.

There are obvious problems with immigration. We have not taken those obvious issues on in decades. They need to be resolved, and every year they are not resolved, this issue gets harder and it gets more complicated. We should address the issue of immigration. For years, the conversation has been out there, and for years, it has remained unresolved. I would challenge this body in the next 3 months: Let's resolve some of the big issues in immigration.

Almost 4 years ago, I was in Central America with a group of other Senators and House Members. We were meeting with Central American leaders, and we were meeting with them to talk about immigration and about some of those individuals leaving those countries who were coming to the United States illegally. But also, we met with them in Central America to determine what they should do for immigration. Multiple countries that were there in the conversation were talking about how they were increasing their border requirements at their borders, how they were managing their workforce within their country, and how individuals from other Central American countries were traveling to their countries and changing the job structure and changing the pay structure.

We somehow get this belief that the immigration issue is only an American issue. Every country in the world deals with immigration because every country in the world has the right and the responsibility to know who is in their country. Are they citizens? Are they noncitizens? I should have the ability, in my country, to be able to know who is coming in as a guest and to be able to say yes or no. That is a basic right. For some reason, that becomes lost in all of this conversation.

When we fly anywhere else in the world, we have a visa or we have a passport because when we enter that country, that country requires it. That country, when we land, wants to know who is in their country and where they are. That seems normal to us when we talk about travel, but for some reason, it gets lost in this issue of immigration. This should be a normal conversation—that our country would know who is in the country, that we would know where they are, if they are a guest, and that we would know when they are leaving.

After the 9/11 Commission finished, they challenged our Nation to resolve one of the issues of immigration that sat out there that is still unresolved to this day. It is entry-exit visas. Why can

we not know if a person comes in under a legal visa? We know when they come in, but we don't know when they leave. That is still unresolved a decade and a half later. Year after year, when I talk to Homeland Security, they say: We are doing a pilot project. We are close.

Year after year, that is unresolved. The vast majority of the people who are in our country illegally didn't cross a border illegally. They came with a visa, they overstayed it, and they never left. We are never asking the questions: Who is here, who is not here, and where do those connections come from?

What I would like to find is a way to establish a group of foundational issues that are commonsense solutions to the obvious immigration issues that we face—and find common ground. We will have disagreement in this body, but we should be able to find common ground on immigration issues that we can all look at and say: That is a reasonable way to do it. Probably, every Member of this body would do it a little bit different, and we would have a different set of preferences, but we should all agree it should be done. We have to solve the obvious issues, and there are areas of common ground to be able to do it.

Quite frankly, the President of the United States gave us quite a gift about 3½ months ago when he said to the DACA Program: That is an administrative program. It should be a legislative issue. I am not going to renew that any more as an administrative issue. That needs to be done in Congress.

For the first time in a long time, Congress has a deadline to be able to deal with immigration. That is actually a very good gift because this Congress has punted the immigration issue year after year without a deadline to get it resolved. Now we do have one. That deadline is in early March. I would suggest to this body: Let's get it resolved. Let's find the areas where we can actually find common ground in this area. Some should be pretty obvious.

Immigration courts, right now, have over half a million cases backlogged and pending. Currently, if you are going to hire a new judge to be able to be in the immigration courts, it will take 742 days to hire one immigration judge. That is not right. That is ridiculous. We should be able to get that resolved, to be able to add new judges to our immigration courts, and to be able to help deal with the backlog of over half a million people. The E-Verify system has been renewed in a bipartisan way year after year. Let's take it beyond the temporary program that it is right now. Some people don't know it is a temporary program. Let's move it from a temporary program to a permanent program. Let's do a permanent reauthorization. And let's make the tweaks and changes that are needed, whether it is to be able to move E-Verify into the hiring system, whether

it is to be able to encourage individuals in their hiring—for more companies to be able to use it, for it to be a faster system that is more reliable. At times it can take up to 6 months to get a final answer from E-Verify. Again, that is absurd. That is a fixable issue that we should be able to do.

We should be able to resolve the issue of chain migration. We somehow believe that chain migration is an issue that has existed forever. It has not. It has been around only since 1965. Prior to 1965, our immigration issues were tighter than they are now. But now it has formed into this system where you can have initially your nuclear family, and then as you gain citizenship, you can add parents, and you can eventually add siblings, and you can add other individuals, and it continues to accelerate.

