

Trump ‘likes’ idea of sending undocumented immigrants to sanctuary cities as Dems accuse him of causing ‘chaos’

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Donald Trump is still considering moving immigrants to sanctuary cities such as New York — whether or not that’s legal or even an effective solution to what the president considers to be a national emergency.

“Let’s spread out some of that burden and let’s put it in some of those other locations if that’s what they want to see happen and are refusing to actually help fix the problem,” White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders told ABC’s “This Week” on Sunday.

Sanders said that despite White House officials saying last week that the idea has been shot down, Trump “likes it” and wants to explore the plan. She added that the idea is “not our first choice, probably not even our second or third choice,” but that it remains a consideration.

Trump does not seem discouraged by the fact his former homeland security secretary, Kirstjen Nielsen, reviewed the idea and determined it would not be legal to send immigrants to sanctuary cities. Nielsen submitted her resignation April 7 and was gone three days later.

“This Week” host George Stephanopoulos suggested the idea is inherently flawed as many immigrants strive to make their way to big cities where there are more job opportunities. Critics of the administration, including 2020 presidential Democratic candidate Pete Buttigieg, have suggested Trump’s decision to cut aid to several Central American countries is “self-defeating” and may also lead to more immigrants heading to the U.S.

“I don’t understand why the president’s attracted to it at all,” Stephanopoulos said.

Sanders shifted the burden back to congressional Democrats, challenging them to propose an alternative to sending immigrants to sanctuary cities, which often skew Democratic.

“We need to take away some of that burden on all of the communities that are along the border, like San Diego and El Paso, and look at other options,” Sanders said. “Again, not our first choice. Ideally, Congress would fix the problem.”

Later on “This Week,” House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Bennie Thompson accused Trump of manufacturing a problem so that he could solve it.

“This is again his manufactured chaos he’s created over the last two years on the border,” Thompson said. “Before Donald Trump took office, we had a situation that was manageable. We had spikes, but it also went down. But what we have now is a constant pushing of the system so that it doesn’t work.”

The number of immigrants coming into the U.S. through Mexico between 2010 and 2017 dropped by 1.3 million people, according to the Center for Migration Studies. President Trump nevertheless declared a state of emergency in February, requesting federal funds to build a wall across the southern border of the U.S. Construction of that barrier was one of the President's most controversial campaign promises in 2016.

The Cato Institute estimates that wall would cost American taxpayers nearly \$60 billion. That's more than 500% higher than President Trump's most conservative estimate. Trump also promised on multiple occasions that Mexico would pay for a border wall. He has since stated caveats through which Mexico might indirectly contribute funding to a barrier at the border.