

of immigrants with signed affidavits of support that are receiving or have received Federal, State, and local benefits when those immigrants really are not eligible and should have turned to their sponsors for support. A GAO study is needed to determine how much revenue the Federal Government could collect if they enforced these contracts and insisted that the individual who sponsored the person into the country actually pays what they are supposed to pay.

We need to preserve means-tested public benefits for those who are truly needy. We don't have enough money to take care of all the people in our country and shouldn't have to take care of people when they have a sponsor who promised to take care of them and promised that the sponsors would pay back the money for any benefits that the immigrants received.

So those are some of the amendments I offered. There is much that we can do to make our system of immigration at the border more effective. I would just cite that it is a matter of national security. We absolutely know that we have many people who simply want to come to America to work and don't want to cause any attack on the United States, and they are good people. They simply would like to make more money, which is available in the United States, than if they stay in their home country. But we also know that since we are not able to accept everyone who would like to come to America, we have to have rules about who can come and who cannot come and those we let come have to obey our laws.

One of the first and toughest rules should be that we don't allow people to come here who are terrorists, or have terrorist connections that could threaten our country.

Next, we need to ask ourselves how many persons should come in legally, and under what conditions, what kind of skills and abilities and education level and language skills they should have. That should be part of a good and effective immigration policy.

I will just say, however, that any such rules are absolutely worthless if we have a wide open system where people come across illegally on a regular basis and they know they have a high probability for success to come here illegally. Indeed, we know they do because we have about 12 million people here illegally.

So those are some steps I suggest we can take that will improve our legal system. I am pleased that a number of those will be included in the Gregg-Graham amendment and will not require a separate vote.

I hope we will take this responsibility seriously. I see no reason we should not undertake the actions that I have suggested, which have bipartisan support in the Congress. I hope they will not become part of some grand agreement that everything else that we can't agree on has to be a part of it. In

other words, these provisions, which I think would have broad bipartisan and public support, these provisions should not be used as a vehicle to try to drag on things that people don't agree with—certainly not at this time.

So I support these amendments. I am glad we do have the Graham-Gregg-McConnell-Kyl amendment on the floor, and I support that. And I would ask these amendments be considered in due course.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam President, before the Senate, I understand, is a Graham amendment dealing with border security. Then there is a second-degree amendment that has been offered on top of that which effectively is where we are at the present time. I would like to make a few comments about this whole issue that has been brought up by Senator GRAHAM in terms of the security aspects at the border.

Those of us who supported a comprehensive program on immigration reform supported strong border enforcement because we know there are 400,000 or 500,000 people who have come across the border, minimally, a year. We don't know their names. We don't know where they go. They disappear into American society. There is no question, on a matter dealing with homeland security, we have to be serious about dealing with our borders. We understand that.

That is why it is so interesting to me, when I saw we had that opportunity 2 years ago, we had a great deal of fuss on the other side about building a fence along the border and then, after they got their vote, the Republicans never funded that particular program.

When we had a chance a few weeks ago to do something on comprehensive border control, again the Republicans, the other side, voted no; they voted it down. Now we have the proposal to try to, I guess, make them politically OK among the voters. We know this issue of undocumented and illegal immigration is a complex one, is a difficult one.

We know the primary reason people come across the border down in the Southwest is because of the magnet of jobs in the United States. This amendment does nothing about the magnet of jobs. We should not delude ourselves, if we say we are going to support this particular proposal and then not deal with what is the basic cause of the hundreds of thousands of people who come here, and that is the magnet of jobs. This amendment doesn't deal with the magnet of jobs. Maybe it has

a good political ring to it out there on the hustings, that we are doing something, but as we have seen time and time again, as long as we are not going to deal with the magnet of jobs, the efforts we have on the border—we can build the fences, people have ladders to go over them; or you can build fences and people will burrow and go underneath them—as long as you have the powerful magnet of jobs, the efforts will fail.

We are going to have a vote on this issue, although I, for one, believe having strong border security is a key aspect of having comprehensive reform. That is why a number of us are going to support an alternative to the Graham amendment, an alternative that recognizes, No. 1, this is a complex problem—we are for border security and control, to the extent we can—but, No. 2, that we have a situation affecting millions of Americans in agriculture and that is, if we are going to have border control we are going to have to be able to provide agricultural workers. That is why I hope the Senate will consider an amendment which will have the border control provisions but also have what is called the AgJOBS provisions that will address what is the need in agricultural America.

Without it, as we have heard so eloquently from Senator FEINSTEIN, as we heard from Senator LARRY CRAIG, we are going to have devastation in major parts of our country.

If you are going to have border security, you are going to have to have some way for these workers to get in. The AgJOBS bill is the bill that has had over 60 Members of the Senate who have been supporters of that program. That seems to me to begin to make a good deal of sense.

Recognize, in dealing with this whole issue in a comprehensive way, the most vulnerable people inside our borders, those individuals who are here and are undocumented in so many instances are young people, brought here through no fault of their own because their parents brought them here when they were under 16 years of age, who are here for more than 5 years, serving 2 years in the military, graduating from the high schools of this country—it is called the DREAM Act.

I see my friend and the principal spokesperson and sponsor of that, the Senator from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, on the floor. He speaks so well to this issue. When we have the amendment before the Senate, I will review some of the great, important successes of many young individuals who came here undocumented and have worked long and hard and have graduated from high school, which is no mean feat when you have more than a 50-percent dropout rate among the Hispanic community. The fact that these individuals are here, want to be part of the American dream, want to contribute to our Nation—the DREAM Act gives them the hope and opportunity for the future, which so many who have come here as