

# UPDATE ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

MAY 24, 2007

The Senate debate on the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2007 (S. 1348), which began earlier this week and concluded on Thursday, will not resume until after the Memorial week recess. This e-newsletter brings our membership and the broader philanthropic community up to date on the latest developments. Keep in mind, however, that the debate is extremely fast-moving, and this e-newsletter will have a shorter-than-usual shelf life. GCIR will be sending another e-update with the latest on the debate in early June. We welcome your comments and suggestions on how to make these updates more helpful to you.

- [Articles](#): Articles and editorials on the latest developments
- [Opinions and Editorials](#): Opinion pieces on current immigration reform proposals
- [Analyses](#): Analyses of the immigration reform issues

## Articles

[Senate Votes to Keep Plan to Make Immigrants Legal](#), by Robert Pear, *New York Times*, May 25, 2007. The Senate on Thursday turned aside the most significant challenge to the comprehensive immigration bill now under debate, voting 66 to 29 to keep a provision that offers legal status to most of the nation's 12 million illegal immigrants.

[Divisive Immigration Measure on Hold](#), by The Associated Press, May 25, 2007. The Senate debate over legalizing millions of immigrants is on hold as lawmakers brace for political blowback from unhappy liberals and conservatives.

[Immigration Bill Provisions Gain Wide Support in Poll](#), by Julia Preston and Marjorie Connelly, *New York Times*, May 25, 2007. As opponents from the right and left challenge an immigration bill before Congress, there is broad support among Americans — Democrats, Republicans and independents alike — for the major provisions in the legislation, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll.

[Immigration Backers Beat Key Challenges](#), by Julie Hirschfeld Davis, *Associated Press*, May 24, 2007. Proponents of a broad immigration measure narrowly beat back potentially fatal challenges Thursday, including an effort to phase out the temporary worker program. The Senate rejected, 49-48, a proposal by Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., to end the temporary worker program after five years. Earlier, by the same margin, senators voted down a proposal by Sen. Norm Coleman, R-Minn., to allow government authorities to question someone about his immigration status if they had probable cause to suspect the person was in the U.S. illegally.

[Clinton, Hagel, Menendez Introduce Measure to Remove Barriers to Reunification for Immigrant Families](#), *Hillary Rodham Clinton Statements and Releases*, May 23, 2007. Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) today introduced an amendment to the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2007 that would remove barriers to reunification for the nuclear families of lawful permanent residents. The amendment would reclassify the spouses and minor children of lawful permanent immigrants as "immediate relatives," thereby exempting them from the visa caps.

[Amendments May Jeopardize Immigration Bill](#), by Michelle Mittelstadt, *Houston Chronicle*, May 22, 2007. The Senate on Monday opened what's sure to be a bruising fight over immigration with many potential deal-killer amendments lurking in the weeds.

[Critics in Senate Vowing to Alter Immigration Bill](#), by Robert Pear and Michael Luo, *The New York Times*, May 22, 2007. Lawmakers from both parties are seeking to alter a comprehensive immigration bill substantially.

[With an Immigration Compromise Committed to Paper, the Time for Scrutiny Begins](#), by Julia Preston, *The New York Times*, May 22, 2007. A sweeping bipartisan bill is an ambitious package of interlocking components intended to work together to create a new immigration system.

[Strife over Immigration Bill as Debate Begins in the Senate](#), by Nicole Gaouette, *The Los Angeles Times*, May 22, 2007. The Senate launched debate Monday on a sweeping bipartisan bill that could yield the most significant changes in the nation's immigration law in 20 years.

[Foes on Right and Left Attack Immigration Bill](#), by Jonathan Weisman, *The Washington Post*, May 22, 2007. Senate votes 69-23 to move forward with debate on controversial overhaul of laws; action on undocumented workers unlikely before June.

