

# Democrats push for deal with Trump on DACA as ICE threatens mass raids

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The Democratic Party is preparing to make a deal with Trump and his fascistic adviser, Stephen Miller, that places the lives of millions of immigrants at risk.

Democratic leaders Charles Schumer and Nancy Pelosi announced the outline of a deal last month to rework Deferred Action of Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program which grants temporary status to 800,000 immigrant youth brought to the US by their parents.

In recent days, Democrats have downplayed indications that the far-right of the Republican Party is wary of making a deal to protect the DACA recipients. Democratic Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer told reporters Tuesday, “If the president is changing his view, he should tell us. If they want to back off, let them tell us.” The *Washington Post* noted that Democratic Senator Richard Durbin “told [Republican Senator John Cornyn] that Democrats are willing to work with Republicans on certain border security measures.”

Meanwhile, ICE Acting Director Thomas Homan announced Friday that ICE is launching a series of workplace raids in California in response to the state’s decision to enact a “sanctuary city” law. Roman’s statement threatens that “ICE will have no choice but to conduct at-large arrests in local neighborhoods and at worksites, which will inevitably result in additional collateral arrests, instead of focusing on arrests at jails and prisons...ICE will also likely have to detain individuals arrested in California detention facilities outside of the state, far from any family they may have in California.”

These are the modern-day Gestapo agents with whom the Democrats are eager to negotiate. They come after reports surfaced that Miller is guiding the Trump-Democrats deal. One Trump administration source characterized the proposals Miller is making when he

told CNN Friday, “Think Sheriff Arapaio,” referring to the former Arizona sheriff who said he wanted his jails to be like “concentration camps.”

Miller, Trump’s senior policy advisor, is pushing for a deal on DACA that would include provisions from the 2017 RAISE (Reforming American Immigration for Strong Employment) Act, a proposal from extreme right-wing elements within the Senate that would cut legal immigration levels in half over the next decade, expand criminal penalties for illegal immigration, impose a class-based system for immigration that eliminates family-based petitions, and cap the number of refugees.

The Democrats’ efforts to prop-up a possible deal came as more than 36,000 immigrant youth who were eligible for a two-year DACA renewal did not submit their paperwork by the October 5 deadline and may soon face deportation with all of their information already in the hands of the Department of Homeland Security.

The Democrats’ attempt to “protect” DACA recipients by extending their benefits in some form is a cynical political maneuver to use DACA youth as a bargaining chip that will involve passing anti-immigration legislation based on increased militarization of the border. The Democrats are bargaining away the lives of hundreds or thousands of future migrants compelled to risk the horrific journey through the Sonoran Desert, where tens of thousands have succumbed to heatstroke, dehydration, and murder.

The framework posed by the political and media establishment that the Democrats must “Save DACA” is a stunt to rebrand the party as “pro-immigrant.” The Democrats faced a significant decline in support among Latino and youth because of the increasingly right-wing

character of their political program.

While 9 million Latinos voted for both Obama in 2012 and Clinton in 2016, a large increase in the Latino voting population over the past four years points to an overall decline in the Latino vote for the Democratic Party. The Democrats are aware of growing support for DACA recipients. Over 80 percent of the population supports granting them citizenship.

As the *New York Times* noted on October 1, Pelosi and Schumer “are staying pragmatic, even in the face of protests that have been personal and cutting.” (Activists called Ms. Pelosi a liar in San Francisco.)

That’s because the Democratic Party is responsible for setting the legal framework for mass deportation and agrees with proposals to militarize the border and expand the anti-immigrant crackdown.

In the 1990s, Bill Clinton introduced legislation Operation Gatekeeper and Operation Hold the Line. These legislative acts doubled the ranks of the Border Patrol, increased the agency's budget nearly threefold from \$374 million to \$952 million and equipped the border with the most advanced technology to carry out mass deportations.

George W. Bush oversaw the Secure Fence Act of 2006 which created an additional 700 miles of fencing along the border and won the support of then-Senators Schumer, Obama, Kerry, and Clinton.

The Obama administration, having overseen nearly 3 million deportations, expanded Secure Communities or “S-Comm.” Under Bush, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) recruited a total of 14 jurisdictions to participate in the program, while Obama oversaw its expansion to over 1,210 jurisdictions. Obama’s 2009 deal with the for-profit prison corporations, Detention Bed Quota, was a congressionally mandated quota that required ICE to maintain 34,000 detention beds at any given time.

Republicans are making a number of additional proposals to which the Democrats may agree. For example, a new measure introduced Thursday by Sen. Jeff Flake, a veteran of comprehensive immigration reform efforts, includes Trump’s 2018 budget request to start building a wall and permanent protections only for people who had DACA.

There is no telling to what the Democrats will agree. The *Times* quotes Durbin, “It is naive for us to believe that we will get 12 Republicans to vote for DACA or

the Dream Act without putting something on the table. There’s always going to be a group that wants more. There are some people who want all or nothing,” he said, disparagingly referencing those who oppose the Democrats’ efforts to horse trade the lives of a few hundred thousand immigrants here in exchange for a few million there.

The Democratic Party poses no opposition to the Trump administration’s plans for mass deportations. That statements like that made by ICE Acting Secretary Homan could be made in public by a leading government official poses a stark warning the working class, immigrant and non-immigrant alike. Workers of all races and nationalities must reject efforts by the government to drag their coworkers off the shop floor or out of the classroom or their bedroom solely because they came to the US without proper documentation.



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