

Rubio favors piecemeal immigration approach over comprehensive bill

By [Aaron Blake](#) | October 28 at 11:00 am

Sen. Marco Rubio's (R-Fla.) office, in a statement Monday, said Congress should be open to passing a series of immigration bills rather than attempting to pass the comprehensive legislation Rubio authored and the Senate passed earlier this year.

Rubio spokesman Alex Conant said those who favor comprehensive immigration reform need to be realistic about what Congress can pass. He noted that the Senate has passed a comprehensive bill, but that conservatives in the House are afraid of passing smaller bills for fear that the issue would go to conference committee and a comprehensive bill would result.

Conant said the House would be more apt to act if they were assured that a conference committee wouldn't focus only on the legislation that passed in the House and wouldn't produce a larger bill akin to the Senate package.

"An 'all or nothing' strategy on immigration reform would result in nothing," Conant said. "What is keeping us from progress on a series of immigration issues on which there is strong consensus is the fear that a conference committee on a limited bill will be used to negotiate a comprehensive one. We should take that option off the table so that we can begin to move on the things we agree on."

Conant [made similar comments](#) over the weekend to Breitbart.com.

"At this point, the most realistic way to make progress on immigration would be through a series of individual bills," Conant told the Web site. "Any effort to use a limited bill as a ruse to trigger a conference that would then produce a comprehensive bill would be counterproductive."

While Rubio was instrumental in passing the comprehensive Senate bill, which included a path to citizenship, he has in the past said he favors a more piecemeal approach over the comprehensive approach. In January, he said that [he would prefer Congress pass four or five separate bills](#).

Despite favoring that approach, Rubio put his political brand on the line after the 2012 election when he came out in favor of a comprehensive immigration reform package — something the conservative base remains highly skeptical of. He repeatedly granted interviews with conservative talk radio hosts who disagreed with the legislation.

The bipartisan group of House members negotiating a comprehensive bill has fallen apart in recent months, with three of four Republicans departing.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2013/10/28/rubio-now-favors-piecemeal-immigration-approach-over-comprehensive-bill/>