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### The Big Question: Should Dems push immigration reform?

By Sydelle Moore - 04/20/10 01:35 PM ET

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Some of the nation's top political commentators, legislators and intellectuals offer insight into the biggest question burning up the blogosphere today.

Today's question:

#### Should Democrats push immigration reform before November 2010?

**Daniel Griswold**, director of the Cato Institute's Center for Trade Policy Studies, said:

Congress can and should pass comprehensive immigration reform in 2010. Any legislation worthy of the name would:

- 1) offer legalization to undocumented workers who have been here for several years, pass a security check, and pay a reasonable fine and back taxes;
- 2) create a temporary-visa program sufficient to meet future labor needs of a growing economy; and
- 3) enforce the law against those who still insist on working outside the system, but in a way that does not restrict the freedom of American citizens.

Reform would reduce illegal immigration by offering a legal alternative. It would tighten border security by allowing U.S. agents to focus on intercepting real criminals and terrorists, not dishwashers and gardeners. And it would expand output, investment, and job opportunities for middle-class Americans. Polls show a majority of Americans will accept the three-fold approach to reform. Recent elections confirm that support for reform is a modest plus with swing voters, and a huge plus with Hispanics. This is an issue where both major parties can work together to fix our immigration system in a way that boosts the economy, enhances security, and expands liberty.

**Frank Askin**, professor of law at Rutgers University, said:

Not unless there can be a bipartisan solution. There are too many other significant issues (finance reform, energy reform, economic stimulus, Supreme

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Court nominee) that must take precedence and another filibuster on immigration would be devastating.

**Justin Raimondo**, editorial director of Antiwar.com, said:

The Democrats should push immigration "reform" if they want to further alienate Middle America and engage in an orgy of "Republicans-are-raaaaaacist" posturing. If they want to salvage what's left of their electoral prospects, they'll stay away from the issue altogether. There is no upside for the Dems on this issue: they risk losing their multicultural constituency if they so much as hint they want to limit immigration, and they risk losing the middle American majority if they cave to the PC crowd. It's a lose-lose situation.

**Craig Newmark**, founder of Craigslist.org, said:

We're pretty much all immigrants, or children of them, in this country, and believe that you should treat people like you want to be treated.

Immigration reform just reflects those values.

**John F. McManus**, president of The John Birch Society, said:

The Democrats will likely push for immigration reform (which means amnesty for 11-20 million) before the November election because they expect to be routed when the votes are counted this Fall. They know that they had better attempt this now because it won't go anywhere in the new Congress.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has already announced that he will bring the topic before the Senate prior to Memorial Day. He has written a bill that calls for amnesty and for "other purposes."

But let's not blame only Democrats for what seems for the coming attempt to reward the millions of lawbreakers. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) is working with Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) to produce a bill that will include not only amnesty for these millions but also require an ID card for every worker - illegal immigrant or not. It will also speed the process of getting all these illegal entrants on the voting rolls.

Graham, derisively labeled "Gramnesty" by irate South Carolinians, has long championed amnesty for the border crossers. In doing so, he is allying himself with top SEIU executive Eliseo Medina who has openly stated his desire to get millions amnestied and on to the voting rolls. He happens to be a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, the U.S. branch of the Socialist International begun by Karl Marx in the 1860s. There's a lot more than amnesty behind this threat.

A famous example of what amnesty will do occurred when Congress passed and President Reagan signed an amnesty bill in 1986. Proponents of the measure insisted that there would never again be a need for amnesty for illegal entrants to our country. But the measure promptly stimulated a flood of new border crossers. Rewarding lawbreakers has always stimulated more breaking of the law, no matter the law.

The important issues in the Fall elections will be the economy, the healthcare monstrosity, and yes, illegal immigration. There will even be some Democrats opposing immigration reform as they hope to win reelection.

**Damon N. Spiegel**, entrepreneur and writer, said:

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The Democrats should push for immigration reform to help them win the Latino vote as they'll need anything and everything they can get their hands on to remain the majority.

Comments (34)

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Who is going to pay for all of the illegal immigrants education and health care. Are they just going to continue to get it for free. Will they have to pay taxes like everyone else?

BY JOHN on 04/20/2010 at 14:20

Most of the illegals in this country are men who have large families back home that they support. If you make these men citizens then they automatically have a legal right to sponsor the rest of their family (wife, children, brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents) members for citizenship. In a flash, you go from 11 million new citizens to perhaps as many as 50 million new citizens. How can you do that when 25 million Americans are un- or under-employed right now? We might as well just annex Mexico.

BY BC on 04/20/2010 at 14:29

I don't see any 2010 upside for the Democrats either. But I know one thing: illegal or legal, people are going to keep on immigrating here. Farms and factories, among many other industries, rely on cheap "illegal" labor and, despite the politics, those big businesses will keep recruiting immigrants. And those immigrants will keep living their lives as best they can, no matter what we think of them. How many hundreds of thousands of new American citizens are being born to undocumented immigrants each year? Either we legalize this shadow community and tax it and regulate it and intergrate it... or we wait another 10 years or so for enough young American Latinos to reach voting age.

BY BRENDAN on 04/20/2010 at 14:44

Of course they should push immigration reform. In fact, they are not going far enough. Let's send planes and boats all over the world, and let everyone come to America legally and as fast as possible. If we double our population in one year, with dependent people, then we should be able to hasten our descent into third-world status, as the Progressives/Liberals/Democrats want for us. This way we won't have to prolong the agony.

BY SCOTTIE on 04/20/2010 at 15:11

Brendon, we need to give people currently on welfare a choice: Go to work in these open jobs or we cut off your benefits. The addiction of American businesses, particularly the construction industry (which went gaga building all the millions of houses that started the whole housing crisis in the first place), has distorted the social order of Mexico to the point where there no longer exists a middle class in Mexico. Is this neighborly behavior?

BY BC on 04/20/2010 at 15:12

immigrants are not asking for auto citizenship, what they want its be able to work freely so they can contribute in a better way to make this country bigger. I believe most of the people who speak against immigration reform are the ones that not even pay taxes

BY SALOMON on 04/20/2010 at 15:13

Solomon, what do you think of a "time sharing" system where undocumented workers can work in the U.S. for four months out of each year, then return to Mexico to work for eight months - building houses and improving living conditions at home. An immigrant working in the U.S. can make enough in three years to retire back in Mexico. That distorts everything! We need to let them work here but only on the condition that they use their skills and their money to go back to their families and to build nice houses and develop safe middle-class communities there. There is no reason at all that Mexico cannot become just as nice a place to live as the U.S. - better!

BY WH CLARK on 04/20/2010 at 15:35

Rasmussen polling consistently shows that nearly 70% of American voters want border enforcement and not amnesty. So despite the hyperbole from the pro-amnesty interests, only a small % of the population wants amnesty. The Democrats should ignore them and instead appropriately focus on unemployed working class Americans.

BY NO AMNESTY on 04/20/2010 at 15:38

Failure to reform illegal immigration will only add to the skyrocketing costs of health care. Craig, We know we are all immigrants. In fact, immigrants have made great contributions to our nation but only because they immigrated legally. Why should illegal immigrants be allowed to bypass all of the requirements that legal immigrants are willing and happy to fulfill? Illegal immigration is going continue out of control because we hand to them on a silver platter what other immigrants had to work for?

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