

FIRST, ENFORCE IMMIGRATION LAW

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During the two weeks that the Senate debated a "grand bargain" immigration bill – and then gave up last Thursday – America had to absorb an estimated 28,000 more illegal aliens. That massive rate of lawlessness is just the reason the Senate should make a second try at reform soon.

Among the chief reasons the bill failed is that it would have reduced the flow of illegal immigrants by only a quarter, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Many senators simply forgot that the initiating impetus for reform began with the post-9/11 drive to better guard US borders and to make sure Americans feel safe once again in welcoming (legal) immigrants.

The Senate got tangled up over many ancillary provisions, such as how to continue providing inexpensive, legal immigrant labor to business or whether to give tax money to newly legalized immigrants. The bill, a careful compromise put together by 12 Republican and Democratic senators, was becoming burdened by an endless stream of amendments, many to simply score political points with key special interests or big donors.