The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release April 29, 2010

Statement by the President on Senate Proposal Outlined Today to Fix Our Nation's Broken Immigration System

"It is the federal government's responsibility to enforce the law and secure our borders, as well as to set clear rules and priorities for future immigration. The continued failure of the federal government to fix the broken immigration system will leave the door open to a patchwork of actions at the state and local level that are inconsistent and as we have seen recently, often misguided.

The proposal outlined today in the Senate is a very important step in the process of fixing our nation's broken immigration system. I am especially pleased to see that this detailed outline is consistent with the bipartisan framework presented by Senators Chuck Schumer and Lindsey Graham last month, and is grounded in the principles of responsibility and accountability.

What has become increasingly clear is that we can no longer wait to fix our broken immigration system, which Democrats and Republicans alike agree doesn't work. It's unacceptable to have 11 million people in the United States who are living here illegally and outside of the system. I have repeatedly said that there are some essential components that must be in immigration legislation. It must call for stronger border security measures, tougher penalties for employers who hire illegal immigrants and clearer rules for controlling future immigration. And it must require those who are here illegally to get right with the law, pay penalties and taxes, learn English, pass criminal background checks and admit responsibility before they are allowed to get in line and eventually earn citizenship. The outline presented today includes many of these elements. The next critical step is to iron out the details of a bill. We welcome that discussion, and my Administration will play an active role in engaging partners on both sides of the aisle to work toward a bipartisan solution that is based on the fundamental concept of accountability that the American people expect and deserve."

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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