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Trump pushes back on immigration, tells Republicans what he wants them to do

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WASHINGTON -- Rather than negotiate with congressional Democrats on immigration legislation, President Donald Trump urged his fellow Republicans to abandon the issue until next year.

Trump's latest tweets came after the Republican-controlled House failed to attract enough Republican support to pass a hard-line immigration bill that mirrored the president's positions.

The measure would have used taxpayer dollars to fund a border wall Trump promised Mexico would pay for and tightened immigration rules while not offering a path to citizenship for the "dreamers," undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children.

Polls, however, indicate that Trump's immigration policies are unpopular with U.S. voters.

In a Quinnipiac University poll released Monday, two-thirds opposed Trump's now-discontinued policy of separating kids from their parents when they cross the border; 79 percent supported allowing the dreamers to become citizens, even though Trump revoked the protection against deportation granted to them by President Barack Obama, and two-thirds said the 11 million unauthorized immigrants now in the U.S. should be given a path to citizenship.

Meanwhile, a majority of voters, 58 percent, opposed Trump's border wall, with only 39 percent in support.

House GOP leaders, having blocked an effort by more moderate Republicans and Democrats to bring a bipartisan immigration bill to the floor, have been scrambling to gin up enough support for their own bill designed to bridge the gap between member of their own party.

Neither Trump nor House Republican leaders have reached out to Democrats and compromise in order to get the votes they need.

Trump rejected earlier bipartisan efforts to strengthen border security and allow the dreamers to remain. He said he did not want people from "shithole countries" to come to the U.S.

Instead, Trump has blamed the Democrats for refusing to acquiesce to his demands on immigration.

Despite Trump's claims that unchecked immigration was breeding crime, a detailed analysis in the publication Criminology refuted those assertions.

"The results of our study call into question claims that undocumented immigration increases violent crime," the report said. "If anything, the data suggest the opposite."

Likewise, the libertarian Cato Institute studied 951 homicide convictions in Texas in 2015 and reported that the conviction rate for native-born Americans was 3.9 per 100,000 people, higher than the rates of 2.9 for unauthorized immigrants and 0.5 for immigrants legally in the U.S.