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Q & A: Congresswoman Linda Sanchez

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

This week, we are discussing immigration reform. Today, we hear from Congresswoman Linda Sanchez, D-CA.

The question: What will it take to get immigration reform passed and what are the prospects for passage?
Cong. Sanchez:

In order for immigration reform to get done this year, we need Republicans to stop playing politics with a problem we should have fixed long ago. I'm ready to move forward; the majority of Democrats are ready to move forward; and I believe the majority of Americans are ready to move forward. But the fact is, without bipartisan support, we cannot reform our broken immigration system. The Senate requires 60 votes to pass an immigration reform. With 56 Democrats, 2 Independents, and 42 Republicans, the reality that Republican votes are needed in order for something to happen is a reality that can't be ignored.

We need an immigration reform that is tough, fair, efficient and humane. There is no getting around this. We can keep adding border patrol agents, National Guard and even an army at our border ? at great expense -- and this is not going to solve the fundamental problem we have. Without a system that lets us weed out those who would do us harm from those who come here to be reunited with family, work hard, and contribute to the greatness of this country, we will simply be throwing our resources down a black hole.

Nevertheless, it is possible to get immigration reform done this year. We need Republicans to come to the table to find common ground on more than just border security. The fact is, in the last few years we have dramatically increased our resources at the border, and crime among the border states is down to its lowest level in decades. Police Chiefs from border states confirm that this is fact, despite the media hype about drug cartels.

Republicans must be pressured to stop demonizing immigrants and recognize the tremendous growth they bring to our economy. They need to be reminded that all our states --and our country as a whole-- will benefit from immigration reform. The November elections may be the best time to remind them of this. Only when they are willing to admit that the status quo is unsustainable will we finally see the logjam clear.

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