

Biden's Closed Door Immigration Policies Are Not 'Open Borders'

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Last week, 51 House Republicans sent a letter to President Biden asserting that his new immigration policies amount to “open borders.” The charge is laughably absurd. Except for a couple of months last year, Biden is maintaining the most closed border policy in the history of the United States. Whether you’re a documented or undocumented immigrant, it’s nearly impossible to come to America.

The fact that Biden’s political opponents will still hang the “open borders” label on him shows that he is foolish not to act on his campaign promises to immediately restore America’s immigration system.

Sure, Biden stopped building Trump’s border wall, but few seriously thought it did anything other than perhaps redirect a few arrivals. Most crossers want to seek asylum — a legal status for those facing persecution. But the Trump administration enacted a web of policies designed to keep them from crossing legally or receiving that status, and Biden has kept nearly all of them.

Trump adopted a policy known as “metering” whereby he stopped accepting all but a trickle of asylum applicants at ports, creating crowds waiting south of the border. Port inspectors stand in the middle of the bridge and physically block potential applicants, sending them back into Mexico. Biden has not only maintained the “metering” policy — his team reportedly plans to keep it long into the future.

If you can’t cross legally — and staying in Mexico means you and your children face homelessness, destitution, and serious criminality (even murder) — many illegally cross around the ports to apply for asylum. Trump had only one idea to deal with them: lock them up and kick them out as quickly as possible.

Despite his so-called “deportation moratorium,” Biden has continued to detain and deport recent crossers. He is continuing a Trump policy known as “expulsion” under which the Border Patrol arrests anyone who crosses illegally and drives the immigrants to a port of entry and pushes the immigrants back into Mexico. Expelled immigrants receive no hearing, no lawyer, no due process — just a shove to the spine.

What about legal immigration? Surely Biden has opened the borders for them? Sadly, he has not. Yes, he did revoke Trump’s discriminatory “Muslim ban” based on phony security concerns, but he has maintained even worse policies that make that recission almost meaningless.

Biden has continued a Trump ban on nearly all temporary work visas and all immigrant visas — mainly for close relatives like parents, adult children, and siblings of U.S citizens as well as the

spouses and young children of legal permanent residents. Even the highest skilled workers are subject to this ban, which reduced *legal* immigration from abroad by about 90 percent.

Trump said that immigrants would take jobs from Americans. At the time, Biden criticized this protectionist thinking. But now he has continued the bans and even defended them in court. Last week, the government said more than 290,000 families were waiting for visa appointments abroad, but the government had scheduled just 262 — a tenth of a percent — and families are only a small portion of the demand for visas.

In fact, Biden may have made the situation worse for legal immigrants. On almost his last day in office, Trump announced he'd end travel bans mainly targeting European countries. But Biden not only reinstated them — he added more countries to the list.

Biden has been in office for less than a month. Many people keep saying “give him time.” But what's concerning isn't that Biden hasn't “gotten around to immigration yet.” It's that he has, and is intentionally choosing to perpetuate one of the worst immigration regimes in American history.

These aren't the policies that Americans voted for. Americans certainly didn't vote for “open borders,” but they did vote to reject Trump's cruel and unnecessary closed door policies. Biden clearly isn't getting any kudos from the Trump crowd, so there's no political reason to keep these policies around. He should end them today.

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