I am always frustrated when I hear people talk about our legal immigration system in the United States and say that we should be more open. We admit 1 million people a year through legal immigration—1 million a year. We are a very open country to legal immigration.

We need to be more precise. We need to base our immigration not just on chains of family connections but actually what our Nation needs to grow economically. I am not anti-family—far from it—but we should have a reasonable system. Canada doesn't do it this way. Australia doesn't do it this way. The UK doesn't do it this way. We still do. We should be able to resolve this.

We should deal with the issue of border security. There has been a lot of conversation about a wall. I don't think we should have a 2,000-mile-long wall on our southern border and a multithousand-mile-long wall on our northern border, but I do think we should be able to monitor our border and know who is coming in and out. Not everyone is coming just to work. There are individuals who are trafficking drugs and people. We do need to be able to monitor them.

I have heard folks say that we don't need a wall anywhere. I totally disagree. This whole adage of a 20-foot wall just begs for a 21-foot ladder—if you talk to the homeland security folks and the border security folks, they would say: Fine, put a 21-foot ladder there because it slows you down in the process. A wall is not designed to prevent you entirely; it is designed to slow you so we can actually interdict you, prevent you from coming in.

Yuma, AZ, can tell us the story about when they put up a wall, how it dramatically slowed down crime in Yuma, AZ, rather than just having an open border. There are areas where we desperately need a wall. There are other areas where we just need vehicular barriers. There are other areas where we need drones, and we need greater technology. But we certainly need more personnel in that area. It is one of the other challenges we face.

The President said: Let's add 5,000 new people. Great. Do you know how long it takes to hire one Border Patrol person? It takes 450 days—450 days to hire one person on the Border Patrol. It is a broken system of hiring. We need to fix that.

We need to do more rapid screening.

We certainly need to take care of the issue of sanctuary cities. All of the Nation last week did a giant sigh for Kate Steinle's family. Kate was murdered in San Francisco—a sanctuary city—by someone who had seven felonies and who had been deported five times. Then a jury said that because the bullet ricocheted off the ground, it wasn't really murder. He can go free. We have to resolve the issue of sanctuary cities. That is unjust. We are better than that as a nation.

We certainly should resolve the issue of DACA. We have kids who have been in this country and have grown up in this country. They get up every day, and they say the Pledge of Allegiance to this country. They speak perfect English. They have great grades and no criminal history. I asked people in my State: Who would you like to come into the country and be free to join this country? If they say the pledge every day, if they speak perfect English, if they are passionate about entrepreneurship and starting companies and getting engaged, if they have joined the military—that is exactly whom the people of my State would like to see immigrate to this country to be a part of it.

Well, guess what. We have almost a million of them already living here, but they have no legal status. They were brought here as a child by their parents under no decision of their own. We should have a long-term legislative solution. This particular bill that is under discussion now has a short-term solution to that, something called the BRIDGE Act. It is a 3-year legislative solution. It cries out for a longer solution, but it at least gives additional certainty more so than what DACA has.

I would challenge this body to look at all of these reasonable solutions and to say: If we can't decide on these, let's start the conversation. What can we decide on? How far can we get? How much can we resolve in immigration?

Let's do it, and let's do it right. Let's start the conversation, but let's finish it this time. We should negotiate with the House. They have some great ideas. We should negotiate here. There are some tremendous ideas on both sides of the aisle. But let's certainly get it done. I look forward to that ongoing conversation. Let's get this resolved in the days ahead.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I know the Senator from Arkansas has some remarks to make, so I will keep mine brief. I want to speak on the introduction of the Security, Enforcement, and

Compassion United in Reform Efforts Act, or the SECURE Act, which we will, under the provisions of rule XIV, put on the Senate calendar following the vote on the nomination at 4 o'clock. This bill is a product of a working group formed by Chairman GRASSLEY of the Senate Judiciary Committee—the committee with jurisdiction over immigration matters. I have been a part of that, as have Senators Graham, Tillis, Lankford, Perdue, and Cotton.

