

A Pathway To Citizenship For Undocumented Immigrants Via Reconciliation, Durbin Says It Must Pass

July 30 2021 1:40 PM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a speech on the Senate floor, U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and lead author of the *Dream Act*, today made the case for passing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants through the budget reconciliation process.

During his speech, Durbin argued that due to four years of former President Donald Trump's 'zero-tolerance,' anti-immigrant policies and Congressional Republicans'

refusal to pass meaningful, bipartisan immigration legislation, the only viable option at this time for passing a pathway to citizenship is through the budget reconciliation process.

“Last night... we sat down with the President of the United States for more than an hour. We were discussing with him and with Vice President Harris our nation’s need for immigration reform... that’s because President Biden understands that we cannot wait any longer to fix America’s broken immigration system. It’s been 35 years, 35 years since we passed any meaningful immigration bill,” Durbin said. “Under the last Administration, our broken immigration system absolutely collapsed. Former President Donald Trump’s ‘zero-tolerance’ policy at the southern border was not only inhumane, it was ineffective. It made our nation weaker and less safe... Some of my Republican colleagues have tried to blame President Biden, who been in office for six months, with the failure of our immigration system. But the reality is Donald Trump was the one who provoked the crisis at our border.”

Durbin continued, “President Biden also recognizes that just fixing the mess of Donald Trump is not enough. We need to provide a path to citizenship for Dreamers and others who make our economy better every day and who help, over the years, to add to its growth. The vast majority of Americans agree with this—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents... Giving these people a chance to become citizens is the right thing to do. It’ll help our economy. The reforms in our immigration system could add \$150 billion to spending power in our economy every year, and over the next ten years boost our nation’s GDP by \$1.5 trillion. That’s enough money to pay off every student loan in America just by doing the right thing for immigrants in our country.”

Durbin concluded, “... I believe the only viable option at this time for passing a path to citizenship is through reconciliation. The overwhelming majority of Americans support this pathway, many who have risked their lives to save Americans during the pandemic. This is a critical component of our economic recovery and rebuilding our communities. It cannot wait any longer.”

Video of Durbin’s floor speech is available [here](#).