

[Romney Says He Would Honor Immigration Reprieves Granted by Obama](#)

The New York Times Blogs

(The Caucus)

October 2, 2012 Tuesday

Copyright 2012 The News York Times Company All Rights Reserved

Section: US; politics

Length: 664 words

Byline: JULIA PRESTON

Highlight: Mitt [Romney](#) clarified his stance about an [immigration](#) move by the [Obama](#) administration that has been hailed by Latinos.

Body

Responding to pressure from Latino groups to clarify his [immigration](#) views, [Mitt Romney](#) [told The Denver Post](#) late Monday that he would not cancel temporary [reprieves](#) from deportation that [Obama](#) is [granting](#) to hundreds of thousands of young illegal immigrants. [President](#)

"The people who have received the special visa that the president has put in place, which is a two-year visa, should expect that the visa would continue to be valid," Mr. [Romney said](#) in an interview aboard his campaign bus two days before he meets Mr. [Obama](#) in a debate in Denver.

"I'm not going to take something that they've purchased," he [said](#). He added, "Before those visas have expired, we will have the full [immigration](#) reform plan that I've proposed."

It was unclear what Mr. [Romney](#) meant when he called the deferrals "something that they've purchased," but he may have been referring to the \$465 application fee, which is steep for many immigrant families. The program is financed by the fees.

As he returned to Colorado, where Latino voters could help decide who carries the battleground state, Mr. [Romney](#) had been repeatedly pressed about his approach to the [Obama](#) administration's program, which gives two-year deferrals of deportation to young undocumented immigrants who were brought to this country as children.

Despite repeated questions at a Sept. 19 town hall meeting in Miami broadcast by Univision, a Spanish-language network, Mr. [Romney](#) declined to [say](#) whether he would continue the program, which has been highly popular in Latino and immigrant communities. He did [say](#) he would not support any mass roundup and deportation of illegal immigrants.

In the Denver Post interview, Mr. [Romney](#) did not fill in new details about the reform plan he would propose, or [say](#) how he would steer it through Congress, where there is a partisan stalemate on the issue.

Mr. [Romney](#)'s statement seemed likely to play well among Latinos in Colorado, who have been turning out by the thousands for legal counseling sessions about the deferrals. Many undocumented immigrants have [said](#) they are holding back from applying for the program until after the Nov. 6 elections, because they fear that Mr. [Romney](#) would halt it if he were elected.

Young immigrants had praise but also some skepticism. "We think it is important that Governor [Romney said](#) that people who have already received their deferred action permits will be able to keep them," [said](#) Lorella Praeli,

Romney Says He Would Honor Immigration Reprieves Granted by Obama

a leader of the United We Dream Network, a nationwide group. "However, it is still not clear whether he is intending to allow those of us who have not applied yet to continue to apply."

Many immigration policy analysts noted a conspicuous error in Mr. Romney's choice of words, which suggested a misunderstanding about basic terms of the debate. Mr. Obama's program, which he put in place by executive directive, does not confer any visas or legal status. The program, known as deferred action, suspends deportations only on a case-by-case basis.

"It is disturbing that he does not know the difference between a visa and deferred action," said Margaret Stock, a retired Army lieutenant colonel who is an immigration lawyer in Alaska and a Republican. "Nobody got a visa through this program. That would have required Congressional action."

"This is Immigration Law 101," Ms. Stock said. "It looks like a major fumble by whoever is advising him on immigration."

Since taking hard-line positions during the Republican nominating contests, Mr. Romney has moderated his position, saying he could support legislation to give permanent resident visas, known as green cards, to young immigrants who serve in the military. Still, polls suggest that Mr. Obama had far broader support among Latinos than Mr. Romney.

More than 100,000 immigrants have applied for deferrals, a number that officials say is increasing steadily. As many as 1.2 million immigrants could be immediately eligible.

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Document-Type: News

Publication-Type: Web Blog

Subject: IMMIGRATION (91%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (90%); HISPANIC AMERICANS (90%); PASSPORTS & VISAS (89%); INTERVIEWS (89%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2012 (77%); ELECTIONS (77%); TALKS & MEETINGS (77%); US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES 2008 (77%); PUBLIC POLICY (75%); PUBLIC HEARINGS (74%); CHILDREN (72%); VOTERS & VOTING (72%); LANGUAGE & LANGUAGES (64%)

Company: DENVER POST CORP (58%)

Organization: Denver Post; Univision

Person: MITT ROMNEY (79%); BARACK OBAMA (77%); Obama, Barack; Romney, Mitt

Geographic: DENVER, CO, USA (77%); COLORADO, USA (92%); Colorado

Load-Date: October 2, 2012

Romney Says He Would Honor Immigration Reprieves Granted by Obama

End of Document