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Trump says he'll send migrants to Guantanamo Bay hours after idea floated on Fox & Friends

‘We’re evaluating and talking about that right now,’ Kristi Noem said on Fox News on Wednesday morning. ‘It’s the president’s decision.’

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Trump orders opening of Guantanamo Bay as migrant detention facility

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President **Donald Trump** on Wednesday signed an order directing his administration to revive a migrant detention facility at the **Guantanamo Bay Naval Station** in Cuba to hold detained migrants while they await deportation.

Speaking at a signing ceremony for the Laken Riley Act — the first bill he has signed into law since becoming president — Trump said the facility would be used to warehouse detainees and massively increase the number of detention beds available for holding migrants after they are arrested by American immigration officials.

“Today I’m also signing an executive order to instruct the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security to begin preparing the 30,000-person migrant facility at Guantanamo Bay,” Trump declared while signing the **Laken Riley Act** into law.

“Most people don’t even know about it. We have 30,000 beds in Guantanamo to detain the worst criminal illegal aliens threatening the American people,” he added. “Some of them are so bad we don’t even trust the countries to hold them, because we don’t want them coming back. so we’re going to send them out to Guantanamo. This will double our capacity immediately.”

The American military facility, which the US has controlled under the terms of an indefinite lease signed in 1903 and disputed by the current Cuban government, has previously been used to detain refugees from Cuba and Haiti during periods of high migration in the 1990s.

After Haiti's government was overthrown in a 1991 coup, then-president Bill Clinton ordered refugees encountered at sea to be taken to the naval facility by the US Coast Guard. At the time, US government policy was to detain and repatriate Haitian refugees found at sea, and later, detain refugees who tested positive for HIV.

In 1994, the facility was used to house roughly 50,000 Cuban and Haitian migrants. The practice ended following a series of lawsuits. Still, the US base has also been used since 2002 to house War on Terror detainees captured in the early years following the September 11, 2001 terror attacks on New York and Washington. However, only a small number remain in a purpose-built prison operated by the Department of Defense.

The idea of once more using Guantanamo Bay to house migrants may have occurred to the president, a frequent Fox News viewer, earlier on Wednesday after *Fox & Friends* morning show host **Brian Kilmeade**

ended a discussion on revoking Venezuelan migrants' temporary protected status by asking Homeland Security Secretary **Kristi Noem** if she planned on housing immigrants in a prison facility most known for housing 9/11 terror suspects.

Calling the Guantanamo Bay prison camp an "asset," Noem said that the administration was "evaluating" that possibility but that it was ultimately President Donald Trump's decision.

Hours after the idea was floated on Trump's favorite morning show, the president revealed that he was indeed going to use the infamous prison camp to house tens of thousands of migrants — once again showing the **Trump-Fox feedback loop** in real-time.

The shocking revelation comes amid the Trump administration's **mass deportation campaign** that has already resulted in thousands of arrested immigrants, many of whom **have no criminal record**, Noem **announced** that she was revoking the Temporary Protected Status extension that had **recently been granted** to over 600,000 Venezuelan migrants.

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Kristi Noem tells Fox News she's "evaluating" sending Venezuelan migrants to Guantanamo Bay, calling it an "asset." (*Fox News*)

The protection is intended to assist people who have come to the United States and cannot safely return to their country of origin due to natural disasters, armed conflicts, or political upheaval. In the case of Venezuela, residents have fled the country as its economy has collapsed amid President Nicolás Maduro's autocratic rule, which has also resulted in the stifling of political dissent.

The cancellation of the extension would likely cause fear and confusion among Venezuelan migrants, immigration advocates told *The New York Times*. “By taking this action, Secretary Noem is throwing over 600,000 into a state of ongoing bureaucratic limbo. People will no longer have any certainty as to whether they can stay in the country legally through the end of the year,” Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, a senior fellow at the American Immigration Council, said.

Fresh off **joining her first ICE raid** in which she referred to immigrants as “dirtbags,” Noem appeared on *Fox & Friends* on Wednesday to unveil her revocation of Venezuelans’ protected status, declaring that she was committed to deporting people who were in the United States illegally.

“We can’t say American citizens have to follow the law and people from other countries don’t have to. We choose laws. We put them in place. Congress has a chance to change the law. But until then, our job is to enforce it,” she stated. “And when you want to live in a country where everybody is treated the same and fairly and equally and has a chance to live the American dream, so we understand some families have been here illegally and have been perpetuating that.”

Noem continued: “That is my job. We are going after those here illegally. We have to do due diligence and get resources through Congress. We are deporting dangerous individuals and fixing our system.”

Kilmeade then wondered what she would do with migrants from countries that “don’t want to take them back,” specifically referencing Cuba and Venezuela. “We got 607,000 Venezuelans here, what do we do?” Kilmeade added.

“Well, we have a fantastic Secretary of State in Secretary Rubio,” she responded. “And he has been doing incredible work – you know, the other night, I was talking to him on the phone at one in the morning, and he was up and still discussing negotiations with other countries and working with his people in these countries to do diplomatic relations, and the president clearly will exercise all the authority and power that he has to make these countries take them back.”

The Trump-boosting Fox News star then invoked the notorious prison compound at Guantanamo Bay as a possible solution to house hundreds of thousands of migrants currently in the United States legally.

“Are you ruling out Gitmo?” Kilmeade asked.

“We’re evaluating and talking about that right now,” Noem replied. “It’s the president's decision, but it's an asset and we're going to continue to look at how we can use all of our assets to keep America safe.”

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