



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on November 14, 2014

Rep. Walter Jones Says Impeachment Is the Answer to Obama's Immigration Plans

Congress should consider impeaching President Obama if he tries to change the requirements of immigration law by executive action, veteran Congressman Walter B. Jones, Jr. (R-NC) said in an [interview with Breitbart News](#). Should the president grant legal status to more undocumented immigrants, it would be a constitutional issue involving the separation of powers, Jones told Breitbart, and not a matter to be resolved by restricting funding as some Republicans have suggested.



"To me a constitutional question means that we have the option of impeachment," Jones said in an interview Breitbart published Thursday. "We have a Constitution, and I am very disappointed from year to year that we do not follow the Constitution. To me, if you think the president has violated his trust of office, meaning with the American people, then follow the Constitution."

The *New York Times* [reported](#) Friday that "as soon as next week," Obama will announce an overhaul of the nation's immigration enforcement that will "protect up to five million unauthorized immigrants from the threat of deportation and provide many of them with work permits," the *Times* said, based on information from "administration officials who have direct knowledge of the plan."

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Congressional Republicans have issued warnings and appeals to the president against taking such executive action, with Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, soon to be the Senate's new majority leader, likening the move to waving a "red flag" in front of the Republican opposition, which, after last week's elections, will have majorities in both houses of Congress. The president promised to take executive action this summer, voicing his frustration over House inaction on a bill reforming immigration law passed by the Senate a year earlier. He later said he was postponing any move on immigration until after the November elections.

In his post-election press conference on November 5, Obama said he would use executive action as a spur to bring about a resolution by Congress to what he has repeatedly called a "broken immigration system." "My executive actions not only do not prevent them from passing a law that supercedes those actions, but should be a spur for them to actually try to get something done," he said.

But if Congress were to pass an immigration reform bill less expansive than Obama's executive actions, would the president acquiesce in taking back or reducing any of the protections he will have already extended to millions of illegal immigrants? It seems more likely he would veto any bill that does not meet or exceed the goals he has established. His failure to do so would be seen as a retreat on his part, especially by Latino and Hispanic advocates of immigration reform who have already been complaining about his delays in issuing the promised executive orders.

In June of 2012, Obama issued an executive decree making millions of young illegals who were brought



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here as children eligible for legal status and work permits. The order amounted to an implementation of legislation called the Dream Act (for Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors). The bill was introduced in the Senate in 2001, and though a House version passed in 2010, the legislation was never authorized by both houses of Congress. Last summer the Republican-majority House voted to cut funding for the president's program, called Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals, but the Democratic-controlled Senate did not take up the measure.

Throughout the summer, Republicans issued warnings of a constitutional crisis, with former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin and Representative Steven King of Iowa calling for impeachment if Obama follows through on his promised executive action. The Republican House leadership disavowed any impeachment plans, but Democrats used the threats in fundraising letters to spur donations to Democratic candidates.

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) did not use the "I-word" [in a fiery speech on the Senate floor](#) last July, but he did warn that the action contemplated by the president would be "exceedingly dangerous."

"Congress makes laws, the executive branch executes those laws. It's that simple," the three-term senator said as he warned of a constitutional crisis if the president acts without authorization of Congress. "Such calculated action strains the constitutional structure of our republic," Sessions said. "Such unlawful and unconstitutional action, if taken, cannot stand. No Congress, Republican or Democrat, can allow such action to occur or to be maintained. The people will not stand for it. They must not stand for it."

Jones, who represents North Carolina's Third District, won election to an 11th term this fall. He is the son of a former Democratic congressman of the same name and was a Democrat himself before switching parties in 1994. As a Republican, he has often broken with party leadership on contentious issues. He initially supported the Iraq War, even to the point of leading the effort to have French fries renamed "Freedom fries" on the House cafeteria menu as a protest against France's opposition to the 2003 invasion. He later turned against the war when allegations concerning Iraq's weapons of mass destruction proved to be untrue, and after he had heard the final letter of a constituent who was killed in Iraq read at the soldier's funeral. He called on President George W. Bush to apologize for misleading the Congress into authorizing the war and, in 2005, he joined with three other members of Congress in introducing a resolution calling for the withdrawal of U.S. forces by October 2006. Regarding tensions between Iran and the West over Tehran's controversial nuclear program, Jones in 2007 introduced a resolution to forbid any military action against Iran without congressional authorization, unless Iran were to attack the United States. In 2012, he proposed in a resolution that Congress consider the waging of war by the president without an Act of Congress grounds for impeachment for "high Crimes and Misdemeanors," as authorized by the Constitution.

Jones voted earlier this year against the House Republicans' lawsuit against the president for authorizing changes in the implementation to the Affordable Care Act that contradict provisions spelled out in the legislation. Jones told the Washington journal *The Hill* that a lawsuit spearheaded by Speaker John Boehner is a waste of time and money. "Why not impeach instead of wasting \$1 million to \$2 million of the taxpayers' money?" said Jones. "If you're serious about this, use what the founders of the Constitution gave us."



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