

## **White House issues correction after Bush misspeaks on 'amnesty'**

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### **Body**

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WASHINGTON -- President **Bush misspoke** Tuesday about the immigration bill he supports and triggered a rare **White House correction**.

Hours before the Senate voted to proceed with debate on the bill, **Bush** goofed by appearing to say the measure included **amnesty** for illegal immigrants. It's a point he has long denied.

The bill would create a path to citizenship for many illegal immigrants. Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., and other critics say that is **amnesty**.

"**Amnesty** means that you've got to pay a price for having been here illegally, and this bill does that," **Bush** said at a meeting of **White House** staff and bill supporters. A few spectators chuckled at **Bush**'s gaffe, and the comment quickly appeared on websites and TV.

The **White House** press office swung into action, e-mailing a statement from spokesman Tony Snow that said "President **Bush misspoke**." Snow said interpreting **Bush**'s comment at the **White House** meeting as an endorsement of **amnesty** "is the exact opposite of the president's long-held and often-stated position."

Snow noted that **Bush** decried the "rhetoric" about the immigration proposal and pointed out that it contains fines and other penalties for immigrants who have entered the USA illegally.

"**Amnesty** means forgiving wrongdoing without imposing punishment," Snow said. "The immigration reforms passed in 1986 granted **amnesty**. The legislation under consideration this year does not."

### **Graphic**

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PHOTO, B/W, Saul Loeb, AFP/Getty Images

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