



Is it fair to say the Senate immigration bill offers 'amnesty'?

By: Chris Moody – July 23, 2013

When the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration bill in June that offers immigrants living in the United States illegally a path to legal status and increases funding for border security, some critics wrote the measure off as “amnesty” for lawbreakers.

Those who oppose the effort argue that the bill does not go far enough to secure the border. Immigrants living in the country illegally, some also say, should be required to return to their home country, where they would have to apply for legal status through channels that already exist under current law.

The Senate bill, in contrast, offers a way for them to achieve legal status without leaving the U.S. But would the measure offer immigrants a free pass, or “amnesty,” as the bill’s opponents say it does?

A video from the Cato Institute (a think tank where, full disclosure, I once worked) aims to explain what the legalization process would look like under the Senate bill and makes clear that the “pathway” is no cakewalk.