I would say to our friend from Illinois, we are all united in the desire to actually come up with a solution to this problem.

Our working group had two assignments. The first was to adopt reforms to secure America's borders and enforce our immigration laws. The second was to find a compassionate solution for those individuals who received deferred action under the DACA Program created by President Obama in 2012.

When I introduced a border security bill—the Building America's Trust Act—in August, I made clear that the main purpose for that was to create solutions that we could put in place to deal with our porous borders and that throwing money at the problem is not the answer, but it was also contemplating that at some point in the not too distant future, we would need to combine border security and enforcement measures with a solution for the recipients of the deferred action under President Obama, which now President Trump has appropriately sent back to Congress for us to address.

Coming from the State with the longest border with a foreign country—the State of Texas—I can tell my colleagues that my understanding and appreciation for border security are multifaceted. It requires boots on the ground, it requires technology, and it requires improvements in aging infrastructure at our ports of entry. But it also requires new authorities and enhancements to existing immigration laws to close loopholes that incentivize people who repeatedly violate our laws.

We can all agree that we need to protect America's international borders, whether they be to the north or south. Each day that we fail to put the needed resources and laws in place for border security and interior enforcement, we strengthen the resolve of drug cartels, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations to encroach on our sovereignty with impunity.

If we are going to act to help folks who were brought here by their parents, for whom we all have compassion—and thanks to President Obama's insistence on going around Congress in violation of the law, they now find themselves in limbo—prioritizing the resources needed to secure the border is the first step. It is not the last step, it is the first step. If we can demonstrate our ability to deal with a compassionate solution for the DACA recipients and combine that with real border security and interior enforce-

ment, I would propose that we don't need to stop there, but we do need to regain the public's confidence that we are capable of dealing with these issues in a responsible way.

The DACA Program was designed to help those who were brought here illegally, but it was not created lawfully. President Trump, as I said, did the right thing when he kicked it back to Congress. So we have now introduced a bill that will address the very issues that our friends across the aisle say they care about the most: a solution for the DACA recipients. This bill provides a framework for a legislative proposal that we can support and that will regain America's trust.

I have told both Senator SCHUMER, the Democratic leader, and my friend Senator DURBIN from Illinois that I stand ready to work with them on a proposal that includes the four pillars of the GOP framework: border security, interior enforcement, improvements to the E-Verify system, and some limits on chain migration. I hope they will come back to the table and respond to this proposal. I hope they will also quit threatening to shut down the government, which won't solve the problem but, indeed, will make it worse.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I want to associate myself with much of what my Republican colleagues have said about the immigration bill we are working on—or perhaps I should say, to be more accurate, the immigration bill we should be working on, because the Democrats at this point simply will not take yes for an answer. We are offering a package that they should support, and in return, they are threatening to shut down the government.

So let me just dispense off the top with their argument, such as it is, about the so-called DACA recipients.

No one is eager to deport 690,000 illegal immigrants who are here mostly through no fault of their own. They were left in legal limbo by President Obama, and everyone wants to find a good, durable, long-term solution.

But if we are going to give legal status to these illegal immigrants in their twenties and their thirties, we have to recognize that there are going to be negative side effects.

First, we are going to encourage parents from around the world who live in poverty and oppression and war to illegally immigrate to our country with small children. What could be more dangerous and even immoral than that?

Second, we are going to create a whole new category of Americans who could get legal status for their extended family, to include the very parents who brought them here in violation of our laws. We often hear that children ought not pay for the crimes of their parents. That may be so, but surely parents can pay for the crimes of the parents. They are the ones who created the situation in the first place.

I offered legislation with Senator PERDUE earlier this year called the RAISE Act. It had many features in it to replace unskilled and low-skilled immigration with high-skilled immigration, to limit chain migration, to reform our refugee program, and to eliminate our diversity lottery. This Congress needs to take up our legislation and pass it. But today I want to focus on chain migration in particular because chain migration is one of the biggest categories of immigration that bring unskilled and low-skilled workers to this country to compete for jobs and drive down the wages of working Americans.

Did you know that once you have legal status in this country, once you have a green card and become a citizen, you can bring to this country not only your spouse and your unmarried minor children but your adult children and their spouses and their children and your adult brother and your adult sister and your parents and their siblings—and it goes on and on and on. That is why it is called chain migration.

