

# [***Opinion: Playing ball on border bill comes back to bite Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B97-2M31-DY7V-G011-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

February 9, 2024 Friday 10:36 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 1064 words

**Byline:** Opinion by Danielle Campoamor

**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; After the Democratic Party gifted the GOP with what has been lauded as the most conservative, restrictive immigration and border security bill in recent history, Republicans have rejected the proposal [*at the behest of the party's leader*](https://www.cnn.com/videos/politics/2024/01/27/donald-trump-border-bill-boast-beto-orourke-acostanr-vpx.cnn), 2024 GOP presidential frontrunner Donald Trump. After playing by Republicans' inhumane rules, Democrats are left with no agreement and emerge with battered values in the process.

[*Speaker of the House Mike Johnson proudly declared the deal was "dead on arrival"*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/04/politics/senate-border-foreign-aid-bill/index.html) after the text of the bill was released on Sunday, though it is not clear whether Johnson actually took the time to read any of it. [*Trump has continuously lambasted the legislation*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/05/politics/border-deal-senate-vote/index.html), claiming on his [*makeshift social media platform Truth Social*](https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/111879340091575646) that "only a fool, or a Radical Left Democrat, would vote for this horrendous Border Bill." His sycophantic followers in the House and the Senate have, of course, followed suit, with [*Republicans blocking the bill*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/07/politics/senate-border-ukraine-israel-aid-vote/index.html) in a procedural vote in the upper chamber.

Now, the path to any hope for immigration reform in the near future is all but blocked, and Democrats seem perplexed. More than a few liberal legislators have been scratching their heads at the notion that their political counterparts would outwardly reject an anti-immigration fantasy of a bill despite Trump's [*endless claims that rapists, criminals,*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/) [*people from so-called insane asylums*](https://www.newsweek.com/trump-bret-baier-fox-news-border-insane-asylum-claim-1807887) and deadly drugs are crossing the border willy-nilly.

"Just gobsmacked," Democratic Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii [*posted on social media*](https://x.com/brianschatz/status/1754671014703710248?s=20). "I've never seen anything like it. They literally demanded specific policy, got it, and then killed it."

This back-and-forth political theater should serve as a reminder to Democrats that playing by the inhumane rules of the GOP in the name of faux compromise is an exercise in futility and an embarrassment for the only political party acting like the adults in the room.

The bill itself - one President Joe [*Biden is all-too-happy to lobby for on the national stage*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/26/politics/senate-deal-shutdown-border/index.html) - is antithetical to the promises made at the start of the Biden-Harris presidency. On Biden's first day in office and with images of children locked in cages still fresh in our collective memory, the president sent [*a comprehensive immigration bill to Congress*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/20/fact-sheet-president-biden-sends-immigration-bill-to-congress-as-part-of-his-commitment-to-modernize-our-immigration-system/) that he claimed sought to "restore humanity and American values to our immigration system."

Now, he is championing a bill that would allow any sitting president to completely shut down the [*southern border if crossings surpass 5,000 on average per day or 8,500 in a single day.*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/26/politics/senate-deal-shutdown-border/index.html)  In a [*2018 tweet*](https://nypost.com/2018/12/28/trump-threatens-to-shut-down-border-over-impasse-on-wall-funding/), then-President Trump threatened to do much of the same - close the southern border "entirely" if he didn't get money to build his wall.

The [*$118 billion package*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/04/politics/senate-border-foreign-aid-bill/index.html) would also limit access to the asylum system, making it harder for those fleeing their homes to seek refuge in the United States. It funds the very [*"border-barrier construction"*](https://www.dhs.gov/news/2022/07/11/dhs-update-border-wall-remediation-efforts) Trump ran on not once but twice and restricts the use of what is known as humanitarian parole, in which immigrants can seek temporary legal status that allows migrants to not only enter the country but legally work.

The same so-called bipartisan bill completely leaves out the future status of the roughly [*580,000 active DACA recipients*](https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/key-facts-on-deferred-action-for-childhood-arrivals-daca/#:~:text=As%20of%20December%2031%2C%202022,coverage%20through%20Medicaid%2C%20the%20Children's), or Dreamers, whose parents brought them to this country as children without legal status.

"Dreamers are Americans," [*Biden tweeted back in 2020 during his winning presidential campaign*](https://x.com/JoeBiden/status/1272687836349837313?s=20). "But Trump ripped away the hard-won protections of DACA recipients, throwing their lives into upheaval. It's unacceptable, and on day one of my presidency I will protect them from deportation and send a bill to Congress."

Now, Biden is stomaching a piece of legislation that negates that promise and many more. Instead, presumably in the name of a re-election quest, his administration as well as rank-and-file Democrats are treating DACA recipients much like Republicans do: as political pawns worth sacrificing as they search for so-called common ground with a group of bad-faith actors who do not care what happens at the border, only that they can campaign off of it.

A compromise assumes that both parties have a general understanding of give, get, lose, gain - a concept that no longer exists in Republican ***politics*** but one that Democrats seem hellbent on holding onto. This is not the Republican Party of days long past, yet every year Democrats refuse to act accordingly. As a result, they have started to regurgitate right-wing immigration talking points, using words like [*"border crisis"*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/01/26/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-the-bipartisan-senate-border-security-negotiations/#:~:text=For%20too%20long%2C%20we%20all,finally%2C%20address%20the%20border%20crisis.) and [*"flow of deadly fentanyl*](https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/news/press-releases/baldwin-joins-bipartisan-bill-to-target-fentanyl-supply-chain)" when all evidence points to the contrary. In 2022 seizures of fentanyl were up 480% compared to 2020, [*according to US Customs and Border Protection*](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/drug-seizure-statistics) - proof that border security is doing its job and intercepting smugglers and shipments of illegal drugs.

And despite the pearl-clutching and fearmongering of GOP politicians and pundits [*warning of an immigrant "invasion,"*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/12/18/trump-immigrants-invasion-dehumanizing/) Republican lawmakers still shot down the agreement intended to address what the House speaker [*called a "catastrophe"*](https://www.cnn.com/audio/podcasts/5-things/episodes/ad684c0e-8efc-11ee-9469-c734590889a7.pdf) at the border. As Sen. Krysten Sinema of Arizona - who was arguably a Republican in Democrat clothing until becoming a member of the Independent party - [*said on the Senate floor,*](https://www.azcentral.com/story/opinion/op-ed/laurieroberts/2024/02/07/kyrsten-sinema-border-bill-impact-arizona-election/72509061007/) "After all their cable news appearances, after all those campaign photo ops in the desert, after all those trips to the border, this crisis isn't actually much of a crisis at all."

If the Democrats want to win in 2024 and beyond, it would behoove the party to stop treating the GOP as anything other than a farce and, instead, stay true to the morals, ethics and values they claim to champion. To stoop to the level of the Republican Party, where the bar is already in Satan's basement, is to diminish this country's political state as a whole. Don't take a page out of the GOP's manual; burn it.

The American voter deserves a party that stands up for what is right and upholds the very foundation of this country - one built on the backs of immigrants seeking refuge and the American dream. What voters do not need is a party that caves to their toddler counterparts by gladly handing them the cup they asked for, only to have those same toddlers throw it to the ground because it's blue, not red, and therefore "not good enough."

Opinion by Danielle Campoamor

TM & © 2024 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2024

**End of Document**