

# Statesman

## **Fact check: Trump blasts Democrats for ‘open borders’ bill that doesn’t exist**

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President Donald Trump went to Kansas to rally for Republicans seeking election in November and in the process made false claims about Democrats signing on to a purported “open borders bill.”

“Every single Democrat in the U.S. Senate has signed up for the open borders, and it’s a bill, it’s called the ‘open borders bill.’ What’s going on? And it’s written by, guess who? Dianne Feinstein,” Trump said Saturday in Topeka.

Overall, Trump portrayed Democrats as too extreme and radical for public office and cast fear that if the alleged Democratic bill ever became law, “a tidal wave of drugs and crime would pour into our nation like never, ever before.”

There are layers of falsehoods to what Trump said. A main one? There’s no “open borders bill.”

Trump is misrepresenting a bill introduced in June by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., called the Keep Families Together Act. The intention of that bill isn’t to create open borders, but to prevent the separation of immigrant families arriving at U.S. borders.

We’ve fact-checked other Republican attacks on this bill and its companion in the U.S. House of Representatives. A False claim in Missouri said the bill “would give a free pass to any illegal immigrant who brings a child to the border.” Similarly, a False claim in Arizona about the House bill said it was “essentially encouraging child trafficking.”

Here are the facts.

Feinstein introduced the Keep Families Together Act at the height of family separations caused by Trump’s “zero-tolerance” immigration policy.

The bill sought to prohibit federal agents and officers from separating a child from a parent or legal guardian at or near a port of entry or within 100 miles of U.S. borders.

Separations would be allowed under specific circumstances: if the child is a victim of trafficking or at significant risk of it; if there’s a strong likelihood that the adult is not the parent; or if the

child is in danger of abuse or neglect. State courts and state or county child welfare agencies could also separate a child from a parent if it's in the child's best interest.

The point of Feinstein's bill is to prohibit separations as a policy to deter immigrants from coming to the United States, "or for the policy goal of promoting compliance with civil immigration laws."

"The bill would not grant illegal immigrants a 'pass' — free or otherwise — to enter or live legally or illegally in the United States," David Bier, an immigration policy analyst at the libertarian Cato Institute think tank told us for a similar Missouri fact-check.

Immigration experts have also told us that the Senate and House versions of Keep Families Together Act don't prohibit the removal or detention of adults and families. The proposals also don't supersede immigration laws. Immigrants would still have to go through proceedings to prove any claims for asylum or other relief.

Feinstein's bill also calls for annual reports on family separations. Such reports would include whether an adult was charged with a crime, the type of crime, if the adult was prosecuted, and the outcome.

Our ruling:

Trump said, "Every single Democrat in the U.S. Senate has signed up for the open borders, and it's a bill, it's called the 'open borders bill'," written by Feinstein.

There is no such bill.

The bill introduced by Feinstein, and supported by all Senate Democrats, is meant to stop family separations at the border. The measure does not eliminate the enforcement of immigration laws. Trump gave an inaccurate and misleading description of the bill.

We rate his statement False.