

# Proposals for Immigration Reform

In his speech, President Bush tried to strike a balance between some conservatives in his own party, particularly in the House of Representatives, which has enacted a tough border-security bill. The Senate is also taking up legislation that is more friendly to immigrants.

Related Links	<b>Bill Passed in the House</b> (H.R.4437)	<b>Bill Being Debated in the Senate</b> (S.2611)	<b>The President's View in His Speech</b> (May 15, 2006)
<b>Temporary Worker Program</b>	No such provisions. Eliminates the Diversity Visa Lottery Program.	Creates a temporary worker program, with a potential path to legal permanent residence for individuals currently outside the U.S. Employers seeking to hire foreign workers would first have to try to recruit an available American worker.	Has called on Congress to pass a guest worker program for more than two years. Said that "to secure our border, we must create a temporary worker program."
<b>Legalization of Undocumented Immigrants</b>	No such provisions.	Provides legalization criteria for three different groups. The major one, called the "Earned Legalization Program," would provide a path to legal permanent residence for undocumented immigrants who have been here for five years and employed for three of those and who meet other requirements.	While rejecting "an automatic path to citizenship," Mr. Bush said that immigrants should be given a chance to gain citizenship after they "pay a meaningful penalty for breaking the law."
<b>Worksite Enforcement</b>	Requires employers to participate in an electronic employment eligibility verification system within three to six years.	Also requires employers to participate in an electronic employment eligibility verification system, but with a shorter timeline: within 18 months.	Mr. Bush also said that employers should participate in an electronic employment eligibility verification system but did not give a specific timeline.

**Criminal Penalties for Existing Illegal Immigrants**

Makes it a federal crime to live in the United States illegally. Individuals who help illegal immigrants to enter or stay in the country would also face criminal penalties.

Mandates penalties for smuggling aliens, but offers exceptions for those who provide "humanitarian" assistance to immigrants, including medical care and housing.

Said that "it is neither wise nor realistic to round up millions of people, many with deep roots in the United States, and send them across the border."

**Border Security: Fencing**

Requires the construction of "at least two layers of reinforced fencing" as well as "physical barriers, roads, lighting, cameras and sensors" along approximately 700 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Also calls for "double- or triple-layered fencing" but only to replace "aged, deteriorating, or damaged primary fencing" in Arizona.

Said that "walls and patrols alone will not stop" illegal immigration. Instead, the focus should be on trying to reduce the number of people trying to sneak across.

**Border Security: Personnel**

Hires more Border Patrol agents "as expeditiously as possible." Nearly 12,000 Border Patrol agents currently stand guard. Hires at least 250 active duty port of entry inspectors for each of the next three years.

Increases the number of Border Patrol agents by 2,400 each year through 2011. Calls for at least 500 active duty port of entry inspectors to be hired in each of the next three years.

Called on Congress to provide funding for large increases in manpower and technology at the border. He said that "by the end of 2008, we will increase the number of Border Patrol officers by an additional 6,000" and to help with the transition "up to 6,000 Guard members will be deployed to our southern border."