



Trump to be 'special guest' during House GOP Immigration Conference

June 19, 2018

President Donald Trump supports both Republican immigration bills now being considered in the U.S. House of Representatives, the White House said on Friday, clarifying his earlier statement that he opposed one of the measures.

"Overall, the bill would be bad for the children brought across the border by their parents - they could and would still be separated from the parents, they would have less protections than under current law, and they would be subjected to prolonged detention", said Kate Voigt, associate director of government relations at the American Immigration Lawyers Association, which opposes the bill.

The House GOP whip team is expected to count votes for the compromise measure during a 6:30 p.m. vote series Tuesday.

This morning during his marathon Fox & Friends interview, President Trump indicated he would not support the more "moderate" immigration bill in the House.

The tumult erupted days before GOP leaders planned campaign-season votes on a pair of Republican bills: a hard-right proposal and a middle-ground plan negotiated by the party's conservative and moderate wings.

Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., said the bill would cover all of the estimated 1.8 million Dreamers, not just the smaller subset who received coverage under DACA.

"The "zero tolerance" prosecution policy driving the separation of families isn't addressed in the White House 2.0 bill, so it can't even begin to claim that it will halt family separation", said Tom Jawetz, the vice president for immigration policy at the Center for American Progress.

The draft bill ends the Diversity Visa Program and scales back family-based immigration visas, while offering a path to citizenship to dreamers that is contingent on the provision of border wall funding.

"I'm watching 100 percent the president because nothing is going to happen without his approval", said Alex Nowrasteh, an immigration policy expert with the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute. "That's it", said White House deputy press secretary Hogan Gidley.

Mr. Trump told reporters Friday he's looking at both plans. White House aide Stephen Miller, an immigration hard-liner who has been accused of trying to sabotage immigration deals in the past, told conservative lawmakers at a closed-door meeting that the president backed that plan.

"There is no law that requires families to be separated at the border", Reid said. "We should focus on that", Goodlatte argued, even saying he supported setting aside his own bill in order to do so.

Both bills contain stringent security provisions and money to build Trump's proposed wall with Mexico, but only the compromise measure gives young immigrants who arrived in the US illegally as children a chance to ultimately become citizens. Both bills, which are still undergoing changes, contain provisions aimed at helping young immigrants brought to the US illegally as children, often called Dreamers.

A powerful conservative group, Heritage Action, also came out strongly against the bill -urging GOP lawmakers to vote no. He then said that Democrats are "afraid of security for our country" and of a wall on the U.S. -Mexico border.

The discharge petition, which was two votes shy of succeeding, would have gone around the speaker to force a vote on four bills, and the one with the most votes would pass-a big win for Democrats.

The official also said that congressional leadership had reached out to the White House to express their unhappiness with the President's comments. The House may take up an immigration bill next week although nothing is on the schedule yet.