



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 23, 2007
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

S. 1348 – Secure Borders, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Reform Act of 2007

(Sen. Reid (D) Nevada and 4 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly supports Senate passage of the bipartisan immigration reform proposal under consideration on the Senate floor. The proposal offers a much-needed solution for our Nation's broken immigration system. This proposal would deliver an immigration system that is secure, productive, orderly, and fair. The Administration applauds the members of the Senate who worked in the spirit of bipartisanship over the past months to address this critically important issue.

The Nation's immigration system badly needs reform, and this proposal takes a comprehensive approach. The proposal would require specific improvements in border security and interior and worksite enforcement. For example, the proposal would establish a strong employer verification system, which is a critical element of a successful system. Once these important goals are met, a temporary-worker program would be created to allow workers to come to this country for a short period of time on a new "Y visa" and fill jobs Americans are not doing. The temporary-worker program would address the needs of the Nation's economy and take pressure off the border by providing a secure and legal channel for workers seeking employment in the United States. For future immigrants wishing to come to the United States permanently, the proposal would revamp our immigration system and establish a new merit-based process, which takes into account job skills, economic needs, education, and English proficiency. The U.S. immigration system's recognition of immediate family ties would continue; however, future family immigration would be limited to the nuclear family – spouses and minor children. Visas for parents of U.S. citizens would be capped, while visas for siblings and adult children would be eliminated. Extended family would still be able to apply for green cards under the new merit-based system and would receive points under that system recognizing their family ties to U.S. citizens or green card holders.

The proposal would bring undocumented workers already in the United States out of the shadows without amnesty and without animosity. It would require workers to pay a meaningful penalty, pay their taxes, and pass a background check in order to obtain what would be known as a "Z visa." If these workers decide they want to apply for a green card, they would have to pass an English test, return home to file an application, and get in line behind those who have played by the rules and followed the law.

The United States has been a melting pot for over 200 years, giving much strength to the Nation. The proposal would further efforts to help immigrants assimilate into American society by directing the Department of Education to make English instruction freely available over the Internet. The proposal also affirms that English is the language of the United States.

The Administration looks forward to a serious, civil, and conclusive debate that results in a comprehensive solution to our Nation's immigration challenges.

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