



Americans stand with Stephen Miller on immigration, not Lindsey Graham

Ryan Girdusky

January 25, 2018

On Tuesday, it was announced that Lindsey Graham is stepping aside from leading bipartisan negotiations on what to do with the nearly 800,000 illegal immigrants shielded from deportation by the soon-to-end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. The South Carolina senator hit a wall after the White House announced that his plan with Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., was “dead on arrival.” Graham went out kicking and screaming, complaining that President Trump’s senior adviser Stephen Miller was derailing talks.

“As long as Stephen Miller’s in charge of negotiating immigration, we’re going nowhere,” Graham said to CNN on Sunday. “He’s been an outlier for years. There’s a deal to be had, DACA plus for more border security funding. ... And we’re going to have to do something with legal immigration increases, because we don’t have the workers we need.”

Graham has been supporting bills that reward illegal immigrants, expand legal immigration, and leave our borders wide open for future waves of unauthorized migration for well over a decade.

None of these bills have succeeded and in large part because Graham’s positions are outliers and people like Stephen Miller, Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., and Trump are more in touch with the American people.

The Graham-Durbin plan, presented to the White House as a “bipartisan compromise,” could only be considered as a moderate approach by open border zealots. It would have granted U.S. citizenship to all the DACA recipients, granted legal protection for their illegal immigrant parents, allowed them to sponsor distant relatives through chain migration, maintained the Diversity Visa Lottery, while only giving the president about \$1.6 billion for building a border wall and only in areas where current fencing already existed.

This bill would have granted legalization to upwards of 8 million people and caused a massive run on the border, not to mention the millions of new people who would be sponsored by the DACAs once they obtain citizenship.

Americans have never supported a massive increase in legal immigration and are strongly in favor of most of the president’s reforms that end the Diversity Visa Program, chain migration, and enact E-Verify.

Gallup has polled Americans on their position on legal immigration dating back to the 1960s and there has never been a single time where a majority or even a plurality of Americans have wanted immigration levels increased. Furthermore, a Harvard-Harris poll released on Jan. 20 showed that a supermajority of Americans wanted legal immigration reduced from its current level, with a plurality wanting it reduced by over 75 percent.

The Harvard-Harris poll also found that 65 percent of Americans supported proposals being offered by Virginia Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., in the House: work permits for DACA recipients in exchange for the end to chain migration in favor of a merit-based system, eliminating the diversity visa lottery, and funding border security.

Goodlatte's bill also cuts legal immigration by about 40 percent from nearly 1 million a year to about 700,000, bringing legal immigration to its lowest level since the 1990s according to the pro-immigration CATO Institute. A far cry from the amount the American people want according to the Harvard-Harris poll, but that's what makes it a compromise.

According to the Washington Post, Miller has been supportive of the Goodlatte bill and trying to get other conservatives to sign on.

The American people overall, and Republicans especially, stand with Miller, Cotton, and Trump: Legal immigration needs to be cut, the border needs to be enforced, and this constant crisis of illegal immigration needs to come to an end.

Graham is the outlier, standing with a handful of Republican senators indebted to their corporate donors and Democrats who hope that they will import enough new voters that they'll never lose another election.

It's possible that, had Graham supported an immigration policy that was popular with voters, he would have done better when he ran for President in 2016.