

## **Just the Facts: House Republicans' Failed Record on Immigration Reform**

Over a year after the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill with a strong bipartisan vote of 68-32, House Republicans have yet to take action to fix our nation's broken immigration system. Despite their [empty rhetoric](#) about immigration reform being a top priority, House Republican leaders continue to ignore the majority of Americans, business organizations, the faith community, the tech community, the agriculture community, their own Members, and others who want Congress to act on this important issue. Instead of letting the House work its will on immigration reform, House Republican leaders have added to their record of obstruction and partisanship by blocking action on immigration reform and pandering to the far-right wing of their party with extreme legislation.

### **SPEAKER BOEHNER HAS STATED MULTIPLE TIMES THAT HE WANTS TO ADDRESS IMMIGRATION REFORM...**

*Since taking the majority, Speaker Boehner has repeatedly claimed that House Republicans would work to address immigration reform.*

**Speaker Boehner:** "There's nobody more interested in fixing this problem than I am." [Politico, [5/28/14](#)]

**Speaker Boehner:** "It's important to act on immigration reform because we're focused on jobs and economic growth, and this is about jobs and growth." [Politico, [1/30/14](#)]

**Speaker Boehner:** "This issue has been around far too long. A comprehensive approach is long overdue, and I'm confident that the president, myself, others can find the common ground to take care of this issue once and for all." [ABC News, [11/8/12](#)]

### **... BUT HOUSE REPUBLICANS FAIL TO ADDRESS THIS CRITICAL ISSUE**

**Speaker Boehner:** "The House of Representatives will not take up the Senate immigration reform bill or accept it back from the Senate in any fashion." [Release, [7/29/14](#)]

"Just a week after Republicans raised hopes for a bipartisan overhaul of the nation's immigration laws, House Speaker John A. Boehner all but abandoned the effort Thursday, saying it would be 'difficult' to get any legislation approved this year by his GOP majority. [Los Angeles Times, [2/6/14](#)]

*Throughout the year, Republicans have failed to take meaningful action on immigration:*

- Had to shelve the immigration reform "principles" that House Republican leaders announced at their conference retreat after vocal criticism from the far-right wing of their party.
- Voted against H.R. 15, a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill, three times in one week. [8/1/14, 8/1/14, 7/31/14]
- Failed to work in a bipartisan way to pass legislation to address the humanitarian crisis at the border; Republicans ultimately passed legislation that did not provide sufficient resources to meet the challenge.

### **HOUSE REPUBLICANS VOTE TO MOVE BACKWARDS ON IMMIGRATION REFORM**

*Not only have House Republicans refused to vote on comprehensive immigration reform legislation, they have instead voted for draconian legislation that would target children brought to the U.S. through no fault of their own, and who know no other home than the United States. Just this Congress, House Republicans have:*

*Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 09/16/14*

- Passed the Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014, which expands the circumstances under which the Attorney General is required to report to Congress regarding the enforcement of laws, causing confusion and removing already-limited law enforcement resources. [3/13/14]
- Passed the ENFORCE Act of 2014, giving Congress the ability to accelerate lawsuits against the executive branch for what Republicans defined as “failing to execute the laws,” with the goal of making it difficult for immigration officials to exercise enforcement discretion under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. [3/12/14]
- Rolled back funding for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that gives undocumented youth, or DREAMers, the opportunity to stay in the United States to work. [6/6/13]

## **HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADERS IGNORE THEIR OWN MEMBERS, CATER TO EXTREME WING OF THEIR CONFERENCE**

*Over 30 House Republicans agree that our nation’s immigration system is broken, but House Republican leaders continue to ignore their calls for reform:*

**Republican Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25):** “We have a historic opportunity to fix a system everyone knows is broken. We’re squandering that opportunity. The bottom line is, we have a bill that is ready to go. We had bipartisan support. And yet I’ve been told we’re not going to move forward this year.” [Washington Post, [7/10/14](#)]

**Republican Representative Jeff Denham (CA-10):** “Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., promised earlier this year he would force a floor vote on legislation to create a legal status pathway for illegal immigrants who served in the military — but GOP leadership intends to thwart that plan.” [Roll Call, [5/16/14](#)]

**Republican Representative David Valadao (CA-21):** “Addressing immigration reform in the House cannot wait... I am serious about making real progress and will remain committed to doing whatever it takes to repair our broken immigration system.” [Release, [10/30/13](#)]

*In addition to ignoring dozens of their own Members, House Republican leaders have refused to work on a bipartisan basis to fix our broken system and failed to sufficiently address the humanitarian crisis at the border in July. Instead, they have consistently moved further to the right to cater to the most extreme wing of their party:*

