

# As President Trump acts unilaterally, Congress at a standstill on immigration reform

WASHINGTON (SBG) – President Donald Trump’s newest rule limiting asylum for immigrants is already facing legal challenges.

But what it’s not being met with, at least so far, is a plan by Congress to change the law, despite multiple past statements from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle calling specifically for comprehensive immigration reform.

It’s a common refrain, not just from members of Congress, but from presidents past and present.

*“We simply cannot allow people to pour into the United States undetected, undocumented, unchecked and circumventing the line of people who are waiting patiently, diligently and lawfully,” President Barack Obama said back in 2005, while still serving as a U.S. Senator.*

“The laws are so bad, Democrats have to help us fix the immigration laws,” President Trump said recently.

One reason President Trump said he’s acted unilaterally with executive orders expanding border security, banning travel by people from certain countries and this week’s rule limiting who may seek asylum, now facing legal challenges.

So what are the chances there’s action on this from Congress moving forward? The finger-pointing from both sides makes the prospect seem unlikely.

“We had a bipartisan bill when the late Senator John McCain was alive,” said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D- Texas. “The ‘gang of eight’ and that bill was coming to the floor of the House. We were eagerly waiting for it. But the then-Speaker would not put it on the floor, that’s the Republicans,” she said blaming the then-majority.

Now that Republicans are in the minority, leadership has a different take.

In a House Republican leadership press conference Tuesday, House Minority Leader Rep. Kevin McCarthy, R- Calif., said this when asked why immigration legislation hasn't come to a vote:

"We tried a number of different Congresses and we brought two different bills to the floor. The real challenge was the other side of the aisle made sure no one voted for it," he said.

As lawmakers blame one another, The Bipartisan Policy Center's Theresa Cardinal Brown said in an interview Tuesday that mixed messages from the White House are also to blame.

"The president has either agreed at one point and then turned around and said 'no, I want these other things' that kill the deal or when a deal presented itself that could get him a majority of votes, he has intervened and said 'no, I won't sign that'," Brown said.

On immigration, it seems there's an impasse in Washington, as Congress readies for a long summer recess with no solution in sight.

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