

## FROM 1A/NATIONAL

## Congress Takes On Immigration Issue Amid Election Pressures

BY ALAN FRAM  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate begins a rare, open-ended debate on immigration and the fate of the “Dreamer” immigrants on Monday, and Republican senators say they’ll introduce President Donald Trump’s plan. Though his proposal has no chance of passage, Trump may be the most influential voice in the conversation.

If the aim is to pass a legislative solution, Trump will be a crucial and, at times, complicating player. His day-to-day turnabouts on the issues have confounded Democrats and Republicans and led some to urge the White House to minimize his role in the debate for fear he’ll say something that undermines the effort.

Yet his ultimate support will be vital if Congress is to overcome election-year pressures against compromise. No Senate deal is likely to see the light of day in the more conservative House without the president’s blessing and promise to sell compromise to his hard-line base.

Trump, thus far, has balked on that front.

“The Tuesday Trump versus the Thursday Trump, after the base gets to him,” is how Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., a proponent of compromise, describes the president and the impact



The Capitol Dome of the Capitol Building at sunrise Friday in Washington. The Senate is ready for a showdown debate over immigration, including whether to protect young “Dreamers” from deportation, in an election-year battle that’s sure to electrify both parties’ most fervent voters and could well end in stalemate.

AP PHOTO/ANDREW HARNIK

conservative voters and his hard-right advisers have on him. “I don’t know how far he’ll go, but I do think he’d like to fix it.”

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., scheduled an initial procedural vote for Monday evening to commence debate. It is expected to succeed easily, and then the Senate will sort through proposals, perhaps for weeks.

Democrats and some Republicans say they want to help the “Dreamers,” young immigrants who have lived in the U.S. illegally

since they were children and have only temporarily been protected from deportation by an Obama-era program. Trump has said he wants to aid them and has even proposed a path to citizenship for 1.8 million, but in exchange wants \$25 billion for his proposed U.S.-Mexico border wall plus significant curbs to legal immigration.

McConnell agreed to the open-ended debate, a Senate rarity in recent years, after Democrats agreed to vote to end a three-day government shutdown they’d forced over the issue. They’d

initially demanded a deal toward helping Dreamers, not a simple promise of votes.

To prevail, any plan will need 60 votes, meaning substantial support from both parties is mandatory. Republicans control the chamber 51-49 but GOP Sen. John McCain of Arizona has been home for weeks battling brain cancer.

Seven GOP senators said late Sunday that they will introduce Trump’s framework, which they called a reasonable compromise that has White House backing. The group includes Sens.

Tom Cotton of Arkansas, John Cornyn of Texas and Iowa’s Charles Grassley.

Democrats adamantly oppose Trump’s plan, particularly its barring of legal immigrants from sponsoring their parents or siblings to live in the U.S. It has no chance of getting the 60 votes needed to survive. The plan will give GOP lawmakers a chance to stake out a position, but it could prove an embarrassment to the White House if some Republicans join Democrats and it’s rejected by a substantial margin.

Another proposal likely to surface, backed by some Republicans and many Democrats, would give Dreamers a chance at citizenship but provide no border security money or legal immigration restrictions. It too would be certain to fail.

Votes are also possible on a compromise by a small bipartisan group led by Sens. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C. It would provide possible citizenship for hundreds of thousands of Dreamers, \$2.7 billion for border security and some changes in legal immigration rules. McCain and Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., would offer legal status but not necessarily citizenship, and require tougher border security without promising wall money.

Trump has rejected both proposals.

Some senators have discussed a bare-bones plan to protect Dreamers for a year in exchange for a year’s worth of security money. Flake has said he’s working on a three-year version of that.

“I still think that if we put a good bill to the president, that has the support of 65, 70 members of the Senate, that the president will accept it and the House will like it as well,” Flake told NBC’s “Meet the Press” on Sunday.

Underscoring how hard it’s been for lawmakers to find an immigration compromise, around two dozen moderates from both parties have met for weeks to seek common ground. So have the No. 2 Democratic and GOP House and Senate leaders. Neither group has come forward with a deal.

In January, Trump invited two dozen lawmakers from both parties to the White House in what became a nearly hour-long immigration negotiating session. He asked them to craft a “bill of love” and said he’d sign a solution they’d send him.

At another White House session days later, he told Durbin and Graham he was rejecting their bipartisan offer. He used a profanity to describe African nations and said he’d prefer immigrants from Norway, comments that have soured many Democrats about Trump’s intentions.