**New York Times:** “But on Capitol Hill, the Tea Party wing continues to drive the party’s agenda. Last winter, as House Republican leaders drafted their ‘principles’ for immigration overhaul, they largely disregarded the opponents of any form of legal status for immigrants in the country illegally, dismissing them as a loud but small minority. When that faction vocally opposed the principles, Mr. Boehner put the effort in cold storage rather than highlight the divisions in his conference — even as he mocked Republicans who feared moving forward with immigration legislation.” [[8/12/14](#)]

**Wall Street Journal:** “Earlier this week Speaker John Boehner had his caucus lined up to pass a modest bill that would have provided the Obama Administration with \$659 million to deal with the border influx, while tweaking a provision in a 2008 law that even President Obama has said has encouraged the flood of unaccompanied minors to the U.S... Instead, the GOP’s Deportation Caucus—led by Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions and Ted Cruz of Texas—lobbied House conservatives to resist any immigration compromise and pick a fight with Mr. Boehner... The episode is also sure to raise doubts among swing voters about whether Republicans would be prepared to govern if they do win control of the entire Congress.” [[8/3/14](#)]

**Washington Post:** “Even so, a defeat of border legislation in the House would deliver another embarrassing blow to Boehner and his leadership team, which has struggled to contain the party’s restive tea party caucus. It also would serve as the latest example of Cruz wading into House affairs and working against the agenda of GOP leaders.” [[7/30/14](#)]

## **THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DISAGREE WITH REPUBLICAN INACTION**

“A plurality of Americans believes immigration is the most important problem facing the U.S... Seventeen percent of Americans think immigration is the country’s biggest problem.” [Politico, [7/16/14](#)]

Seventy-one percent of Americans support comprehensive immigration reform, and 73 percent think the issue is important when deciding which candidate to support in November. [Politico [May 2014](#)]

## **OUTSIDE GROUPS DISAGREE WITH REPUBLICAN INACTION**

### [Business Community:](#)

**News Corp Executive Chairman Rupert Murdoch:** “People are looking for leadership—those who stand for something and offer a vision for how to take America forward and keep our nation economically competitive. One of the most immediate ways to revitalize our economy is by passing immigration reform... If we are serious about advancing our economic future and about creating job growth here in America, then we must realize that it is suicidal to suggest closing our doors to the world's entrepreneurs.” [Wall Street Journal, [6/18/14](#)]

**U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohue:** “If the Republicans don’t do [immigration reform], they shouldn’t bother to run a candidate in 2016.” [Politico, [5/12/14](#)]

**Microsoft Founder Bill Gates:** “To remain competitive, we need a workforce that consists of the world’s brightest minds [and we need to] make it easier for foreign-born scientists and engineers to work for U.S. companies.” [Forbes, [3/24/14](#)]

**Deloitte U.S. CEO Joe Echevarria:** “One thing the overwhelming majority of Americans agree on, regardless of political party, is the need for immigration reform. Not only is it one of the keys necessary to create a healthier national economy and critical to America’s security, growth, and prosperity, it is also an integral component for the success of American business ... Make no mistake: if we fail to attract the brightest minds and best people, other countries will... We simply cannot afford to wait any longer to bring real solutions to a system that isn’t working as we need it to. Our current immigration policies are not just hurting those looking to come to America, but those already here, by stifling opportunities for tremendous growth.” [Reuters, [1/7/14](#)]

**636 Business Organizations:** “We are united in the belief that we can and must do better for our economy and country by modernizing our immigration system. Done properly, reform will deter illegal immigration, protect and complement our U.S. workforce, better respond to changing economic and demographic needs, and generate greater productivity and economic activity, while respecting family unity. Failure to act is not an option. We cannot afford to be content and watch a dysfunctional immigration system work against our overall national interest. In short, immigration reform is an essential element of a jobs agenda and economic growth. It will add talent, innovation, investment, products, businesses, jobs, and dynamism to our economy.” [Letter, [2/25/14](#)]

[Faith-Based Organizations:](#)

**Evangelical Immigration Table:** “After thousands of hours of work, reaching millions of evangelical Christians across our nation, the evidence proves America is ready for commonsense immigration reform... The status quo is untenable. Congressional inaction is hurting our families, farms, businesses, churches and national security. The moral case for reform is clear and compelling.” [Letter, [6/12/14](#)]

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:** ““As pastors, we see the human consequences of this broken system each day in our parishes and social service programs, as families are separated, migrant workers are exploited, and our fellow human beings risk everything to find a better life for themselves and the ones they love,” said Archbishop Kurtz. ‘Our nation should no longer tolerate an unjust system.’” [Release, [6/5/14](#)]

**Southern Baptist Convention:** The message is clear: Reform is the right thing to do for our economy and needed for a safe and secure border. It is also the smart thing to do for our future and the moral thing to do for the soul of our nation.” [Wall Street Journal, [3/30/14](#)]

**American Jewish Committee:** “Comprehensive immigration reform offers our country a tremendous opportunity to act in accord with its highest values, ensuring fairness and humanity while also being mindful of our nation’ security and economic interests.” [Letter, [11/15/13](#)]

