Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007 / Act should be passed

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Position: Act should be passed

This position addresses the topic Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007.

For this position

"There are at least 12 million undocumented immigrants in this country. Most simply walked or motored across our closest neighbors' borders. But many traveled clandestinely from Europe or Asia. They are not going back home on their own, and no matter what blathering demagogues say on talk shows, this nation has neither the will nor the wallet to round them all up and force them to go home. It's just more logical to allow the productive and law-abiding among them some path to legal status or citizenship. The new bill does that."

From They're not going away, by The Philadelphia Inquirer editorial board (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 24, 2007) (view)

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"Now is probably the last window for action on comprehensive reform before presidential politics thwart any rational debate. Millions of desperate people enter the United States every year, risking their lives and often eking out mean livings in squalor and fear. They deserve a chance to work, train, and pay their way toward becoming legal residents, and the canny old negotiator Ted Kennedy has likely found the clearest path to get them there."

From A big deal on immigration, by The Boston Globe editorial board (*The Boston Globe*, May 19, 2007) (view)

"No one seriously believes they will be rounded up and deported en masse, yet too many opponents of the bill evidently prefer the status quo -- immigrants in the shadows; employers ignoring the law; preoccupied and embittered state and local officials in whose laps the problem has been dumped -- to the reasonable resolution the bill offers: an arduous but navigable route to citizenship. Wrestling that problem to the ground would be an enormous achievement, and so would measures in the Senate bill that would tighten the border and create systems by which employers could verify the legal status of the workers they hire."

From Pass the Immigration Bill, by The Washington Post editorial board (*The Washington Post*, June 7, 2007) (view)

"The bill gives conservatives a large chunk of what they've wanted for years, plus some things they don't want. The balance is heavily in their favor, though, and they're crazy to oppose this once-in-a-lifetime chance to stop illegal immigration and enact sensible policies for legal immigration."

From Things to Like in the Immigration Bill, by Fred Barnes (*The Weekly Standard*, June 2, 2007) (view)

"For starters, the bill addresses the forecast of a critical worker shortage in the United States created by low employment in the United States and the retirement of 77 million baby boomers. It also acknowledges it's impractical to deport some 12 million illegal immigrants or to create a class of permanent residents who have no responsibilities or rights."

From Get back to work, by The Charlotte Observer editorial board (*The Charlotte Observer*, June 18, 2007) (view)

"The government will continue to ramp up enforcement efforts - more fencing, more Border Patrol, more job-site raids. And all of this will work up a point - to Americans' disadvantage. Because to the degree enforcement succeeds, it will be choking the economy. The worker shortage will grow more acute, particularly at the low end of the job ladder. Fruits and vegetables will rot in the fields. Hospital patients will go uncared for."

From Immigration: Status Quo = Hell, by Tamar Jacoby (New York Post, June 18, 2007) (view)

"With luck the worst bits can be redacted or defanged in House-Senate negotiations. But the big-picture goals of border security, employment verification, and legalization for existing and future immigrants remain worth the fight, if only because they promise an improvement on an intolerable status quo."

From The 'Grand Bargain': Round II, by The Washington Post editorial board (*The Washington Post*, June 17, 2007) (view)

"For political as well as practical reasons, border security in the future must be linked to legalization of those who crossed the border — yes, illegally — in the past. That's why the bill is called a "grand bargain." Now that it has been given a second chance, the Senate should recognize that it's a good bargain for America."

From A second chance for immigration, by Los Angeles Times editorial board (*Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 2007) (view)

If we have no comprehensive immigration reform this year, and if we do not deal rigorously and openly with those already here, silent amnesty will continue. As a border-state governor who has dealt with immigration issues more than any other governor I know of, I am certain that continued inaction by Congress -- silent amnesty - - is the worst of all worlds."

From The Myth of Amnesty, by Janet Napolitano (The Washington Post, June 10, 2007) (view)

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In this enforcement alone will not solve the problem. To the degree it works, it will choke off a needed supply of foreign labor, slowing - perhaps significantly slowing - American economic growth. But mostly, it won't work. Even the most robust enforcement will not end illegal immigration until and unless we bring our quotas more into line with the reality of our labor needs."

From The fearmongers win again, by Tamar Jacoby (New York Daily News, July 1, 2007) (view)

Against this position

"Yes, this country has absorbed huge migrations of illiterate peasants in the past -notably Italian immigrants at the turn of the last century. But also notably, half of them went back. We got the good ones. America was not yet a welfare state guaranteeing room and board to the luckless, the lazy and the incompetent from cradle to grave."

