

Reid: Immigration bill will pass Senate

By Meghashyam Mali - 02/03/13 10:50 AM ET

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) on Sunday said that immigration reform was “certainly going to pass” the upper chamber.

“It has to get done. We have to work hard to get it done,” said Reid in an interview aired on ABC’s “This Week.” “It’s really easy to write principles. To write legislation is much harder. And once we write the legislation, then you have to get it passed. But I think things are looking really good.

“This legislation is going to pass. If people are looking for excuses not to vote for it,” Reid added.

Reid’s comments come as momentum is growing for immigration reform on Capitol Hill. Last week a bipartisan group of senators introduced a framework for reform, which includes a path to citizenship for illegals and calls for tighter border security.

President Obama has also made immigration reform a “top priority” in his second term, unveiling his own principles during a speech in Las Vegas last week.

On the House side, another group of bipartisan lawmakers are also working on a proposal they hope to introduce soon.

But the momentum faces obstacles from GOP lawmakers who are opposed to measures granting illegal immigrants citizenship and want border-security issues addressed first.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) who joined in the bipartisan Senate blueprint has said Republicans will not back the measure unless they are assured that border security will be dealt with.

Democrats say that under the plan Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano would have final say on whether the border is secure enough for Washington to begin moving the nation’s 11 million illegal immigrants to legal status.

Reid, asked about Rubio’s remark that the government would need to have “operational control” over the border, said Sunday he was unsure of what that would entail.

“I don’t know what that means, and I don’t think he does, either. The fact is, we have some metrics we’re talking about, some numbers, and we can do that,” said Reid.

But Reid warned that Republicans would hurt themselves politically if they stood in the way of an immigration bill.

“It would be a bad day for our country and a bad day for the Republican Party if they continue standing in the way of this,” said Reid.

Read more: <http://thehill.com/video/senate/280739-reid-vows-immigration-reform-will-pass-senate#ixzz2JyeIRmVZ>