[Tech Community:](#)

**FWD.us President Joe Green:** ““Both of [Majority Leader-elect, Kevin McCarthy and Majority Whip-Elect, Rep. Steve Scalise] have indicated their support for fixing our fundamentally broken system multiple times,’ he wrote. ‘[A]s members of House GOP leadership, the pressure is on for them — along with Speaker [John] Boehner — to take action and bring reform legislation to a vote as soon as possible, so that we can boost our economy and do right by the millions of American families living in fear of separation.’” [The Hill, [6/23/14](#)]

**Intel Corporation Director of Immigration Policy Peter Muller:** “Many earned advanced degrees from American universities. All are helping keep America’s innovation economy growing. And yet, because of a high-skilled immigration system badly in need of reform, we’re pushing them away.” [Roll Call, [6/6/14](#)]

**Internet Association President Michael Beckerman:** “If America is to remain the global leader in Internet and tech innovation, we must ensure that we are able to attract, train, and retain the best minds in the world... Our current immigration system is broken. Ideally, each of our member companies would like to be able to retain the best and brightest minds without having to worry about visa caps and other restrictions.” [In the Capital, [5/7/14](#)]

[Labor Groups:](#)

**Service Employees International Union Chair of the Immigrant Justice Campaign Eliseo Medina:** “It’s time for the Republican leadership to decide if they will lead their party to stand on the right side of history and gain the vote of mainstream America and that of the fastest growing bloc of voters--Latinos--or block immigration reform and lead their party into national irrelevancy.” [Press Release, [6/11/14](#)]

**AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka:** “Without citizenship, it’s a nonstarter because you can’t fix a broken immigration system and create a vast class of millions of people living in the community and working in our workplaces without citizenship. You can’t do that. They have no rights. The labor unions are united. Our price of admission is citizenship. Republicans aren’t talking seriously until they start talking about citizenship, and that means a direct route to green cards and a real path to citizenship.” [Washington Post, [1/29/14](#)]

## [Agriculture Industry:](#)

**Wisconsin Agribusiness Council President and CEO Ferron Havens:** “Our nation’s broken immigration system is hindering our economic recovery. We need a system that allows our state to recruit more immigrant entrepreneurs and innovators, as well as retain foreign-born students at Wisconsin universities who will drive job creation and stimulate economic growth. The system is specifically broken for farmers who are producing below their capacity when they cannot meet their labor demands.” [Wausau Daily Herald, [6/20/14](#)]

**Washington Growers League Executive Director Mike Gempler:** “We’re seeing a lack of response to our needs and concerns from significant parts of the Republican caucus in the House. They either have ideological issues or they are catering to a more reactionary crowd... If we don’t get this done by August recess, we’re going to be in trouble as an industry.” [Washington Post, [3/31/14](#)]

**Sunleaf Nursery President Bob Lyons:** “This is not just a problem for American agriculture, but for the health and stability of our national economy as well. With common-sense, meaningful immigration reforms we can secure the future of the agricultural industry we all depend upon. It is time for the U.S. House of Representatives to take this issue seriously and pass these reforms this year.” [Cleveland.com Column, [3/10/14](#)]

**American Farm Bureau President Bob Stallman:** “Status quo is not a viable option for anyone involved in this issue, and as a nation, we expect better. Over five years, an enforcement-only approach would lead to losses in farm income large enough to trigger large scale restructuring of the sector, higher food prices, and greater dependence on imported products,” Stallman said. ‘With a reworked guest worker program, and by allowing skilled laborers to earn an adjustment of status, food prices remain stable and there are only marginal impacts on production.’” [USA Today, [2/10/14](#)]

## **THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF IMMIGRATION REFORM ARE CLEAR**

- The Congressional Budget Office has said that reform would increase employment and raise wages. [[Business Roundtable Report](#), June 2014]
- Immigration reform would boost gross domestic product by about 4.8% and productivity by 1% percent over 20 years, according to the Bipartisan Policy Center. [[Business Roundtable Report](#), June 2014]
- According to the Business Roundtable, immigrants are nearly 50 percent more likely to start a business than native-born workers, resulting in increased innovation and entrepreneurship. Additionally, immigrants or their children founded more than 40% of U.S. Fortune 500 companies. [[Business Roundtable Report](#), June 2014]
- The Congressional Budget Office projects that immigration reform would reduce the deficit by \$900 billion over the next 20 years. [[Roll Call](#), 3/25/14]

## **HOUSE DEMOCRATS ARE COMMITTED TO FIXING OUR BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM**

House Democrats continue to pursue a common sense and comprehensive solution to fix our nation’s broken immigration system. During the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, House Democrats introduced H.R. 15, bipartisan legislation that reforms our broken system and offers a pathway to citizenship, and continue to urge House Republican leaders to put this bill on the Floor for a vote without delay.