

# WALL STREET JOURNAL

## IMMIGRATION DEBATE TO TOUCH ON SAME-SEX RIGHTS

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May 5, 2013

WASHINGTON—Senators began laying the groundwork on Sunday for formal debate on immigration overhaul legislation in the coming week, including a provision that would grant immigration rights to same-sex couples.

Sen. Dick Durbin, an Illinois Democrat who was part of a group that negotiated the immigration proposal moving through the Senate, warned on CNN that the group didn't have a "specific agreement among the eight of us about this particular issue" and stopped short of a full endorsement of immigration rights for same-sex couples.

"I support this, and I hope that we can find a way through it that preserves immigration reform," Mr. Durbin said. But he added that both sides may have parts of the bill they don't like. "We reached a compromise," he said. "We've got to basically stick to the standard of what we've established."

Sen. Patrick Leahy, the Vermont Democrat who has championed the measure, said he did not believe it threatened the prospects of the overall immigration package.

"We've had about ten different things that people say will kill it," he said on NBC. "The fact is there are a lot of people who want to kill an immigration bill no matter what... People can vote for or against any one of these amendments."

Meanwhile former Sen. Jim DeMint, a South Carolina Republican who left Congress at the beginning of the year to become president of the conservative Heritage Foundation, signaled that he would not be letting up on his efforts to block the overhaul.

Mr. DeMint said that his think tank would be releasing a report this week arguing the immigration proposals would "cost Americans trillions of dollars" as unauthorized immigrants gain legal status and become eligible for government benefits. "The study you'll see from Heritage this week presents a staggering cost of another amnesty in our country," Mr. DeMint said on ABC.