

Fragmented U.S. immigration bill wallowing

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Partisan politics and procedural rules are leading to no progress in renewed U.S. Senate debate on piecemeal immigration reform. Last month, President George Bush's omnibus overhaul was defeated in the Democrat-controlled Congress, and the bill was broken into various elements, several of which are drawn along party lines. On Wednesday, a Republican effort to authorize \$3 billion for new border security and immigration enforcement was voted down 52-44 based on Democrats' objections over legislative rules involving legislation containing appropriations, the Washington Times reported Thursday. The division in both houses is based on Republicans wanting to give top priority to security, and Democrats seeking legalization for illegal college students and agriculture workers, the newspaper said. Bush had proposed a path to citizenship for the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the country, but conservatives decried that as a form of amnesty. Bush has said a guest-worker program is also needed to take pressure off the border and he has rejected the conservatives' push to deport illegal immigrants.

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