Chuck DeVore: National security requires Biden to break campaign pledge on illegal immigration

Throwing open our borders to virtually unrestricted immigration would cause a crisis.

President-elect Joe Biden is already backpedaling on a dangerous campaign promise that pleased advocates of open borders, but would create a humanitarian and national security crisis on our border with Mexico.

While he pledged during the election campaign to roll back President Trump's policies that have reduced illegal immigration on his first day in office on Jan. 20, Biden said Tuesday that it would take about six months to reverse Trump's actions enforcing immigration laws.

The delay is a smart move, and Biden should use the first six months of his administration to backpedal further and embrace the reality that throwing open our borders to virtually unrestricted immigration would cause a crisis that would thrust border state governors into the greatest challenge of their careers.

BIDEN NOW SAYS IT WILL TAKE 'SIX MONTHS' TO REVERSE TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION POLICIES

But squaring his irresponsible immigration promises with reality won't be easy for Biden, and will lead to an ugly fight with far-left Democrats.

Already radical "Squad" member Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., has attacked the president-elect for pulling back on his campaign promise.

"This is a classic bait and switch," Omar tweeted. "It perpetuates Trump's dehumanization of migrants and breaks a core campaign promise. Democrats lose big when administrations won't fulfill their promise. I urge the Biden transition team to reconsider this position."

"Trust me," Biden said Tuesday. He said he was already working with authorities south of the border to end President Trump's Migrant Protection Protocols — the

"return to Mexico" policy — that was successful in quelling the human trafficking crisis on the border.

Biden now says he wants "guardrails" to prevent "2 million people on our border."

But it's already too late. Illegal immigration has risen, buoyed by the expectation of Biden ending Trump's border enforcement efforts, coupled with some form of amnesty.

"During the presidential campaign, Biden promised to reverse President Trump's strict immigration and border policies, which together with emergency travel restrictions because of the pandemic helped drive illegal immigration levels to historic lows after a surge last spring," said John Daniel Davidson, a senior fellow with the Texas Public Policy Foundation. "Numbers are once again increasing as conditions deteriorate in Central America."

Davidson and 23 other experts from the Heritage Foundation, government, and academia — both in the U.S. and Mexico — as well as four former members of Congress, gathered for a border crisis simulation for three days earlier this month. I designed and led the effort. The results were sobering. The team's report can be read here.

The simulation projected that a renewed wave of illegal immigrant caravans will be headed for the U.S.-Mexico border by January.

The new border crisis would be worsened by a Biden administration slow to comprehend and react to the situation's magnitude. This sluggishness would be compounded by three things:

1— Biden's own history of slow and often wrong decision-making.

2— Biden's appointees being ideologically sympathetic to increased illegal immigration.

3— A default assumption by Biden and his team that anything the Trump administration did was wrong.

Our simulation forecast that the illegal immigration crisis will intensify as the Biden administration implements its policy changes in the areas of border enforcement, a renewed and expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

(DACA) program, vastly expanded access to the U.S. asylum system, and proposed immigration reform legislation.

These shifts in policy and accompanying public announcements will, in and of themselves, serve as magnets to would-be illegal immigrants to the U.S.

Illegal immigrants from Central America pay drug and human trafficking cartels as much as $10,000 for passage into the U.S. These "services" include coaching on the keywords required to trigger credible fear standards to qualify for asylum.

One of the Trump administration's innovations in this regard was to process asylum claims in Mexico rather than allowing migrants across the border and then assigning them a court date with an immigration judge in the hope that they will show up.

As the number of would-be migrants overwhelms the border, there will be vastly different responses by the governors of the two most-populous states, California and Texas. As a result, California is likely to eventually see far greater numbers of illegal immigrants on its border than is Texas.

California's Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has a well-established record of welcoming illegal immigrants. In a press release last year in response to Trump's effort to tighten border controls, Newsom said: "Since our founding, this country has been a place of refuge — a safe haven for people fleeing tyranny, oppression, and violence."

Newsom then signed a bill to provide taxpayer assistance to "asylum seekers," a term that might be broadly interpreted by advocates of open borders as covering virtually all illegal immigrants.

In Texas, Republican Gov. Greg Abbott has taken a different path. Abbott has shown no hesitation to deploy state assets, including the Texas National Guard, to reinforce the 1,954-mile border with Mexico while closely cooperating with the U.S. Border Patrol.

During our simulation, Gov. Abbott's approach resulted in lawsuits claiming that Texas was stepping into immigration enforcement — exclusively the domain of the federal government.

CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR OPINION NEWSLETTER

Imagining what might happen by June 2021, we projected that the U.S. Supreme Court would vote 6-3 in favor of Texas, ruling that "the federal government [was] openly abdicating its duty to secure the United States' borders and enforce immigration law."

We further projected that the Supreme Court would find that "Texas' actions are an exercise of their constitutionally delegated state prerogatives, as reserved to them under Article 1, Section 10," of the Constitution, with the state "in imminent danger … [from] a surge of illegal aliens and goods across its borders."

Under our scenario, once the Supreme Court ruled in Texas' favor, migrants shifted west to the more welcoming California border.

CLICK HERE TO GET THE FOX NEWS APP

One last portent from our border crisis simulation was the appearance of carfentanyl, an opioid 100 times as potent as fentanyl. Carfentanyl, like fentanyl, is made in China and trafficked across our border with Mexico by the drug and human trafficking cartels. Its introduction would lead to a tragic increase in drug overdose deaths, along with injuries to law enforcement officers.

The above nightmarish scenarios are only some of the terrible results that would be caused by destroying the effective policies put in place by the Trump administration to control illegal immigration. The Biden administration will need to carefully consider these negative consequences before embracing immigration policies that will please the far-left but harm the American people.

Chuck DeVore is a vice president with the Texas Public Policy Foundation and served in the California State Assembly from 2004 to 2010.

[Disclaimer]