From A Green Card in Every Pot, by Ann Coulter (Human Events, May 30, 2007) (view)

"All of which means that "inexpensive" immigrants turn out to be expensive, after all. Robert Rector of the right-of-center Heritage Foundation estimates that the total net social cost of amnesty - oops, "earned citizenship" - for 12 million illegals will be \$2.5 trillion over 30 years."

From Poor immigrants end up being expensive, by James Pinkerton (*Newsday*, May 29, 2007) (view)

"One of the biggest - and least discussed - problems with the immigration bill now before the Senate is the sheer impossibility of implementing it. The measure would triple the workload at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services - an agency that the Government Accountability Office says is already at the breaking point. It's an invitation not only to fraud, but to any terrorist group or criminal gang that's looking to insert minions into America."

From Rx for Breakdown, by Kris Kobach (New York Post, May 27, 2007) (view)

"The amnesty bill promises an explosion in federal, state and local spending on public education, subsidized housing and entitlement programs, and extraordinary new fiscal pressure on three of the fastest-growing federal entitlement programs, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. If immigration "reform" is enacted in anything remotely resembling the bill before the Senate, staggering tax increases are inevitable in the decades just ahead."

From The immigration time-bomb, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, May 23, 2007) (view)

"But adult children and brothers and sisters would no longer have an automatic right to immigrate. They'd have to prove that they have skills, education and speak English (thus favoring countries such as India). This radical overhaul of the family-based system deserves hearings -- not a closed-door deal among a dozen senators."

From Wrong on immigration, by The Sacramento Bee editorial board (*The Sacramento Bee*, May 23, 2007) (view)

"Just as we don't need to solve every crime and catch every criminal in order to have deterrents to crime, neither do we have to ferret out and deport every one of the 12 million illegal aliens in this country in order to deter a flood of new illegals."

From The amnesty fraud, by Thomas Sowell (New York Post, May 22, 2007) (view)

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"It's a disaster for national security, for keeping Islamist jihadists out of the country, for exploding the costs of Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, for preserving the rule of law, and for that quaint principle called national sovereignty. From the details that have leaked out thus far, the legislation [...] would swell the size of the welfare state in a way we haven't seen since Lyndon Johnson imposed his Great Society on us four decades ago."

From Immigration debacle, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, May 21, 2007) (view)

"The deal calls for the creation of a new underclass that could work for two years at a time, six at the most, but never put down roots. Immigrants who come here under that system -- who play by its rules, work hard and gain promotions, respect and job skills -- should be allowed to stay if they wish. But this deal closes the door. It offers a way in but no way up, a shameful repudiation of American tradition that will encourage exploitation -- and more illegal immigration."

From The Immigration Deal, by The New York Times editorial board (*The New York Times*, May 20, 2007) (view)

"As for the notion that dumping a population the size of four mid-size European Union nations into the lap of America's arthritic "legal immigration" (please, no tittering; apparently, there is still such a thing) bureaucracy will lead to tougher enforcement and rigorous scrutiny and lots of other butch-sounding stuff, well, if that were the case, there wouldn't be a problem in the first place. You can declare that "illegal" now mean "legal" very easily; to mandate that "incompetent" now means "competent" is a tougher proposition."

From Capitulation, from A----- to Z, by Mark Steyn (Chicago Sun-Times, May 20, 2007) (view)

In exchange for the massive, unpopular amnesty, Senator Kennedy is willing to engage in a little "border dressing" that purports to beef up enforcement of current laws barring illegal entry and the employment of illegal workers. As in the past, supporters of border and workplace enforcement will get the rhetoric, illegal aliens the prize, and taxpayers the huge tab."

From No to Bush-Kennedy, by National Review editorial board (*National Review*, May 17, 2007) (view)

"One thing the Kyl-Kennedy bill did right was to redirect U.S. policy away from family reunification and toward merit-based immigration. It went about it wrong, allowing too much time to elapse before the new system went into effect, which would have allowed additional millions of less productive immigrants into the country — and ultimately into Medicare, Medicaid and other costly social programs."

From Enforcement before amnesty, by David Frum (Los Angeles Times, June 9, 2007) (view)

"There was nothing to recommend it to those who believe illegal immigration is a critical problem for the country. Worse still, many of us who hold the view that illegals have proved a net plus to the nation could not countenance the legislation once the corkscrew impact of its provisions became clear."

From Defeat 'em all, by John Podhoretz (New York Post, June 9, 2007) (view)

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Instead of "comprehensive" reform, Bush should choose a second option: consecutive reform. During this debate, both the comprehensivists and their opponents have stressed the critical need to control the border and to give employers a reliable system to verify the legal status of their workers. There is no reason that either imperative should wait on resolution of the amnesty or guest-worker questions."

