



Statement by Senator Feinstein
on Compromise Immigration Legislation

April 7, 2006

Washington, DC – Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today voted in support of a plan to send the compromise immigration legislation back to the Judiciary Committee to work out problems with the bill, especially a complicated three-tiered plan for illegal immigrants now in the United States.

Senator Feinstein, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, believes that the original bill approved last week by the Committee, was preferable to the new proposal. The following is the statement Senator Feinstein made on the Senate floor:

“Thank you very much, Mr. President. I thank Senator Reid as well. I offer these words on behalf of Senator Boxer, my friend and colleague, and myself.

Senator Craig, I think, said it correctly: Senator Boxer and I have more illegal people in one county than most Senators have in their entire state.

Therefore, what happens here is of serious consequence for the people of California, and for us as well.

We are both going to vote for this motion to recommit. We are going to vote for it with the hope that the ensuing weeks are going to enable some parts of it to be worked out more clearly.

I serve on Judiciary. I serve on the Immigration Subcommittee. The beauty of the original McCain-Kennedy legislation was that once you accepted that approach, you accepted an approach of balance which was simple and able to be carried out.

My concern is: by developing the three tiers of individuals as the Martinez plan does, that you create a much more complicated scenario in terms of enforcement, and therefore run the risk that it cannot be carried out well, particularly for those here for less than two years, who are in the millions.

They simply disappear into the fabric of America once again and you have the same problem all over again

I hope that during the two weeks, cool minds will ensue and that we will be able to work on this legislation further. We have been on rather a forced march, a forced march

in Judiciary to mark up a bill. There have been more than a half dozen guest worker plans in committee. It has been a difficult and complicated path.

I would like to urge that we come together as one body, that we work together as one body.

I think the lives to be affected by what we do, are perhaps more deeply affected than with virtually any other piece of legislation, and both Senator Boxer and I offer our time and our energy to try to help in this.

So we will vote yes on cloture. It will be our hope that a majority of this body will do so also.

Thank you. I yield the floor.”