

Obama Open to House GOP Immigration Plan

By [Laura Meckler](#)

President [Barack Obama](#) said in [an interview](#) that aired Friday he could support the sort of immigration plan that [House Republican leaders are exploring](#): legalization for most of the 11.5 million people in the U.S. illegally, with the opportunity—but no guarantee—of citizenship down the road.

The emerging House plan would give legal status to most illegal immigrants and then allow them to access existing pathways to legal permanent residence, also known as a green card. Those pathways include, for instance, marrying an American citizen or being sponsored by an adult child who is a citizen. Then, once someone has a green card, they can apply for citizenship.

In an interview on CNN, Mr. Obama said he could accept something along those lines.

“If the Speaker proposes something that says right away, folks aren’t being deported, families aren’t being separated, we’re able to attract top young students to provide the skills or start businesses here and then there’s a regular process of citizenship, I’m not sure how wide the divide ends up being,” he said.

Republicans are distinguishing that standard pathway to citizenship from what the Senate did, which they call a “special pathway” to citizenship because it guarantees the opportunity for a green card and then citizenship for all of those here illegally unless they are disqualified.

Mr. Obama said that he is encouraged by the work of House Speaker [John Boehner](#), who presented a set of immigration principles to his conference on Thursday. “The fact that they’re for something, I think, is progress,” the president said.

He said he would be consulting with immigration rights groups and advocates to see what they could accept but hinted that a guarantee of citizenship, which some are demanding, may not be the top priority for everyday immigrant families.

“I do know that for a lot of families, the fear of deportation is one of the biggest concerns that they’ve got,” he said.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2014/01/31/obama-could-support-house-gop-immigration-plan/>