



Opinion: Immigration reform is a conservative issue

by Emily Benavides

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Immigration reform is the popular issue right now, both with the general public and the conservative base. The American people understand that the current immigration system is broken, and that it must be overhauled. They also support a methodical, transparent, deliberate approach to solving our immigration problems – the approach that is currently underway in the House of Representatives.

We're lucky to have conservative leaders like Paul Ryan, Mario Diaz-Balart, and Eric Cantor leading the charge in the House to secure our borders, increase the flow of legal immigrants, and deal sensibly with the undocumented population already in the country.

As Paul Ryan said recently on CBS News' Face the Nation, "We should approach this issue based on what's the right thing to do, what's the right policy."

House Republicans are crafting legislation, like Majority Leader Cantor's KIDS Act, that will give the Dreamer children legal status so that they can continue to contribute to the economic prosperity of the country they call home.

At the same time, many conservative think tanks and groups are active in immigration advocacy. The Hispanic Leadership Network, along with our sister organizations the American Action Network and American Action Forum, has partnered with Americans for Tax Reform, the American Conservative Union, as well as business groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce along with the libertarian Cato Institute. This is an issue that brings us together, this is an issue that affects every American.

Smart immigration reform will help our economy. Conservative economists believe that reform would significantly reduce the deficit and grow the economy.

The conservative American Action Network just released district-by-district numbers on just how many jobs would be created by benchmark immigration reform. The results are astounding. You want a real job creation program; you can have one in true immigration reform. No single district had less than 7,000 jobs gained by 2023, some had as many as 19,000 jobs created. It's clear that good immigration policy is good economic policy.

The House of Representatives is addressing immigration reform. Yes, it is taking longer than in the Senate. However, the House is a separate chamber with different realities, needs, and approaches. The process will be longer but in the end I'm confident the House will pass substantive reform elements. Right now, House members are at home in their districts hearing how supportive everyone is of true immigration reform.

House Democrats who refuse to support anything less than a comprehensive bill will be the ones that kill any chance at immigration reform this year. There is a real opportunity for reform, the time is now and we can't afford to let the demands of the Democrats get in the way of the needs of the American people.

House Republicans are leading the way to the economic benefits of immigration reform and they have a great conservative support network behind them.

Immigration reform is a conservative issue and conservatives will see it through.

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