

## **KENNEDY FIGHTS BILLS THAT WOULD RESTRICT IMMIGRATION**

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### **Body**

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**BILLS** ADVANCING through the Senate would make it much more difficult for immigrants to bring families to the United States - and would put a heavier financial burden on Americans who want aging foreign parents to join them.

The Senate Judiciary subcommittee on **immigration** voted 5-2 Wednesday to send its version of **immigration** legislation to the full committee, where Sen. Edward **Kennedy**, D-Mass., the ranking minority party member, is expected to put up a fierce **fight** against several provisions.

**Kennedy** hinted at the coming battle - likely sometime next year - by saying, "Many of the reforms in the **bill** before us are urgently needed."

"But I am concerned that other proposals will hurt American families by limiting the ability of U.S. citizens to bring their parents and other close family members here as lawful immigrants," he said.

The Senate subcommittee's legislation, offered by Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., seeks to reduce the total number of immigrants who can legally come to this country, besides refugees, from the current 675,000 a year to about 525,000.

That would break down to 75,000 immigrants coming to fill jobs and 450,000 relatives of U.S. citizens.

The proposed law would exclude the adult married children and adult brothers and sisters of American citizens from the category of relatives' sponsorship.

Also, the **bill** would require prior proof as a form of enforcement of a clause that says sponsors must be responsible for the health care and other associated welfare-related costs for their elderly parents.

"It's unclear whether anyone can even buy that kind of coverage," said Jeanne Butterfield, a lawyer with the American **Immigration** Lawyers Association, which opposes the measure.

But, she said, it would mean that an American seeking to bring an elderly parent to this country would have to prove that he or she could pay between \$ 7,000 and \$ 13,000 a year for health insurance for each parent for the rest of his or her life.

Lobbyist Rosemary Jenks of the pro-reform Center for **Immigration** Studies said, however, that the clause covers only about a five-year period. Then immigrants 75 or older would be eligible for many social services.

Still, she argued, the **bill** would force children to be responsible for their parents' support.

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## Graphic

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PHOTO; Photo Headshot- (Edward) Kennedy

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**Person:** TED KENNEDY (74%)

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