



## Obama Heckled by Hispanic Immigration Activists

While speaking in support of Democratic Governor Dan Malloy in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on November 2, President Obama was interrupted at least four times by activists scattered throughout the room who urged him to use executive action to address immigration. What was surprising, however, given Obama's history of strong support for "immigration reform" that includes amnesty for illegal immigrants, is that those who heckled him objected to his "strong" stance on deportations.



The *Washington Times* reported that members of an immigrant rights' group called United We Dream from Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York confronted Obama as he delivered his speech.

"Dreamers will not take any more political delays or excuses," the *Times* quoted Maria Praeli of Connecticut, a member of the group, as saying. "Our community expects President Obama to be broad in using his executive authority to provide deportation relief to millions of people from our community, including parents of Dreamers, and we're here to hold him accountable to his promise."

Police apprehended two young men after they repeatedly interrupted the president's speech with their shouts. One was wearing a T-shirt that said "Obama Deports Parents." After they were led away, Obama said, "Let's try again," only to be interrupted a few moments later by a woman who started screaming at him. The president responded to her shouts:

Hold on, young lady. Hold on a second. Hold on. Hold on. You're a DREAMer, and I gave you relief administratively, and we're going to work on the next one. The Republicans are blocking immigration reform. That's one more reason why we need a Democratic Senate. (Applause.) So I support you. I'm with you. I'm with you. I'm with you. And you need to go protest the Republicans. (Applause.) Because I'm not the one blocking it.

Following another interruption a few minutes later, during which Obama's supporters shouted down the heckler with chants of "Four more years!" the president remarked:

So, listen, here's the good thing about a democracy, is everybody can speak. As I said before, it's always ironic that the folks who are shouting don't understand that we actually support their issue. (Applause.) The folks who don't support the issue are the ones who are voting against Dan Malloy. So they need to go to the other rally and focus on them.

Despite the protesters' discontent, Obama was actually telling the truth when he said, "We actually support their issue." When he told the woman from United We Dream, "You're a DREAMer, and I gave you relief administratively, and we're going to work on the next one," and "So I support you. I'm with you," his words reflected his administration's policies. Consider how he worked to implement the DREAM Act.

DREAM — the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act — was introduced in the Senate in 2001 and varying versions of the act were introduced in the 107th through 111th Congresses. Obama



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supported the 2011 version of the bill as part of his efforts to accomplish “immigration reform.” Though the legislation had not passed, on June 15, 2012, the president announced that his administration would stop deporting young illegal immigrants who met certain criteria previously proposed under the DREAM Act.

The Obama administration policy to implement DREAM by executive action is known as Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA). DACA is a memorandum authored by the Obama administration on June 15, 2012. It directs U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to practice “prosecutorial discretion” toward some individuals who were brought to this country illegally as children and have remained in the country illegally.

“Prosecutorial discretion” is, for all practical purposes, amnesty.

After the House of Representatives repeatedly refused to consider legislation that would include the president’s (and the Senate “Gang of Eight’s) brand of “immigration reform,” Obama announced his intention to implement his policy unilaterally last June 30, when he said he had asked two of his Cabinet secretaries “to identify additional actions my administration can take on our own ... to do what Congress refuses to do and fix as much of our immigration system as we can.”

In other words, if Congress refused to pass legislation acceptable to him, Obama would circumvent Congress and implement action by means of executive actions.

When Obama relented on September 6 and postponed such actions — for fear they would be so unpopular they would be a drag on Democratic senate candidates running in November — he raised the ire of pro-amnesty, anti-deportation activists of the same stripe as those who heckled him Sunday in Connecticut. Even though the White House statement announcing the delay until after the elections promised “The President will take action on immigration before the end of the year,” immigration activists protested. Arturo Carmona of Presente.org called Obama’s turnabout “a betrayal” of the Latino community and “shameful,” and said that the president “is once again demonstrating that for him, politics come before the lives of Latino and immigrant families.”

In an attempt to assuage such feelings among pro-“immigration reform” (which usually means pro-amnesty) supporters, Obama said during a speech at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute’s 37th Annual Awards Gala in Washington on October 2:

I’ve said before that if Congress failed to live up to its responsibilities to solve this problem, I would act to fix as much of our immigration system as I can on my own, and I meant what I said. So this is not a question of if, but when.

“When” is apparently not soon enough for the members of United We Dream and other pro-amnesty activists who have been giving Obama such a hard time.

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