

The Pressure Continues to Build for Comprehensive Immigration Reform

As Speaker Boehner continues to struggle with division in the Republican Conference over taking action on immigration reform, there is increasing support among Republicans on the need for reform. A look at the numbers shows comprehensive reform would pass the House: there are 199 bipartisan [cosponsors](#) of H.R. 15, and over 30 Republicans have indicated that they [support](#) reforming our immigration system. Additionally, H.R. 15 would reduce the deficit by \$200 billion over ten years, and by \$900 billion over twenty years – this deficit reduction could be used pay for other priorities, such as permanently extending the research and development tax credit.

Here's what House Republicans had to say about their support for immigration reform – is Speaker Boehner listening?

House Republicans Recently Calling for Immigration Reform:

Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX): Barton “told the Dallas-area program ‘Lone Star Politics’ that he is close to introducing his own immigration bill that would include a path to citizenship for children, legal status for some adults, beefed up border security and a guest worker program.” [Dallas News, [4/28/14](#)]

Rep. Peter King (R-NY): “In the missive, dated April 23, King tells Boehner that a ‘confluence of events’ makes immigration reform possible, including a path to citizenship coupled with ‘strong and real’ border security and enforcement measures. ‘It would be in our country’s national interest as well as the interest of our party if this could be achieved and I want to assure you of my support as this effort goes forward,’ King wrote.” [Politico, [4/24/14](#)]

Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL): “Diaz-Balart said he thinks they’re close to a deal that can pass both chambers. ‘It is as close as we have ever been. It is still a big, big, heavy lift,’ he said. ‘I think we’re going to get there.’” [Roll Call, [4/25/14](#)]

Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA): “McMorris Rodgers said she still thinks a deal could be struck before the election. ‘I believe there is a path that we get a bill on the floor by August,’ she said.” [The Spokesman-Review, [4/25/14](#)]

Rep. Aaron Schock (R-IL): “‘Quite frankly, I think if a man or a woman likes their American job, wherever they were born, they should be able to keep that job,’ Schock says... ‘We need a clear path to citizenship for workers who are already here and a fair and efficient on-ramp for those who want to come here.’” [Politico, [4/22/14](#)]

Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL): “‘We must work hard to come to an agreement on how to bring undocumented workers out of the shadows, legally entering the work force and becoming part of the American melting pot that makes this country great,’ Kinzinger says in his testimonial. ‘However, if we do not adequately secure our borders, we could be facing these same problems a few years down the road, which is why this must be the first step of the reform process.’” [Politico, [4/22/14](#)]

Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL): “I do support [immigration reform]...we have to address the 12 million undocumented immigrants who are already here by moving them legally into the workforce...” [Crain’s Chicago Business, [4/22/14](#)]

Three House Republicans Co-Sponsoring H.R. 15:

Rep. David Valadao (R-CA): “By supporting H.R. 15 I am strengthening my message: 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.” [10/30/13]

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL): “It’s important to keep the conversation going in trying to fix the broken immigration system. I favor any approach that will help us move the negotiations forward. Other Members may soon produce a bipartisan product that may also deserve support and I’m cautiously optimistic that we can pass meaningful immigration reform.” [10/29/13]

Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA): “We can’t afford any more delays. We are a nation of immigrants, but today, our broken system has failed to secure the border, enforce our current laws and help us to attract the best and brightest who want to come and contribute to the greatness of America.” [10/27/13]

More House Republicans Supporting Immigration Reform:

Rep. Renee Ellmers (R-NC): “(T)he best course of action is one that provides an earned legal work status that would not be given indiscriminately. Instead, it would be contingent on some combination of paying a penalty, admitting to violating the law, and verifying identity. Only after this legal work status is obtained can individuals have the opportunity to begin the naturalization process – if that is their choice.” [Fayetteville Observer, [1/21/14](#)]

Rep. Vance McAllister (R-LA): “We have to secure the borders, but (citizenship) has to be attainable for those people already here. It has to be a tough path, but it has to be attainable.” [The Town Talk, [11/3/13](#)]

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-NM): “I am proud to work across party lines to allow justice for wrongfully separated families with my good friend Congressman O’Rourke. I have long said that we should never split up families, and today’s proposed law allows the careful and sensible evaluation of cases where American families have been wrongly separated, but still makes sure that our immigration laws are upheld. Immigration is an important issue that is central to the future of our country. I am hopeful that the small step we take today will be the start of further cooperation between our two parties in Washington, and that we can tackle greater challenges of immigration reform together in the near future.” [10/31/13]

Rep. Chris Stewart (R-UT): Question: “Chaffetz said he agrees with the path to citizenship, not a special path and not no path, would you second that?” Stewart: “I think that’s exactly right.” [YouTube, [9/4/13](#)]

Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT): “There should be a pathway to citizenship, not a special pathway and not no pathway, but there has to be a legal lawful way to go through this process that works and right now it doesn’t.” [ABC 4 Utah, [8/21/13](#)]