From Out of the Shadows, by National Review editorial board (*National Review*, June 8, 2007) (view)

"A terrorist could walk into a USCIS office and offer a completely fictitious name -- one without any negative information associated with it. In other words, a terrorist could declare that his name is "Rumpelstiltskin," produce two easily forged scraps of paper indicating that he was in the country before Jan. 1, 2007, and walk out with a probationary Z visa -- complete with a government-issued ID card backing up his false identity."

From A wake-up call for the Senate, by Kris Kobach (*The Washington Times*, June 7, 2007) (view)

If I had my druthers, in 2001, Bush would have pursued a real clampdown on illegal immigration while at the same time expanding legal immigration, including from Mexico. I don't even mind the idea of a one-time amnesty for illegals, if in fact it is a one-time deal. But again, a system in which we declare it's a one-time amnesty but mean nothing of the sort means that we have no policy at all."

From Immigration's bad guys, by Jonah Goldberg (Los Angeles Times, June 5, 2007) (view)

"Believing that immigration enforcement can wall us off from people who are prepared to endure huge sacrifices to come here is more in the realm of dreams. Any benefit a new law can achieve is bound to be modest and incremental, discouraging some illegal immigrants from coming, diverting others into legal channels and having no effect on others. Our leaders are better off trying for small improvements than insisting on grand solutions."

From Time to confront reality, by Steve Chapman (Chicago Tribune, June 3, 2007) (view)

"Immigration reform now lies in ruin. That doesn't mean supporters of a broad immigration bill will or ought to surrender. It should, though, force them to admit they didn't do the hard work that would convince Americans to back their efforts to reduce illegal immigration and control the legal immigration our economy needs."

From The speech Bush didn't give, by Chicago Tribune editorial board (*Chicago Tribune*, June 29, 2007) (view)

"The nation's founders thought that the people should rule, which is why the Constitution begins with "We the People." Inherent in the idea was that "the people" would be a coherent group, with a common language and culture - the Constitution was written only in English. Mindful of history, the founders thought that each people ought to have their own state."

From Amnesty would be foreign to founders, by James Pinkerton (*Newsday*, June 28, 2007) (view)

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"Essentially, all of the security benchmarks in the current Senate bill are already law. Unfortunately, proponents of this bill would have us believe that none of these security measures can be implemented unless we pass a bill that grants amnesty to 12 million to 20 million illegal immigrants. In short, security is being held hostage in return for amnesty."

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From We won't be fooled again, by Jim DeMint (USA Today, June 22, 2007) (view)

"A terrorist can walk into a USCIS office and offer a false name, providing two easily forged pieces of paper that purport to show that he was in the country prior to Jan. 1, 2007. With this new identity backed by an ID card issued by the U.S. government, the alien terrorist will be armed with a "breeder document" allowing him to obtain driver's licenses and just about any other form of identification he wants."

From The Terrorist Facilitation Act of 2007, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, June 22, 2007) (view)

"It's no secret that the Senate immigration bill rewards 12-20 million illegal aliens with immediate amnesty. What is less well known is that the bill also allows illegal aliens to receive in-state tuition rates at public universities, discriminating against U.S. citizens from out of state and law-abiding foreign students."

From A college education for illegal aliens, by Kris Kobach (*The Washington Times*, June 22, 2007) (view)

"Yesterday, Kris Kobach, who served as Attorney General John Ashcroft's top adviser on immigration matters, published a Heritage Foundation paper outlining in detail how Mr. Graham's "win-win" bill will make it easier for for illegal aliens — including three of the six men arrested for the terrorist plot to bomb JFK Airport in New York — to conceal themselves and operate inside the United States."

From The wobbly Republicans, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, June 20, 2007) (view)

"Let's expect the senators at least to describe the bill accurately this time around. This would mean that senators not only need to know what the bill contains. It would also mean that they would need to level with the public about the bill, starting with the most important fact. This bill amounts to a rerun of the 1986 amnesty, except with new buzzwords and new false promises for enforcement."

From Immigration horse-trading, by The Washington Times editorial board (*The Washington Times*, June 19, 2007) (view)

"This bill rushes to legalize millions of illegal aliens, which is not the urgent matter at hand. We must first focus on securing our borders and enforcing our laws. I have heard from thousands of North Carolinians who ask me what is being done to address these pressing needs and to make our communities safer. Understandably, folks have no confidence that this is occurring."

