

Speaker Boehner Ignores the Costs of Doing Nothing

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Washington D.C. - Yesterday, Speaker of the House John Boehner reassured the far-right wing of the Republican Party and anti-immigrant activists that he would never agree to a conference to hammer out an agreement on a House immigration bill and S. 744, the Senate's bipartisan immigration bill that passed in June. While that statement may have been reassuring to a few die-hard anti-immigration reform activists, it had the opposite effect for the vast majority of Americans. The Speaker's statement does not stop the clock on the economic, social, and societal costs of doing nothing on immigration. It also does not honor the hard work of Democrats and Republicans who have worked in good faith to pass the Senate bill and negotiate on various fronts in the House.

However, what Speaker Boehner's statement does do is open the door to more protests and public outrage, encourage states to continue to take the lead on immigration policy and leave the administration in the difficult situation of deciding how long they will let Congressional inaction continue before they will intervene. When Congress refuses to act they make themselves less relevant and reinforce the idea that they cannot work constructively to fix our nation's most pressing problems.

Thus, rather than tamp down the flames of reform, the Speaker's statements will embolden those who will work to fix immigration policy on their own - for better or worse. It's inevitable that immigration reform will happen it's just a matter of how much our economy, communities, and the Republican Party will lose in the meantime

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