Rep. Sean Duffy (R-WI): “I think a fair system is this: allow those who have come without documentation a legal status...If they do want those rights (of citizens), they can apply, like any other person around the world, but that means they get to the back of the line.” [Wisconsin Radio Network, [8/20/13](#)]

Rep. John Carter (R-TX): “Part of what’s wrong with our immigration system is that we keep trying to patch it up,” Carter said. “We need comprehensive reform.” [Kileen Daily Herald, [8/20/13](#)]

Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI): “You have to find a way to give them legal status over a long period of time. Once they’ve obtained legal status—so there’s a path to legal status—then they are treated like anyone else who is here as a legal resident. If they want to obtain citizenship, they’re not put ahead of anyone else.” [CSPAN, [8/16/13](#)]

Rep. Mark Amodei (R-NV): “At the end of 10 years, if you want to become a citizen, you go to the (federal immigration system) and start the process like anybody else. I don’t think that’s amnesty.” [Gannett, [8/14/13](#)]

Rep. David Reichert (R-WA): “What about those folks who have been here 25 years? They have families here and kids...what do you do with those people?...I want them to pay a fine, there’s some penalties they have to through, steps that they are gonna go through. I want to hold them accountable and then they get citizenship and pay taxes...” [Talk Radio KVI, [8/7/13](#)]

Rep. Daniel Webster (R-FL): “On the same day Congress adjourned for a five-week break, U.S. Rep. Dan Webster did something he’s avoided for months: speak at length about immigration reform and declare his support for an approach that would give unauthorized immigrants a pathway to citizenship.” [Orlando Sentinel, [8/4/13](#)]

Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO): “[Coffman] believes comprehensive immigration reform...needs to happen mostly simultaneously. Then, when it has been proven the border is secure a pathway to apply for legal citizenship should be opened for all undocumented people, he said.” [Denver Post, [7/24/14](#)]

Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA): A survey of GOP House members’ offices conducted by [the San Francisco Chronicle](#) confirmed that Rep. Nunes supports a path to citizenship.

Rep. Joe Heck (R-NV): “I’ve said, and I’ve always said, that I think a tough but fair pathway to earned citizenship that doesn’t allow anyone to jump to the front of the line, that has certain benchmarks that need to be met, like the ability to show that you can support yourself and your family, that you can speak English, that you have a clean criminal and national security background check, that I would support those.” [Nevada Public Radio, [7/19/13](#)]

Rep. Michael Kelly (R-PA): “Is there is a path to citizenship? I think there is. But I think our plan is about breaking it into separate pieces.” [CBS Face the Nation, [7/15/13](#)]

Rep. Michael Grimm (R-NY): “Legalization ultimately leads to citizenship. That is the ultimate goal.” [Time Warner News Cable Central New York, [7/10/13](#)]

Rep. James Lankford (R-OK): “I wouldn’t prohibit forever (people from getting citizenship). I’m a Christian, and restitution and reconciliation’s a big deal. If you do something illegal or inappropriate you should be able to resolve that, face the penalty, clear it and be forgiven.” [AP, [7/10/13](#)]

Rep. Tim Griffin (R-AR): “I support a pathway to legal status, and once they are legal, those individuals, then they can get behind the people who have been legally following the rules and they can pursue citizenship.” [[KARK Capitol View](#), 7/9/13]

Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX): “As a lawmaker, I must respect the rule of law,” he said. “As a lawmaker, I must respect the rule of law,” he said. “As a Christian, I must follow the rule of God. When it comes to immigration reform, I have worked to find solutions that reconcile both beliefs.” [Dallas News, [7/9/13](#)]

Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL): “Because I don’t think we ought to have two classes of long-term residents, I support a pathway to citizenship.” [Judiciary Committee Hearing, [6/13/13](#)]

Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI): “I do support what (the Gang of 7) are doing. I think they put out a good product. It’s good policy.” [The Hill, [6/6/13](#)]

Greg Walden (R-OR): “If they pay a fine, if they true up in all their areas and then go to the back of the line, there’s probably a way then that they can get (citizenship).” [USA Today, [6/3/14](#)]

Rep. Don Young (R-AL): “Like our colleagues drafting the bill, we believe this legislation should secure our border, streamline our legal immigration system and provide a clear and responsible path to citizenship for those already here.” [Letter with Senators Lisa Murkowski and Mark Begich, [4/5/13](#)]

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA): “I think all of us Republicans know that we don’t want a class of residents that will never be offered an opportunity for citizenship. We’re the party of Lincoln, and the party of Lincoln would not accept people living in our country and not being citizens, or not being given the opportunity to become citizens.” [Real Clear Politics, [2/6/13](#)]

Rep. Raul Labrador (R-ID): “What I think should happen is for illegal immigrants to come out of the shadows, become legalized in some way and that status could lead in some way to legal residency and citizenship eventually but just the same as everybody else,” he told reporters. [Politico, [3/20/13](#)]