

NEW PUSH ON IMMIG REFORM. Nothing seems good enough for critics these days, Obama says

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Body

PRESIDENT **OBAMA** yesterday blasted opponents of his immigration **reform** plan as chronically unsatisfied by any and all attempts to protect our nation's borders.

Speaking in the border city of El Paso, Tex., the President urged passage of the DREAM Act as part of his **reform** package - and urged Americans to express their support for the change.

"Yes, we can!" the enthusiastic Lone Star State crowd chanted in response.

White House aides claim momentum is building for **reform**, but congressional sources **say** prospects in the GOP-controlled House are bleak.

The President, in shirt-sleeves, **said** even his administration's enforcement crackdowns along the nation's borders aren't **enough** for his **critics**.

"They'll **say** we need to triple the Border Patrol," he **said**. "Or quadruple the Border Patrol. They'll **say** we need a higher fence to support **reform**."

"Maybe they'll want a moat. Or they'll want alligators in the moat," he added.

The President invoked the names of immigrants past, like Albert Einstein, I.M. Pei, Isaac Asimov and Andrew Carnegie, in urging support for the immigrants of the **new** millennium.

"We are fighting for every boy and girl . . . with a dream and potential just waiting to be tapped," the President **said**.

"We are fighting to unlock that promise, and all that it holds not just for their futures, but for the future of this great country."

He encouraged people to sign up at whitehouse.gov to show their support for **reform**, and he put in a plug for the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act.

The proposal would allow some undocumented youths to obtain legal residence status.

Rep. Lamar Smith **said Obama** was missing the boat in his speech.

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"The President is right that we are a nation of immigrants, but we are a nation of legal immigrants," **said** the Texas Republican.

Obama specifically cited Mayor Bloomberg for his support of **reform** - and Hizzoner hailed the President for taking on the contentious issue.

"He has spoken out more and more, and that's exactly what this country needs," the mayor **said** Tuesday. "We are a country built by immigrants. We are a superpower because of immigrants."

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Graphic

President **Obama** waves during immigration **reform** speech at Chamizal National Memorial Park in El Paso, Tex. In his address, he called for passage of the DREAM Act, to aid undocumented immigrants. Photo by AP

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