



The ‘Gang of Six’ Amnesty Proposal

Background

A group of six pro-amnesty senators recently unveiled a “bipartisan deal” to give amnesty to millions of so-called Dreamers and their illegal alien parents, while including absolutely zero tradeoffs requested by the White House and a majority of congressional Republicans.

The deal is a product of negotiations among the so-called “Gang of Six” — Republican Sens. Jeff Flake of Arizona, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, and Cory Gardner of Colorado; and Democratic Sens. Dick Durbin of Illinois, Robert Menendez of New Jersey, and Michael Bennet of Colorado. It is worth noting that every member of the gang is unabashedly pro-amnesty, with five of the senators being former members of the 2013 “Gang of Eight.”

What does the “Gang of Six” Proposal Include?

1) Amnesty for Millions of Illegal Aliens

The “Gang of Six” proposal contains the DREAM Act amnesty, which would create a pathway to citizenship for a large portion of the illegal alien population – many more than ever benefited under the DACA program. While approximately 690,000 illegal aliens received protections under DACA, the “Gang of Six” would amnesty **nearly 3.5 million illegal aliens**, according to estimates from the Migration Policy Institute (MPI).

2) Amnesty for Illegal Alien Parents

Despite claims that so-called Dreamers were brought to the US “through no fault of their own,” the “Gang of Six” insists on giving amnesty to their illegal alien parents, who cannot in good faith claim any diminished culpability. The “Gang of Six” proposal would essentially recreate President Obama’s unlawful DAPA program by creating a 3-year renewable legal immigration status for the illegal alien parents of those eligible for protection under the DREAM Act (approximately 3.5 million illegal aliens). This status would come equipped with work authorization to allow them to keep working in the United States indefinitely.

3) Amnesty for Illegal Aliens who Benefitted from Temporary Protected Status

While the “Gang of Six” proposal does include the long needed reform of scrapping the visa lottery, it preserves the numbers as a way to grant another amnesty. Their solution allocates half of the annual lottery visas, or about 25,000, to give amnesty to illegal aliens who benefitted from the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program. The remaining half of visas formally given to lottery winners would be reallocated to nationals of underrepresented countries.

It is hard to imagine why the American people must provide a pathway to citizenship to illegal aliens who benefitted under TPS. TPS was never intended to be a permanent resettlement program, but merely another

deferment of removal for aliens whose home countries are facing severe crises (such as a devastating natural disaster or armed conflict such as a civil war). Additionally, the federal government is required by law to terminate a country's designation under TPS when it has determined that the conditions that inspired the designation are no longer present and the country is capable of handling the return of its nationals, thus eliminating any humanitarian claim for the continued deferment of deportation.

4) Token Border Security Provisions

The "Gang of Six" offers the American people the bare minimum in border security enhancements in exchange for amnesty. The proposal provides slightly under \$1.6 billion for border wall planning, design, and construction, despite estimates by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that construction could cost about \$21.6 billion, not including maintenance. In addition to this low ball offer, the proposal tacks on a bunch of conditions for the actual construction, including existing barrier technology requirements, eminent domain reporting, environmental protection reporting, controller general reviews, and alternate technology reporting. Lastly, the proposal scraps funding intended to initiate the hiring of additional Border Patrol agents, who are currently facing severe staff shortages and morale issues. The money is instead reallocated to retain and relocate existing agents.

What does the "Gang of Six" Proposal Leave Out?

The "Gang of Six" proposal suggests no reforms to deter additional illegal immigration to the United States, and will thus allow the status quo of illegal immigration to persist in the United States indefinitely. By focusing all of its enforcement provisions on token border security measures, it allows illegal aliens who are already in the country (and are somehow not already eligible for any of the expansive amnesties already included in the proposal) to continue living and working in the United States with little fear of enforcement of the law.

The proposal does not end chain migration. Laws allowing extended chain migration permit adult immigrants to petition numbers of distant relatives for green cards, who can then sponsor other immigrants themselves, and so on. Over time, extended chain migration laws result in the admission of millions of immigrants without any assessment of their ability to succeed or contribute in the United States. While the "Gang of Six" proposal claims to limit chain migration by removing the category for adult children of green card holders, it merely reallocates those visas to other chain migration categories, resulting in no net decrease in admissions.

The proposal also does not attempt to close any of the loopholes that allow illegal aliens to file frivolous asylum claims or encourage unaccompanied minors and family units to take the dangerous journey to America. Instead, encouraged by the news of a mass amnesty, Americans can expect to see more illegal aliens surge across the border to claim benefits provided by this proposal. The federal government has indeed made this mistake before. The surge of unaccompanied alien minors and family units in recent years was also caused by President Obama's announcement in 2012 of the DACA program. Additionally, the 1986 amnesty was enacted under the promise that it would solve the illegal immigration problem once and for all. Instead, two decades later, the United States has quadruple the number of illegal aliens living within its territory. When the United States sends a message that it does not intend to take its immigration laws seriously, the world listens.

The proposal also does nothing to ensure that American workers are protected from job displacement or wage depression caused by mass illegal immigration. The proposal will maintain the ineffective, paper Form I-9 process for work authorization verification and does nothing to require employers to use E-Verify – the free, web-based verification program that compares identity and work documents against federal databases to ensure a legal workforce.

The proposal also does nothing to address visa overstays, which account for approximately 40 percent of illegal aliens living in the United States. Some experts also estimate that visa overstays have become the leading source of illegal immigration to the United States in recent years.

Lastly, **the proposal allows sanctuary cities to continuing impeding immigration enforcement efforts** by shielding criminal aliens from detection by federal officials. These policies are extremely dangerous and costly for both immigrant communities and American citizens because they allow criminals to be released back onto the streets instead of transferred to federal custody for removal. The “Gang of Six” proposal does nothing to address these dangerous policies that are perpetuated by defiant officials in some of America’s largest cities.

Conclusion

The “Gang of Six” proposal is nothing more than a transparent attempt to grant amnesty to millions of illegal aliens while offering nothing that would prevent massive illegal immigration in the future. Perhaps the only redeeming feature of the legislation is its honesty: Its authors no longer feel the need to lie to the American people about their intent to enforce or strengthen our immigration laws.