

Protesters condemn amnesty plan; OPPOSED TO BILL IN SENATE

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Waving handwritten signs that proclaimed ``No **Amnesty**," a handful of activists braved a light rain in Fremont on Friday evening to protest legislation that would create a process for undocumented immigrants to earn U.S. citizenship.

``I'm not for stopping all immigration. But if we give **amnesty** to people who came here illegally, we are sending the message that it's OK to break the law," said Dave Sander, a 40-year-old industrial painter who waved an American flag at Mowry Avenue and Fremont Boulevard.

Sander and about 15 other **protesters** said they decided to speak out after a week in which President Bush called both for cracking down on illegal border crossings and for creating a legalization process for immigrants already here.

The U.S. **Senate** appears close to adopting such a **plan**, although it must be reconciled with a House of Representatives **bill** that would instead make illegal immigration a felony, punished by time in prison.

Protesters said they support the House **bill**, and were dismayed by Bush's proposal even though the president insisted it was not ``**amnesty**." He called for imposing civil fines while letting undocumented immigrants apply for citizenship behind people who have entered the country legally.

Homemaker Eileen Williams said her husband's roofing company loses business to competing firms that hire undocumented workers at lower cost. She said a prison sentence would discourage people from coming to this country illegally.

``Lawful immigration is OK, but when I see any breach of the law, I get upset," said Chetan Hari, a 70-year-old engineering technician who came to the United States legally from India in 1996. Now a U.S. citizen, he held a sign that said ``Deport all illegals" and added: ``The law is what makes this country strong."

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