Our legislation would put a halt to chain migration. It is a kind of downpayment on long-lasting legal immigration reform, in addition to things like strengthening E-Verify, improving security at our border, and Kate's Law, named in honor of Kate Steinle, as we heard Chairman GRASSLEY outline earlier today.

We are also pairing those provisions with a bill that Democrats and Republicans should support, the BRIDGE Act. The idea of this bill is simple enough—that everyone who has a DACA card gets 3-year provisional status. That gives them certainty without giving them permanent residency or citizenship, which I think sounds pretty reasonable. I know the Democrats agree with me, too, because earlier this year they were calling for passage of the BRIDGE Act. The BRIDGE Act is supported by Members of both parties, as Chairman GRASSLEY outlined, including many prominent Democratic Senators—both Senators from California, the senior Senator from Florida, the junior Senator from New York, even the minor leader and the minority whip. In fact, the minority whip called the BRIDGE Act a bipartisan breakthrough.

If the Democrats were to oppose our legislation today, the SECURE Act, the question would be, Why? Well, I think I know what they might say. They might say: Oh, those terrible Republicans have added a bunch of terrible Republican ideas to this bill. Let me just ask, which of these provisions are so terrible? That we secure our border? Countries have borders, and those borders have to be secure. Is it terrible that we stop unscrupulous employers from hiring illegal immigrants by strengthening E-Verify? When people say that E-Verify doesn't work, what they mean is—E-Verify works. What they mean is that they want employers

to be able to hire illegal immigrants, to take jobs away from Americans and pay them submarket wages.

What about discouraging illegal and highly dangerous border crossings?

To get back to chain migration, do we really want a system in which green cards are given out by random chance? Because that is what we have not just in the diversity lottery but through chain migration. Today, you can get a green card in this country simply because someone in your extended family happened to immigrate to this country 20 or 30 or 40 years ago, irrespective of your ability to stand on your own two feet in our economy, to get a job and pay taxes and not take welfare, to assimilate into our culture.

Shouldn't we have an immigration system that focuses on the needs of America's workers and the American economy, not one that gives out green cards by random chance the way we have today? Shouldn't we be focused on the jobs and the wages of American citizens? After all, they are who elected us to come here to represent their interests.

I don't think this is unreasonable, and, frankly, I don't think the Democrats do either. They have supported the BRIDGE Act. They have supported reform of other immigration programs—temporary visas—because they worry about the impact of immigration on lower wage, blue-collar workers.

Now, the Republicans have stepped up and done exactly what the Democrats have said they wanted: We have offered a real, long-term solution for persons who have received a DACA work permit. All we are asking for in exchange are commonsense reforms to prevent another situation, like the one happening now, in the future. So it is time for Democrats and Republicans to come together and support this bill.

If you are serious about helping these DACA permit recipients, you should vote for this bill now. It is good for those DACA recipients, it is good for American workers, it is good for our communities, and it will be a good first step toward lasting pro-American, pro-worker immigration reform.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Nielsen nomination?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 305 Leg.]

YEAS—62

Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Reed
Capito	Heitkamp	Risch
Carper	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rounds
Cochran	Inhofe	Rubio
Collins	Isakson	Sasse
Coons	Johnson	Scott
Corker	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	King	Strange
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Tester
Cruz	Manchin	Thune
Daines	McCain	Tillis
Donnelly	McCaskill	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Warner
Ernst	Moran	Wicker
Fischer	Murkowski	Young
Flake	Nelson	

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Blumenthal	Hassan	Schatz
Booker	Heinrich	Schumer
Brown	Hirono	Shaheen
Cantwell	Kaine	Stabenow
Cardin	Klobuchar	Udall
Casey	Leahy	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warren
Duckworth	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Franken	Murray	

NOT VOTING—1

Alexander

The nomination was confirmed.

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

The Senator from Alabama.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. STRANGE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. STRANGE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 455.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Emily Webster Murphy, of Missouri, to be Administrator of General Services.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Murphy nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 501.

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

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Glen R. Smith, of Iowa, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2022.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Smith nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.