



For Immediate Release  
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## Fact Sheet: Bipartisan Border Security and Immigration Reform Bill

Senate Bill Represents The Best Chance To Reform Our Broken Immigration System

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### President Bush Urges Members Of Both Parties To Support The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Bill Now

**In The Senate.** The status quo is unacceptable – by acting now, we can ensure that our laws are respected, that our borders are secure, that the needs of our economy are met, and that our Nation helps newcomers assimilate.

- **The Lessons Of History Are Clear: All Elements Of This Issue Must Be Addressed Together – Or None Of Them Will Be Solved At All.**

Illegal immigration is a serious problem that has been growing for decades. Past efforts to address it have failed because they did not do enough to secure our Nation's borders, failed to address the underlying economic reasons behind illegal immigration, and failed to provide sensible ways for employers to verify the legal status of the workers they hire.

### Comprehensive Immigration Reform Must Accomplish Five Clear Objectives

#### 1. Securing The Border

**Under The Bipartisan Immigration Reform Bill, Temporary Worker And Z Visas Will Not Be Issued Until Meaningful Border Security And Worksite Enforcement Benchmarks Are Met.** These triggers include:

- Increasing border fencing.
- Increasing vehicle barriers at the Southern border.
- Increasing the size of the Border Patrol.
- Installing ground-based radar and camera towers along the Southern border.
- Ensuring resources are available to maintain the effective end of "Catch and Release" at our border.
- Ensuring a reliable Employment Eligibility Verification System (EEVS) is established and in use.

**To Show The Government Is Serious About Meeting These Benchmarks, The Bill Provides \$4.4 Billion In Immediate Additional Funding For Securing Our Borders And Enforcing Our Laws At The Worksite.**

#### 2. Holding Employers Accountable For The Workers They Hire

**The Bipartisan Immigration Reform Bill Sets Up A Sophisticated Electronic EEVS To Give Employers The Tools They Need To Verify The Status Of Workers.** EEVS will require workers to present a limited range of stronger and more readily verifiable identification documents, which will be checked electronically against Federal and State databases.

- **EEVS Will Allow Employers To Verify The Authenticity Of Documents By Providing Access For The First Time To Identification Photographs In Government Databases.**
- **The Bill Imposes Stiff New Criminal And Civil Penalties On Employers Who Continue To Hire And Employ Illegal Workers.** Under current law, the civil fine for employers who hire illegal workers is between \$275 and \$2,200 per alien for first-time offenders and between \$3,300 and \$11,000 per alien for four-time offenders. Under the bill, the civil fine for employers who hire illegal workers will be raised to \$5,000 per alien for first-time offenders, and to \$75,000 per alien for four-time offenders.

### **3. Creating A Temporary Worker Program**

**Under The Senate Bill, A Temporary Worker Program Will Allow U.S. Law Enforcement To Focus More Resources On Apprehending Violent Criminals And Terrorists.** The temporary worker program will help meet the needs of our economy and reduce the number of people trying to sneak across our borders by providing a lawful and orderly channel for foreign workers to fill the jobs that Americans are not doing.

- **This Temporary Worker Program Has Tougher Labor Standards And More Robust Protections For U.S. Workers Than Any Existing U.S. Nonimmigrant Worker Program.**
  - Before hiring a temporary worker under the bill, an employer must first try to recruit U.S. workers for 90 days – three times longer than any other temporary worker program.
  - Temporary workers under the bill must be paid the prevailing competitive wage, which is based on the wages paid to U.S. workers, and ensures that the wages of U.S. workers cannot be undercut.

### **4. Resolving The Status Of The Millions Of Illegal Immigrants Already In The Country**

**The Bill Will Strengthen Our National Security By Bringing The Millions Of Illegal Workers Already Here Out Of The Shadows – Without Amnesty.** This will allow law enforcement officials to know who is in the country and allow immigration enforcement officers to focus their resources on finding and apprehending violent criminals and terrorists.

- **Illegal Workers Already Here Must Come Forward And Pay A Fine.** In order to obtain a Z visa granting temporary legal status, workers in the country before January 1, 2007, must come forward, pay a \$1,000 fine, pass criminal background checks, remain employed, and maintain a clean record.
- **Z Visa Workers Must Pay An Additional Fine, Learn English, And Meet Other Requirements To Apply For A Green Card, And Cannot Receive One Until Years In The Future.** Z visa workers must apply at the back of the line and wait until the current backlog is cleared, pay an additional \$4,000 fine, complete accelerated English and civics requirements, maintain employment, leave the U.S. to file their application, and compete in the merit system based on the skills and attributes they will bring to the United States.

- **Satisfying The Requirements In The Bill Will Take Most Green Card Applicants More Than A Decade.**

#### **5. Finding New Ways To Help Newcomers Assimilate Into Our Society**

**The Bill Will Strengthen The Assimilation Of New Immigrants.** The bill declares that English is the national language of the United States and calls on the United States Government to preserve and enhance it. It also enacts accelerated English requirements for many immigrants. In addition, the DHS Office of Citizenship will be expanded to include coordinating assimilation efforts in its mission, and the Secretary of Education will make an English instruction program available for free over the Internet.

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