[The Presidential Candidates on Immigration](#), by Farhana Hossain, Ben Werschkul, and Sarah Wheaton, *The New York Times*, last updated May 21, 2007. As the Congress gets ready to debate a comprehensive immigration bill, the politics of the 2008 presidential campaign is playing a big role in the proceedings. Below is a look at what various candidates have said on the issue in the past. While many agree on the larger themes, disagreements about the details are likely to arise as the debate proceeds.

[After Aiding Bill on Immigration, Employers Balk](#), by Robert Pear, *The New York Times*, May 21, 2007. Employers said that they were unhappy with the bill because it would not cure anticipated labor shortages.

[Businesses, Families Have a Lot Riding on Immigration Change](#), by Teresa Watanabe, *The Los Angeles Times*, May 21, 2007. As the U.S. Senate prepares this week to debate the most sweeping proposed change to the nation's immigration system in more than four decades, Irvine technology executive Bruce Warren and Los Angeles homemaker Monsorat Jaldon symbolize the high stakes looming for millions of families, businesses and workers.

[Welcome to U.S.A.—If You're a Shepherd](#), by Barry Newman, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 19, 2007. A somber Peruvian in a floppy hat and an overlarge parka, Julio Cruz he works full-time under a special visa and three-year contract for a sheep grower named John Noh. Without Mr. Noh's permission, Mr. Cruz can't work for anyone else.

[Penalties for Illegals Become Focus of Immigration Reform Debate](#), by Nicole Gaouette, *The Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 2007. The ambitious proposal to revamp the U.S. immigration system negotiated by the White House and key senators will confront a critical question next week: How tough does it have to be on illegal immigrants to pass?

## Opinions & Editorials

[Immigration Agreement a Move Forward. But How Far?](#), by Marcela Sanchez, Special to [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), May 25, 2007. There is no shortage of critics of the bipartisan immigration agreement now being debated in the Senate. Even with its flaws, the agreement is a commendable step toward fixing a system of how people can come to live and work in the United States.

[Immigrants and Politics](#), by Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, May 25, 2007. Analyzing the direct economic gains and losses from proposed reform isn't enough. You also have to think about how the reform would affect the future political environment.

[The Divide Over "Amnesty"](#), NPR, May 24, 2007. One source of contention in the immigration debate is the concept of amnesty — not punishing immigrants who came into the country illegally. The latest immigration overhaul proposal in Congress would offer a way for the 12 million illegal immigrants already in the United States to receive legal status. Here is a sampling of opinion about whether the proposal actually gives amnesty to illegal immigrants.

[Coleman Amendment on Immigration Enforcement](#), by Bill Ong Hing, *The Immigration Professors Blog*, May 24, 2007. Senator Coleman (R-MN) has filed an amendment to the immigration reform bill that would force cities and police departments to put immigration law enforcement above protecting the health and safety of their communities.

[Illegal Immigration Bill Won't Work](#), by Foy Evans, *Houston Daily Journal*, May 24, 2007. Democrats are split over how effective the law will be, if enacted. Republicans are more impassioned in their disagreement over whether it will solve the problem of more than 12 million illegal immigrants already in the country and have any effect on how many more will come every day.

[Immigration Bill's Basics Should Fly, But The Devil's in The Details](#), by Carl Leubsdorf, *The Dallas Morning News*, May 24, 2007. The compromise immigration bill is a valiant effort to end the impasse over one of the nation's most difficult issues. But it may well fail because - while it does address the main substantive issues - it fails to satisfy the political realities.

[Migrant Plan Stacks Deck Against Latins](#), by Andres Oppenheimer, *The Miami Herald*, May 24, 2007. Here's some potential fallout of the immigration reform package being debated in the U.S. Congress: Its merit-based admissions criteria may favor Asian immigrants over Latin Americans.

[Immigration Deform \(From The Politics Blog\)](#), by Henry Payne, *The Detroit News*, May 23, 2007. Because the reform bill gives America's 12 million, largely Hispanic, illegal immigrants a path to citizenship and nearly doubles the cap on badly needed H1-B (so-called skilled worker) visas, I was hopeful.

