

Senate Democrats Plan June 10 Start on Immigration Bill

By Kathleen Hunter - May 28, 2013 3:12 PM CT

The Senate plans to start work during the week of June 10 on legislation to revise U.S. [immigration](#) law and create a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, a spokesman for Majority Leader [Harry Reid](#) said.

Spokesman Adam Jentleson said today that Democrats first want to complete work on legislation reauthorizing farm programs when the Senate returns next week from a one-week break. He said the chamber will then turn to the immigration measure, which the Judiciary Committee approved 13-5 on May 21.

The Senate measure, S.744, seeks to balance opening the door to U.S. citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants, sought by Democrats, with enough border-security improvements to satisfy Republicans. The measure includes an agreement reached last week between Democrats and Republican Senator [Orrin Hatch](#) of [Utah](#) on visas for high-skilled foreign workers.

“We would like to finish the farm bill next week so we can move on to immigration the week of the 10th,” Jentleson said in an e-mail. He said Reid, a Nevada Democrat, would “strongly prefer not to wait any longer” to begin working on the immigration bill.

[Senate Democrats](#) want to pass the immigration legislation before July 4.

Hispanic Voters

The last congressional bid to pass comprehensive immigration legislation stalled in 2007. Republicans are trying to reconnect with Hispanics after President [Barack Obama](#) won 71 percent of the constituency’s votes in his re-election in November.

Jentleson said there was “a strong possibility” that during work on the farm bill next week, the first amendment senators may consider would be a proposal to prevent a doubling of student loan interest rates on July 1.

Unless Congress acts, student loan interest rates will rise to 6.8 percent. Senate Democrats want to extend the current 3.4 percent rate for two years.

The Republican-controlled House on May 23 passed a bill that would peg new student-loan [interest rates](#) to yields on the 10-year Treasury note, meaning that the rates would fluctuate. It would also set maximum caps on those variable rates.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-05-28/senate-democrats-plan-july-10-start-on-immigration-bill.html>