

House Votes New Deadline For Immigrants

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Body

At President Bush's urging, the **House** overwhelmingly agreed today to extend a **deadline** for many illegal **immigrants** to apply for legal residency in the United States without first having to return to their country of origin.

In a bipartisan **vote**, 336 to 43, the **House** approved a measure to give some 200,000 illegal **immigrants** with family or employer sponsors four more months to file to adjust their status. As many as 400,000 other **immigrants** met the original filing **deadline**, April 30.

Action on the bill now shifts to the Senate, where the majority leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi, favors a six-month extension, and a bipartisan bill, backed by Charles E. Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton, both of **New** York, calls for extending the **deadline** by a year.

The divergent views in the **House** and Senate will probably force the White **House** to pick sides among competing Republican-backed plans.

The provision at issue, Section 245i, allows eligible foreigners to apply for legal residency without first leaving their jobs and families here, provided they pay a \$1,000 penalty. Normally, **immigrants** must apply for legal residency at American consulates in their home countries.

Earlier this month, Mr. Bush asked Congressional leaders to extend the date for eligible **immigrants** who missed the cutoff, blaming, in part, the government's failure to issue until late March instructions on how the provision would be carried out.

Other Republican leaders, including Gov. George E. Pataki of **New** York and Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of **New** York, also urged Congress to reopen the window of opportunity for illegal **immigrants** to seek the temporary benefit, in an effort to help buff the party's tarnished image with **immigrants**. Mr. Giuliani has said he would like to make the provision permanent.

In a sign of the bill's importance to Republicans, the **House** leadership rushed the measure to the floor today, without committee hearings, under an expedited procedure that limits debate and bars amendments but also requires a two-thirds **vote** for approval.

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