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The Senate held a procedural vote this morning on a motion to invoke cloture on the Senate's review of the immigration reform act. The motion failed and the bill has been withdrawn from the Senate floor.

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Global Edition

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Comprehensive Immigration Reform Effort Dead for Now

By Rodney A. Malpert and Chadwick M. Graham

The effort for comprehensive immigration reform in the Senate ended today after Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's (D-NV) motion for cloture was soundly defeated this morning. The motion for cloture, which ends debate and the presenting of additional amendments, failed 46-53, falling far short of the requisite 60 votes. In the wake of this defeat, Senator Reid withdrew the bill from the Senate floor.

With the majority of Republicans and a significant number of Democrats voting against cloture, this bill was clearly on tenuous ground. Part of the reluctance to move forward to a final vote is likely attributable to the clay pigeon amendment advanced by Senator Reid. The "clay pigeon" procedure, named for its analogy to the clay targets used in skeet shooting, is a rarely used tactic that amasses multiple proposals into a single amendment.

The clay pigeon amendment presented by Senator Reid compiled 22 hand-picked amendments into a single colossal amendment that was just under 400 pages. There was an outcry by numerous Republican leaders against the clay pigeon process, since it limited their ability to present amendments.

While it seems unlikely that comprehensive immigration reform will again find its way to the Senate floor this year, we will continue to monitor the aftermath of the Senate vote and provide updates if and when additional action on the matter is forthcoming.

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