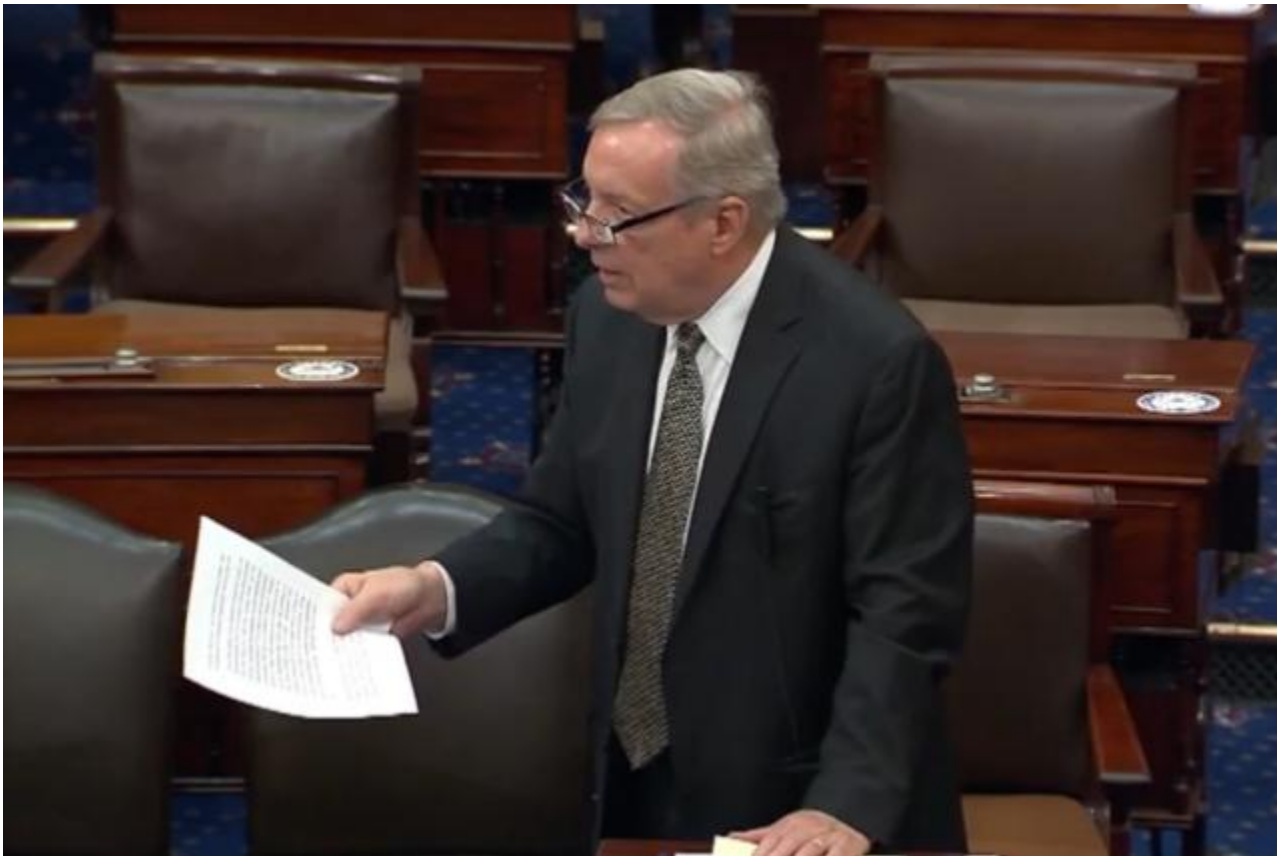


A Pathway To Citizenship And Secure, Compassionate Immigration System: Durbin Delivers Speech

July 23 2021 11:35 AM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, today delivered a speech on the Senate floor calling for a secure, compassionate immigration reform after 35 years of inaction by Congress on the issue.

In his speech, Durbin spoke about the continued uncertainty that undocumented immigrants face, including the looming fear of deportation that prevents them from living a full life in the United States despite residing on American soil for years or even decades.

“All of us have come to this country in various stages of our family life – personally, through our parents, grandparents and beyond. We have built, within the confines of our nation, an amazing story to tell the world of how such a diverse group of people can come together in one place and make an impact on the world itself. That makes it difficult to understand sometimes why we struggle so much with the issue of immigration. It is so central to who we are, what we’ve done, what we will become,” said Durbin. “You may be surprised to know that it’s been almost 36 years since this Congress has passed any meaningful or substantive immigration law. The last real effort was under President Ronald Reagan... Now as Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I have a responsibility to actually deal with the laws surrounding immigration.”

Following yesterday’s Senate Judiciary Committee [hearing](#), Durbin went on to discuss the plight of immigrant farmworkers and highlight their essential contributions to our agricultural industry. Durbin condemned Senate Republicans’ cavalier dismissal of legislation offering a pathway to citizenship for immigrant farmworkers and called on his colleagues to reconsider their position by seeking to understand the stories and contributions of our nation’s immigrant workers.

“Of the 2.4 million who come to the United States to pick these crops, half of them are undocumented. That means that literally they work in the field, picking the crops that reach our tables, and they could be deported at any minute... We’re saying to farm workers, if you give us 19 years of your life picking our crops, we will give you a chance to be a citizen. I just heard that process characterized as amnesty. For people who are breaking their backs in the sweltering heat of America with the toughest jobs imaginable, spending 19 years of their life putting food on our table and then passing a criminal background check, some call amnesty. I won’t,” Durbin said.

A video of Durbin’s remarks on the Senate floor is available [here](#).

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