excellent law enforcement amendments, drawn, I know, from his experience as a former attorney general in Texas and a member of the supreme court in Texas. I believe, as a former Federal prosecutor, those amendments are essential to having a successful immigration program.

I would like to hear why it is that now 3 days into this bill he has not been able to get a vote on those amendments and about other amendments that he has offered this morning, whether he has been successful in even calling them up for consideration.

Mr. CORNYN. Well, Mr. President, I appreciate the question from the distinguished Senator from Alabama, who was a former U.S. attorney, former attorney general of his State, as the occupant of the chair was of his State, as was, as a matter of fact, Senator SALAZAR. It seems as if we have a former attorneys general convention right here on the floor of the Senate, all of us engaged in law enforcement actions most of our professional lives.

To answer the Senator's question, I am simply at a loss to understand why, on the single most important domestic issue facing our country today—our broken borders and our immigration system. This is designed to fail because of these barriers of information sharing that have been erected and because of the confidentiality provisions that have been slapped on affidavits and other evidence of fraud that might help us root out and investigate wrongdoers and bring them to justice. I think this is the main reason people are so profoundly skeptical of what we are doing today.

I don't think any of us should be under any illusion that if we erect this nice, pretty superstructure that we talk about, that the elements of the bill that are meritorious—things such as triggers, things such as enhanced border security, effective worksite verification—if we undermine it, if we simply cut the legs out from under the ability of law enforcement officials to enforce this law in a way that will see it collapse again, like the 1986 amnesty bill did, and we don't learn from that hard experience and improve this bill and eliminate those errors and those flaws, I think we will have failed the essential purpose for which we were sent here—to represent the American people, to see that the laws are respected, to see that law and order are reestablished.

I really do believe the reason people are so upset about this issue is because they see rampant lawlessness and disregard for the law in our immigration system. They recognize that in a post-9/11 world that our broken borders can allow economic migrants to come across.

We all understand why people want to come to America. It is the same reason they always have: they want a better life. We understand that. But we have to know who is coming into our country and the reasons they come here. We have offered generous temporary worker programs under this bill so they could come legally, so they could be screened, so law enforcement could focus on the criminals, potential terrorists, and others who want to do us harm. But why in the world, I would ask my colleagues, would we want to leave these flaws in the bill which prohibit our law enforcement officials from doing their job, from investigating and rooting out fraud and criminality and bringing wrongdoers to justice?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for another question?

Mr. CORNYN. I will.

Mr. SESSIONS. I would just ask this question, through the Chair. Is it similar to the bill last year? Did they not improve the language that basically said if you file a false document for a benefit under this bill, that is really not subject to being examined and investigated and prosecuted?

If an American filed a false claim for hurricane relief or any government benefit, that is a violation of title XVIII, section 1001. I have prosecuted it many times. But persons who are here illegally, noncitizens, can file false statements and then there is a mechanism that blocks that from being actually investigated and perhaps prosecuted?

Mr. CORNYN. I would answer the distinguished Senator by saying there have been some modest steps in improving the flaws in last year's bill. As we have discussed privately and on the Senate floor, I think we ought to give some credit where credit is due to see this bill strengthened over the flawed bill that passed the Senate last year.

But to answer his question, there are still confidentiality provisions in this bill which would allow fraud to go undetected, uninvestigated, and not prosecuted. I don't know why in the world we would possibly stand silently and allow that to happen. I am not going to, and that is the reason I have offered this amendment.

I see on the Senate floor the other distinguished Senator from Colorado, my friend Mr. ALLARD, who has also offered other important legislation to allow information sharing between law enforcement personnel. It was as a result of the Swift meatpacking plant raids that Senator ALLARD held meetings on, which I attended, that we learned the very tool that our Federal Government has given employers to confirm eligibility to work is flawed, and Social Security information cannot be shared with the Department of Homeland Security.

So we find people, such as the Swift meatpacking plant operators, using the Basic Pilot to check whether a person shows up and says: My name is JOHN CORNYN, and here is JOHN CORNYN's Social Security number. They run it through Basic Pilot. It says, yes, that is JOHN CORNYN's Social Security number, but the fact is, it is KEN SALAZAR using JOHN CORNYN's Social Security number, or somebody else, and it doesn't root out that kind of fraud.

What we need to do is make sure all manner of fraud and illegality are capable of being fully investigated, fully prosecuted, where warranted, and that our laws are enforced. That is the flaw that my amendment seeks to correct. And I continue to believe other amendments that have so far not been allowed to be called up, some 107 that have been filed, when we actually had votes on 30 amendments in last year's bill, and we have only had 7 so far, that we are really not going at the kind of pace at which I would hope we would proceed to be able to amend and improve this bill in a way that we could be proud of and that we would know would actually work.

That, to me, is one of the key pillars upon which this legislation ought to be built: Will it work? Can it be enforced? If it can't, we will have failed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments from my good friend from Texas. I wish to respond to the notion that this Chamber is not taking sufficient time in order to consider the issue of immigration and immigration reform. We have, indeed, been on a very long journey to try to grapple with this issue which, at the base of it, is the fundamental question of national security.

It was last year, for most of the month of May, where this Senate debated a comprehensive immigration reform package. It was an immigration reform package that had gone through the Senate Judiciary Committee and was amended multiple times on the floor of the Senate. Now, for the last many months, perhaps as many as 4 to 5 months, there have been a group of Senators, Republicans and Democrats, working with Secretary Chertoff and Secretary Gutierrez and President Bush to try to come up with a comprehensive immigration reform package, which is now the package that is before this Chamber.

I submit, in response to my good friend from Texas, that there has been ample opportunity for us to deal with the issue of immigration reform and to come up with a system that is, in fact, workable.

On this specific issue, what we have done during this past week is—there have been 23 amendments that have been offered. There have been 13 of those amendments that have been disposed of—7 of those have been disposed of with rollcall votes, 6 of them with voice votes. There were 10 amendments pending as of yesterday; there will be 4 more amendments pending as of today.

At the request of many Republican colleagues, Senator REID agreed it was important for us to take an additional week to be able to fully debate this very complicated and very difficult and very emotional issue on how we move forward with immigration reform. We did not get to a conclusion of this debate this week because Senator REID