

Good Job Senate Judiciary Committee

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Yes, Senate Judiciary Committee did a good job on Immigration Reform Bill. Gail Collins in his NY Times Article said, "Immigration reform has been the 2013 bipartisan bright spot in the Senate, unless you were really moved by the day they voted to debate gun control before killing all the gun control plans. The committee members cheerfully plowed through 300-odd proposed amendments, while taking turns telling which country their great-grandfather came from. There was, of course, a lot of disagreement, although almost everybody seemed to enjoy slapping down ideas offered by Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama.

Mainstream Republicans have been super-energized to do immigration reform ever since the Hispanic vote went against them in the last election. Democracy does work. If somebody came up with a dramatic poll showing that all the people with diabetes, asthma and chronic back problems had voted against Mitt Romney, there would no longer be a problem getting funding for health care reform.

High points in the committee's long slog toward passage included a proposal from Tea Party icon Mike Lee of Utah to exempt employers of "cooks, waiters, butlers, housekeepers, governesses, maids, valets, baby sitters, janitors, laundresses, furnacemen, caretakers, handymen, gardeners, footmen, grooms, and chauffeurs of automobiles for family use" from checking to make sure their help had the proper legal status. It didn't go anywhere, but if you happen to run into Lee, feel free to say: "The butler did it."

It is, at minimum, a useful reminder of what lawmaking looked like back in the days when the two parties made deals and we complained that nobody was sticking to their principles. Back to the can-do days when senators routinely said things like Senator Orrin Hatch's explanation of his thinking on immigration: "I'm going to vote this bill out of committee because I've committed to do that."

The bill, which would give millions of undocumented residents a path toward eventual citizenship, now goes to the full Senate, where it actually looks as

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though it's going to pass. Any further progress would require cooperation from the House of Representatives, the circle of hell where the damned are condemned to spend eternity voting to repeal the health care reform law.

The House Republican leadership would probably rather have been working on something else. But the newer members whined that they'd hardly had any opportunities to vote to repeal Obamacare at all. "It sends a great statement back to our district," said Representative Ted Yoho, Republican of Florida, who many people enjoy quoting because they like saying Ted Yoho.

Also, it's hard for the Republicans to agree among themselves about anything else. One influential conservative organization recently urged Speaker John Boehner to drop the whole legislation idea completely and just hold committee hearings about the I.R.S. scandal and Benghazi forever.

"Recent events have rightly focused the nation's attention squarely on the actions of the Obama administration," argued the Heritage Action for America. "It is incumbent upon the House of Representatives to conduct oversight hearings on those actions, but it would be imprudent to do anything that shifts the focus from the Obama administration to the ideological differences within the House Republican conference."

For more information, please feel free to contact the Immigration and Nationality Lawyers at the NPZ Law Group at 201-670-0006 or by e-mailing us at info@visaserve.com.