[Southern Border, Bad Policy Exposed](#), by John Kass, *The Chicago Tribune*, May 24, 2007. Without a fence across our southern border with Mexico, without a border that is controlled and secure, can Americans have faith in what Washington politicians are doing with the so-called immigration reform bill?

[America's Admissions System](#), by David Brooks, *The New York Times*, May 22, 2007. The immigration deal reached in the Senate last week is, on balance, a good thing.

[The Immigration Deal](#), *The New York Times*, May 20, 2007. The Senate last week seized a once-in-a-generation opportunity to overhaul a broken system and emerged with a deeply flawed compromise.

[Anti-family immigration?](#), by Bill Ong Hing, *The Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 2007. A bipartisan group of senators and the White House struck a deal Thursday on a sweeping immigration reform plan. It seems on the face of it to have something for everyone: a path to citizenship for the country's 12 million undocumented immigrants, a guest worker program for industry and a redoubling of border security for enforcement-minded voters. But there's one group for whom this compromise isn't so grand: anyone in the U.S. with family overseas.

## Analyses

[What's In the Senate Immigration Deal?](#), NPR.org, May 21, 2007 · A look at major provisions of the bipartisan immigration compromise.

[Summary of Senate "Grand Bargain"](#), AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 07051768, American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007. AILA has provided a comprehensive summary of the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2007, outlining the triggers, enforcement, and penalties, as well as the proposed Y visa program and merit-based point system.

[NILC's Statement on the Senate-White House Immigration Reform Proposal](#), National Immigration Law Center, May 21, 2007. The deal that Senate negotiators have consummated is a step in the wrong direction. Although the deal includes the DREAM Act and AgJOBS and promises significant short-term benefits for many undocumented immigrants, the nation's experience suggests that the rest of the provisions would have dire long-term consequences for both immigrants and citizens.

[Senate Immigration Bill Proposes Unworkable Employment Eligibility Verification System](#), National Immigration Law Center, May 21, 2007. The 2007 Senate-White House immigration reform proposal would require every employer in the United States to verify the employment eligibility of their workforce — immigrants and U.S.-born workers — through a new Electronic Employment Verification System (EEVS). In contrast to the 2006 Senate immigration reform bill (S. 2611), the EEVS provided for in Title III of the 2007 Senate bill falls short on creating a workable system with strong due process, antidiscrimination, and privacy protections.

[Preliminary Description of AgJOBS Compromise](#), Farmworker Justice Center, May 21, 2007. This document provides a preliminary analysis of the AgJOBS provisions that are likely to be in the bill that the White House negotiated with a bipartisan group of Senators. Contact [Bryan Rhodes](#) at GCIR for the document.

[MPI Releases New Resources on a US Points-Based Selection System for Immigrants](#), Migration Policy Institute, May 18, 2007. A bipartisan group of Senators and the White House have agreed upon a comprehensive immigration bill to be debated in the Senate next week. The Migration Policy Institute has released new data and analysis to place the current proposal for a points-based system and overall reform in the context of the approximately 1.8 million immigrants the United States receives each year.

[The Impact of Immigration on States and Localities](#), by Audrey Singer, *The Brookings Institution*, May 17, 2007. Before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Audrey Singer explained the impact of immigration on local communities, including how foreign-born settlement patterns have shifted during the past 15 years, the local role in integrating these newcomers, and, finally, a proposed federal response.

[AILA Urges Support of Comprehensive Reform, but Not At Expense of Fundamental Principles](#), American Immigration Lawyers Association, May 17, 2007. The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) has emphatically supported the need to fix our broken immigration system by balancing the needs of families, employers, our economy, and our national security to make legality the norm in our country. Unfortunately, it appears that desperate times may have resulted in a cobbling of compromises, which is no grand bargain to the thousands of employers and families who will lose a voice in a hazily outlined process. AILA cannot support such a bargain.

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