

U.S. House GOP To Introduce Shortly New Immigration Plan, Including Path To Legal Status

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House Republicans are working on an immigration plan that would give potentially millions of undocumented immigrants a chance to permanently live and work in the United States.

The plan, which is reportedly days away from being released to the public, will cover ideas on how the U.S. border should be protected, how immigration laws should be enforced inside the United States, the expansion of visas for certain foreign workers, and how many of the country's estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants can embark on a path to legalize their status, according to published reports, such as one in online news publication [Politico](#).

The path to legalization's inclusion in the plan – which House Republican leaders discussed as recently as Wednesday -- is particularly significant given that it is one of the pivotal reasons that plans last year to pass a comprehensive immigration reform law broke down in the House of Representatives after it passed in the Senate in June.

SUMMARY

The path to legalization's inclusion in the Republican plan expected to be released later this month is particularly significant given that it is one of the pivotal reasons that plans last year to pass a comprehensive immigration reform law broke down in the House of Representatives after it passed in the Senate in June.

Conservative members of the Republicans in the House, where they hold a majority, had been adamant about not signing off on any measure that called for granting a pathway to legalization for people who are living in the country illegally. They maintain that that giving those immigrants any kind of break would amount to amnesty, or rewarding law-breakers.

That stance created a fight among Republicans in Congress, with some – including conservatives such as Sen. Marco Rubio, a Tea Party lawmaker from Florida – arguing that deporting all 11 million undocumented immigrants was not a realistic option, and that not doing anything to bring them onto the radar amounted to an amnesty.

Proponents of a pathway to legal status argued that the opportunity would be given only to those undocumented immigrants who earned it by meeting a strict set of criteria including paying fines, learning English, having a clean police record and paying taxes.

Politico reported that House Speaker John Boehner, who is from Ohio, wants the plan, also referred to as “principles,” completed and made public before President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address on Jan. 28.

The plan commits itself to the idea – which is heavily favored by many Republicans – that immigration reform will be handled in a piecemeal fashion, instead of comprehensively, as the Senate did.

Obama told Senate Democrats in a closed-door meeting this week that he believes that Boehner will make sure immigration reform is passed this year, according to [The Hill](#), a political publication in Washington, D.C.

The president reportedly told Democrats in the private meeting that Republicans need to take action on immigration in order to keep the volatile issue from hurting their chances with Latino voters, as it appears to have done in 2012, when GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney performed extremely poorly with the increasingly important voting bloc.

Obama obtained three-quarters of Latino votes cast in 2012, while Romney received barely one-fourth.

Sen. Charles Schumer, a New York Democrat, was quoted in *The Hill* as saying: “I think our Republican colleagues realize that to be blocking immigration reform is not good for them.”

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