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"INTERVIEW CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE"

INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE

CORRESPONDENT: JOSE DIAZ BALART/ENFOQUE

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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Good to be with you, Jose.

JOSE DIAZ BALART:

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Let's talk about 214-- 2014. Leader Boehner said that-- there were some principles you all were working on. How do you see-- these things happening in 2014?

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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Well, we made a lotta progress in-- in 2013 in terms of passing four bills through the Judiciary Committee, one through the Homeland Security Committee. Holding a lot of hearings, getting a lot of focus on-- solving the immigration problem and all three parts of it. Enforcement, legal

immigration reform and finding the appropriate legal status for people who are not lawfully here. Now, we're trying to find a way to give the members of the House a way to see how all these things would work in our step by step approach.

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And we think one way to do that may be to put forward a set of principles. So the Speaker is-- taking the lead in doing that. Of course-- I and others are being consulted on that. And we hope that it will provide something that will galvanize the kind of support that's necessary to understand that if we can do immigration enforcement and have-- and not just on the border, but interior enforcement.

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Because twen-- 35%, 40% of the people who are here-- illegally entered the country legally on visitors' visas, student visas, business visas, visa waivers. And they're from every country on the face of the globe. We need to have that

interior enforcement.

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And if we can have a way to get that up and operating-- I see no reason why we can't also have an agreement that-- shows how people who are not lawfully here can be able to be lawfully here. Able to live here, work here, travel to and from their home country. Be able to-- own a business, pay their taxes. And that is how we're trying to outline a way-- to resolve this as one of several of the steps in this step by step approach.

JOSE DIAZ BALART:

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Interesting. Because President Obama has said that if it's piecemeal and at the end of the day things work out so that everybody has legalization, he'd be for it. Seems like some Democrats are for it. You just said that's something you're thinking' about why is it so difficult to get to an agreement?

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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Well, it's not just getting to an agreement. It's getting to consensus-- on-- in terms of, for example, in the Senate, Democrats are the majority. So they've done their thing. We have a lot of objections to it. In the House, Republicans are in the majority. So we have to have something where a sizeable majority of Republicans can support it.

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So-- finding a way to build that consensus is critical. And one of the things that's really important, and I've had the opportunity to explain this to-- Democrats and to the president is that there have been, not just with this president but a history of presidents, not enforcing our immigration laws.

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And if we're going to have an agreement that there's gonna be a legal status for people who are already here, there also has to be an agreement that there's not going to be a future

wave of illegal immigration. And so that is the--
- the-- part that is difficult to bring together.
But we're working on it.

JOSE DIAZ BALART:

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It seems as though there may be Republicans who could say, "I'm for immigration reform. But because I don't trust the president's word, I'm not going to step onboard of this thing."

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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That is a big problem. And one of the things that highlights it, particularly when you look at the Senate bill, is Obamacare. Obamacare, 2,500 page bill. More than 20,000 pages of regulations. People are now seeing all of the unintended consequences of that. And they're seeing a president who steps in and says, "You know what? That didn't quite work out the way I wanted so I'm gonna change this. Or I'm gonna change that." But he doesn't have the authority. Obamacare-- the law doesn't give him the authority to make the changes he's making. So

when you talk to people about doing immigration reform-- you have to assure them and you can't just do it with words.

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You've gotta do it with legislative language. Assure them that this president will not have the authority to simply flip a switch and say, "I'm gonna enforce this. I'm not gonna enforce that." And that is hard. That's why we think there needs to be, for example, involvement by the states and local governments, not just the federal government, in dealing with the issue.

JOSE DIAZ BALART:

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Back on this issue, because it's-- it's interesting. Some people say, "Well, this may be the Republicans' or some Republicans' way out." To-- to use this of, "I don't trust the president." To say they're for immigration reform. But it's a cheap way out of standing up and saying, "You know what? Let's stop deportations after we do these things. And let's

get this thing and tackle this very difficult issue."

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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Well, I think in order to get to where we need to get-- we have to address all three of these areas. And you're right. Some people may use that as an excuse. That's why we need to-- set forward-- a reasonable way that people can look at this and say, "Yes. In the future, immigration laws will be enforced." And if we take care of people who are here today with some kind of legal status, we will not be concerned that there'll be the repeat of the mistake made in 1986.

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When close to three million people got an easy pathway to citizenship and then-- new enforcement with employers and so on was promised and never delivered. That's what they don't wanna see happen again. That's a reasonable concern. But I think it can be addressed. Especially if you show-- that we can involve measures that aren't

just the discretion of this president. And we can say the legal status is not provided until things like employment verification-- electronic employment verification or entry/exit visa programs are up and operating effectively.

CHAIRMAN BOB GOODLATTE:

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Jose, good to be with you and your viewers.

JOSE DIAZ BALART:

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