



Conservatives push Ryan for vote on hardline immigration bill

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Washington (CNN)As Senate moderates pushed their leader to make a commitment to have a bipartisan immigration vote, House conservatives on Tuesday were pushing their leadership to tack to the right on the issue.

The Republican Study Committee, an influential group of more than 150 Republicans, on Tuesday will announce it has voted to support an immigration bill from conservative hardliners and will push for a vote on the legislation, setting up a potential showdown between the House and Senate on the issue.

The nearly two-dozen-strong steering committee of the RSC voted to make the decision to back the bill, which also would extend the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, from committee and subcommittee chairmen Bob Goodlatte, Mike McCaul, Raul Labrador and Martha McSally, and warned against cutting a deal with Democrats behind conservatives' backs.

"The Securing America's Future Act is the framework to strengthen border security, increase interior enforcement and resolve the DACA situation," the steering committee said in a statement. "We believe an eventual stand alone floor vote is essential. We oppose any process for a DACA solution that favors a backroom deal with Democrats over regular order in the House."

The move follows a commitment secured by the House Freedom Caucus, a smaller group of conservatives, in exchange for their votes on government funding for leadership to whip the bill. Those efforts to push the House to the right could complicate efforts to reach an immigration compromise in Congress, as moderates in the Senate convinced Republican leadership during the weekend shutdown to make a commitment to move to an open floor debate in the Senate on immigration if no deal is reached.

The Goodlatte proposal contains a number of contentious provisions that would be difficult to pass with even just Republican votes, including mandatory worker verification, cracking down on sanctuary cities, changing asylum thresholds and cutting legal immigration to the US by 25%, according to bill authors. An analysis by the libertarian CATO Institute on the bill estimated the cuts to legal immigration at more than 40%.

The leader of the RSC, North Carolina Rep. Mark Walker, acknowledged the bill may need some work to get to the majority of 218 votes, but said it's where leadership should begin.

"Are we at 218, I'm not pretending that we are, but I believe this is the direction we should be headed," Walker said. "I think ultimately (a vote) is our ask. The only other things that we have seen out there are pieces of legislation that, though well intended, may garner 20 or 25 Republican votes here or there. That's why we believe this is the framework to get things moving."