



Sen. Sessions, Rep. Brat Warn Colleagues to Curb Immigration

In an open letter to congressional colleagues published by the Washington, D.C.-based *Roll Call* on October 19, Senator Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) and Representative Dave Brat (R-Va.) warned against “immigration reform” that does nothing to curb what they regard as excessively high immigration levels.



“Immigration reform should mean improvements to immigration policy to benefit Americans,” stated the two members of Congress.

The congressional pair cited Census Bureau projections indicating that the foreign-born share of the U.S. population will soon exceed the highest levels ever recorded, and will increase to new record highs during each upcoming year.

Sessions and Brat observed that proponents of “immigration reform” are prone to crying out, “‘We must pass immigration reform!’ without ever explaining what they believe ‘immigration reform’ means.”

As one example of false immigration reform, the duo asked colleagues to consider the Senate-passed 2013 “gang of eight” immigration bill, which they noted was supported by “giant special interests” including “tech oligarchs” represented by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg’s FWD.us, groups promoting open borders such as La Raza (Spanish for “The Race”), and what they described as the “globalist class embodied by the billionaire-run Partnership for a New American Economy.”

The letter continued its blunt observations about the “Gang of Eight” bill:

For these and countless other interest groups who helped write the bill, it delivered spectacularly: the tech giants would receive double the number of low-wage H-1B workers to substitute for Americans. La Raza would receive the further opening of America’s borders (while Democratic politicians gain more political power). And the billionaire lobby would receive the largest supply of visas for new low-skilled immigrants in our history, transferring wealth and bargaining power from workers to their employers.

Sessions and Brat hit the nail on the head by noting:

This is not immigration reform. This is the dissolution of the nation state, of the principle that a government exists to serve its own people.

The congressmen then went on to compare the growth (and decline) of the U.S. middle class during historic periods of high and low immigration. They noted that as a result of laws passed in the early 1920s (which included the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924), America’s foreign-born population shrank between 1920 and 1970, declining from 14 million to 9.6 million. For half a century, as the number of immigrants declined both in total number and as a share of the population, our nation experienced rapid wage growth.



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on October 21, 2015

Sessions and Brat cite figures from the Congressional Research Service indicating that from 1945 to 1970 — as the foreign-born population fell — the bottom 90 percent of U.S. wage earners experienced an 82.5 percent increase in their wages. They noted that during that time, “millions of prior immigrants were able to climb out of the tenements and into the middle class.”

But things changed, they noted:

In 1965, Congress passed a new immigration law which helped produce an unprecedented wave of low-skilled immigration. The foreign-born population more than quadrupled, from fewer than 10 million in 1970 to more than 42 million today. In 1970, fewer than 1 in 21 residents were foreign-born, today it is approaching 1 in 7. In cities such as Los Angeles and New York, almost 4 in 10 current residents were born in another country. One-fifth of our residents now speak a language other than English at home. One-quarter of our residents is now either an immigrant or born to immigrant parents.

The large increase in immigration came at an unfortunate time, noted the congressmen. It coincided with workers being replaced by automation and a shrinking job market. Manufacturing plants began closing their doors. The surplus of labor drove wages downward. Today, 66 million working-age residents are not working and real-average hourly earnings are lower now than they were in 1973.

Sessions and Brat cited Congressional Research Service reports showing that during the 43 years between 1970 and 2013 — when the foreign-born population grew 325 percent — incomes for the bottom 90 percent of earners fell nearly 8 percent.

As for what the congressional pair propose as a solution, they state:

We should only admit as many new arrivals as we can reasonably expect to absorb into our schools, labor markets and communities. We must never admit so large a number that the immigrants themselves are unlikely to enter the middle class or achieve stable incomes. And we have to recognize that there are record millions already living inside our borders in desperate need of a job.

After nearly half a century of massive immigration it is time to turn our attention to our own residents. It is time to help our own workers, families and communities — immigrant and U.S.-born — rise together into the middle class.

We need an immigration policy that shows compassion for Americans.

Sessions, who is chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, has been one of the most outspoken members of Congress on the topic of the harmful effects of America’s unrestrained immigration policies. On April 9, he and Senate Minority Whip Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) led a bipartisan coalition of senators in sending a letter to then-Attorney General Eric Holder, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, and Labor Secretary Thomas Perez, asking them to investigate Southern California Edison’s use of the H-1B guest-worker program to replace American workers.

The letter, which was signed by eight other senators besides Sessions and Durbin, noted: “A number of U.S. employers, including some large, well-known, publicly-traded corporations, have reportedly laid off thousands of American workers and replaced them with H-1B visa holders.”

The senators also asked whether the U.S. companies (or the IT consulting contractors that they retained) — by laying off American workers and replacing them with H-1B workers — “have engaged in



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prohibited citizenship status discrimination against U.S. citizens.”

Though Democrats have often favored a very loose immigration policy because, upon becoming eligible to vote, immigrants overwhelmingly support Democratic candidates, in this instance senators on both sides of the aisle agreed on the necessity of protecting American jobs by eliminating the practice of giving U.S. workers’ jobs to foreign H-1B visa holders.

Protecting the interests of American workers should not be a partisan issue. Voters should hold their representatives in Congress accountable for supporting sensible immigration policies that protect their jobs and allow them to earn a living wage in the free market.

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