

## Grassley addresses immigration reform

Written by Grassley Press  
Monday, 29 April 2013 13:42

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Friday, April 26, 2013

WASHINGTON – In a weekly video address, Senator Chuck Grassley described his efforts to make sure immigration reform legislation avoids mistakes made in the 1986 legalization by making border security the top priority, giving American workers the first opportunity at jobs, holding employers accountable for their hiring practices, and leaving policy decisions in the representative branch of government.

Click [here](#) for the audio.

Here is the text of Grassley's address:

The Senate Judiciary Committee has held hearings during the last week on the immigration bill proposed by a bipartisan group of eight senators.

As the debate moves forward, I'm committed to making sure legislation doesn't repeat mistakes made in the legalization program that was part of the 1986 immigration overhaul. Congress voted then to legalize the one million people who were in the country illegally with the assurance that doing so would fix the problem once and for all. Decades later, there are 11 million people illegally in the country. So, the legalization in 1986 didn't fix the problem. Instead, it led to more illegality.

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I'm working to make sure that unintended consequences are avoided in other areas of immigration reform, as well. Congress should have learned with Obamacare that lawmakers need to legislate more and delegate less authority to the executive branch. Even so, the proposed immigration bill contains waivers that would give unchecked power to the Secretary of Homeland Security to unravel any law that elected representatives of the people might pass.

Immigration policy also is a key component of America's national security apparatus, and every consideration should be given to how changes in the immigration system impact security of the homeland. Securing the border needs to be the first priority. Border security is fundamental to national sovereignty. Any immigration reform must require accountability for border security.

We also need to fix the flaws in the current system in order to recognize the benefits of legal immigration – including the need for agricultural workers – while at the same time protecting the interests of U.S. citizens. I'm also working to make sure American graduates and workers are given the first opportunity at jobs in science, technology, engineering and math here in this country, and that employers are held accountable for their hiring practices.

America's immigration system is broken. Any repairs that are made and new policies pursued need to be both effective and respectful of the rule of law that safeguards the tremendous opportunities and freedoms found in America, a country based upon immigrants.