



## Obama: I will bypass Congress to fix immigration

*Announces less immigration enforcement in interior, more at border*

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By [Stephen Dinan](#) - The Washington Times

Monday, June 30, 2014

President Obama announced a retreat on interior immigration enforcement Monday, saying he is going to shift resources from deporting illegal immigrants inside the U.S. and send them to the border to try to stop the latest surge of children and families attempting to cross.

The announcement amounts to a concession that the chances for a broad immigration deal are deal this year.

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Mr. Obama also said he will take action by the end of the summer to try to halt even more deportations, once he gets a final recommendation back from his attorney general and Homeland Security chief.

"If congress will not do their job, at least we can do ours," the president said in an afternoon speech from the [White House](#)([topics/white-house/](#)) Rose Garden.

He was trying to use one stone to kill two birds: He has been under fierce pressure from immigrant-rights groups to halt deportations within the interior of the U.S., while also facing pressure to handle the surge of children and families, who have exposed massive holes in current border security.

But his moves also sent mixed messages — those crossing the border remain at danger for deportation, but those who can sneak past the border and into the interior, or who bypass the border altogether by arriving but overstaying their visas, will not be targets.

Mr. Obama said he was forced to act after House Speaker [John A. Boehner](#)([topics/john-a-boehner/](#)) told him last week that the House won't vote this year on an immigration legalization bill.

The Senate passed a bill in a bipartisan vote last year, but it has been bottled up by [Mr. Boehner](#)([topics/john-a-boehner/](#)) and fellow House Republicans who fear the political consequences, and who also argue they can't trust Mr. Obama to enforce the law.

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Two years ago, Mr. Obama also took to the Rose Garden to announce his first executive action on immigration — a unilateral halt to deportations for up to 1 million young adult illegal immigrants. That move, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA, remains controversial, and is one of the reasons the GOP argues it can't trust Mr. Obama to enforce the law.

Republicans also blame DACA and lax enforcement for the current surge of children and families from Central America, who are pouring across the border and overwhelming the government's ability to deal with it.

"The president's own executive orders have led directly to the humanitarian crisis along the southern border, giving false hope to children and their families that if they enter the country illegally they will be allowed to stay," [Mr. Boehner](#)([topics/john-a-boehner/](#)) said in a statement Monday afternoon. "The [White House](#)([topics/white-house/](#)) claims it will move to return these children to their families in their home countries, yet additional executive action from this president isn't going to stem the tide of illegal crossings, it's only going to make them worse."

Mr. Obama denies that his policies are to blame, saying the surge is due to horrific conditions in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

Still, he has struggled to come up with policies to halt the surge.

On Monday he sent a letter to Congress saying he will ask for more money to boost immigration judges and to acquire more detention space, hoping to hold illegal immigrants longer and speed their

deportation. His hope is that will send a message that new arrivals won't be allowed to stay.

That contrasts with most of the 11 million who already made it into the country and whom he wants to legalize.