## SEMINAR

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attendance.

“Greene County has over 200 churches and a lot of them have called our office, wanting us to come out and put on a program,” Hankins said. “Unfortunately, we can’t get around to every church, so we tried to have one centralized location that we can have everybody in and teach this class.”

Approximately 165 people attended the event out of the 232 people who registered for the course. Those who attended heard a presentation by Johnny Welch, who has more than 30 years of experience in law enforcement and retired as assistant director of the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy in Nashville a few years ago.

Some of the items Welch

discussed included how to identify issues that may lead to faith-based organizations being targeted, risk factors to consider, tools to help protect congregations, protecting vulnerable areas (such as nurseries and classrooms) and how to create emergency action plans.

Scott Gailey, a member of Harris Memorial Free Will Baptist Church in Camp Creek, said he came out to try and educate himself as much as possible.

“Some of the issues for us personally would be the small things as opposed to the big things,” he said. “Better safety for prevention of a fire or things like that.”

Gailey said the sheriff offering a class for free to the public was beneficial.

Roger Dykes, a pastor at Brittontown Church in Afton, believed coming out to the seminar was a wise decision. He had already

learned some new tips by the time lunch rolled around.

“It was more of the safety tips that I had not thought anything about, like weather-related problems,” he said. “I’ve always thought about security and that but I hadn’t really thought much about the weather.”

He said his church would work to install some of the safety tips given during the seminar. Brittontown was already in the process of installing security cameras, according to Dykes.

Hankins said he was glad to be able to offer the seminar and hopes it informs members of faith-based organizations.

“Maybe it will educate and help the churches around to be able to protect themselves and keep somebody from coming in on them,” he said. “Maybe save some lives some day is what we’re hoping.”



Johnny Welch, a retired assistant director at the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, speaks to about 165 attendees of a church safety seminar Saturday.

SUN PHOTO BY NICK SHEPHERD

## FLOODING

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Tuesday, he said.

Waters in the northern end of the valley were receding Monday morning, said Weems, who was out checking the roads on that side of the county. Lick Creek is receding in the Ottway area and water was expected to be off the roads by later Monday, he said.

However, water from Lick Creek may remain on the roads in the Pottertown, Mohawk and McDonald area at least until Tuesday, Weems said.

Crews have placed “high water” signs along roadways and motorists are asked to remain alert to water on the roadways, particularly in the Lick Creek valley, he said. It

is best to turn around if a driver encounters high waters, he added.

Drivers throughout the county should also be alert for debris in roadways where driveway gravel has washed out, Weems continued.

Crews will be out cleaning up these areas, as well as cleaning leaves and other debris out of storm drainage tile, he said. While there has not been any major damage to the roads caused by the rain, Weems said, clogged storm drains have caused some issues.

“When we have our first major rainfall after all the leaves have fallen, the drainage tiles get filled with them, and we will have crews out cleaning them as we can,” he said.

This work may take a few weeks to reach all the

area in the county, according to Weems.

Rainfall totals varied throughout Greene County with the heaviest in the western end of the county. For the 72-hour period, Mosheim received the most, at 2.64 inches, and 1.88 inches fell in Greeneville, according to Jessica Whiton, a meteorologist in the National Weather Service Office in Morristown.

Other areas reporting rainfall amounts were

Chucky with 1.72 inches, Whiton said, Cedar Creek with 1.47 inches and 0.096 at Nolachucky.

Rain continues to be in the forecast for the remainder of the week, although not to the extent of this weekend, Whiton said.

There is a slight chance of rain on Tuesday, and if any falls, it will be very light, she continued.

A better chance of rain comes Wednesday,

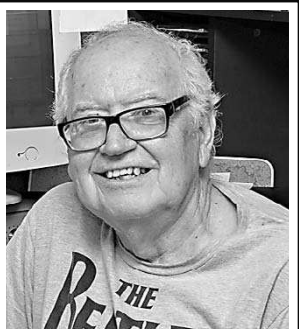
according to Whiton, but accumulations will be on the lighter side at around one-tenth of a hundredth of an inch.

Friday brings a greater chance of heavier rain with more accumulation, she added.

Temperatures for the week are to be on the mild side, according to the forecast, with high temperatures in the 50s on Tuesday and Wednesday, reaching into the low 70s Thursday before falling back to the 60s on Friday.

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