From Same old immigration song, by Elizabeth Dole (*The Charlotte Observer*, June 18, 2007) (view)

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"Entry into this country should be a privilege, not a right. The open-borders lobby has turned that principle on its head. Look no further than New York, where four convicted criminal aliens - a child molester, two killers and a racketeer - just won a federal lawsuit to remain here after all being ordered deported. "

From Silent Amnesty, by Michelle Malkin (New York Post, June 17, 2007) (view)

"A fence announces to the world that America is closed to . . . illegal immigrants. What's wrong with that? Is not every country in the world the same? The only reason others don't need such a barrier is that they are not half as attractive as America, not because we are more oppressive or less welcoming. Fences are ugly, I grant you that. But not as ugly as 12 million people living in the shadows in a country that has forfeited control of its borders."

From Good Fences, by Charles Krauthammer (*The Washington Post*, June 15, 2007) (view)

I opposed the Senate immigration bill because of its core fallacy that millions of illegal immigrants could get right with the law without having to leave the country. For most Americans, and me, that is amnesty and I cannot support it."

From Why I was opposed, by Mike Pence (The Washington Times, June 10, 2007) (view)

"Whether they were detained, rejected, approved or posthumously approved, in the end it made no difference. Because U.S. immigration had no real idea who these men were. But, don't worry, they'll be able to handle another "12 million undocumented Americans" tossed in for express processing. The real "immigration fraud" is not Mahmoud abu Halima's or John Lee Malvo's or Mohammed Atta's, but that of the politicians who attempted to foist this sham bill on the nation."

From A lame joke becomes reality, by Mark Steyn (*The Orange County Register*, June 10, 2007) (view)

"The price for this lurch into rationality appears to be the abolition of the VIP fast track, which constitutes less than 2 percent of total immigration and, from the point of view of the national interest, is the most valuable. This staggeringly stupid idea is reason alone to vote against the immigration bill."

From Get in Line, Einstein, by Charles Krauthammer (*The Washington Post*, June 1, 2007) (view)

"As proof of the promise, the authors say no other provision contained in this bill (except the immediate "probationary" legal status) will be implemented until the border is secure. And how will we know the border is secure? The president — the bill's chief proponent — will receive a letter from one of his top officials certifying that it is so. If history is a guide, these promises will be proved empty."

From Amnesty Immediate, by Jim DeMint (National Review, June 1, 2007) (view)

If you are going to tell people you want to grant citizenship to otherwise-law-abiding illegal immigrants, you need to be consistent. An amendment by Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, to make illegal immigrants who ignored deportation orders or used fraudulent documents ineligible for legal status failed last month by a 51-46 vote. "

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From A bill too bad even for the Beltway, by Debra Saunders (*San Francisco Chronicle*, July 1, 2007) (view)

"It's insulting to tell people that to oppose this bill is to oppose border enforcement. There are immigration laws on the books right now, and they are flouted with impunity by "sanctuary cities," states and the federal government itself. The political class tells us that a nation on permanent "orange alert" at ports of entry can't enforce its borders, and a broken immigration bureaucracy that can't process existing levels of applicants can reliably handle another 20 million people."

From Impudent citizens got Sen. Lotthorn's goat, by Mark Steyn (*The Orange County Register*, July 1, 2007) (view)

Mixed on this position

In the Senate immigration bill, there is a glimpse of what bipartisanship looks like in the real world -- an ungainly, imperfect hybrid that goes some distance toward tightening border security, clearing the backlog of visa applications, and providing a future for 12 million immigrants already in this country, including many who have been here since childhood. The wiser course is to work for improvements, not to sound the death knell for legislation that holds the promise of a better future."

From The Storm Over Immigration, by The Washington Post editorial board (*The Washington Post*, May 23, 2007) (view)

"Eighteen months seems way too fast to hire and train 18,000 new border guards; complete 370 miles of border fencing and another 200 miles of "vehicle barriers;" install 70 radio towers and deploy unmanned drones along the entirety of the border with Mexico; and implement tamper-proof employment IDs nationwide. If the security provisions are not taken seriously, this nation could repeat the fiasco of the 1986 immigration law, which opened the floodgates to two decades of massive illegal border crossings. "

From The deal on immigration, by Rocky Mountain News editorial board (*Rocky Mountain News*, May 19, 2007) (view)

"The critics should instead focus their efforts on a more legitimate goal: Making sure this reform includes both the means and the funding to keep millions more illegal immigrants from coming. If the federal government follows through aggressively — a big if, given the abject failure of the 1986 bill's enforcement provisions — the nation could get control over its borders and its workplaces."

From Amnesty? What amnesty? Critics substitute fear for facts, by USA Today editorial board (*USA Today*, June 8, 2007) (view)

"Congress can ensure that this works by writing tough accountability provisions into the bill, approving the ID cards, and following through with sustained oversight. Critics of the bill talk as if Congress is powerless. They're running from the ghost their predecessors created in 1986. There's no reason they can't write a bill that won't haunt their successors 20 years from now. " "

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