

## Republicans without borders

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Illegal border crossings averaged 21% higher annually under Trump than under Obama. The conservative Cato Institute says: “Trump oversaw a virtual collapse in interior immigration enforcement.” Because illegal immigration inflames their base, Republicans would rather perpetuate the problem than solve it.

House Republicans recently shelved legislation blocking lawful immigration by asylum-seekers after Republican Tony Gonzales (R-TX) accused his party of political posturing. “We can’t just throw bombs and rhetoric,” Gonzales said.

Desperate to deflect and distract, Rep. David Rouzer wrote “Many constituents ask what a Republican majority in the House is going to do to shore up our border?” Rouzer answered with a fear-mongering, deceptive diatribe that proved Gonzales’ point.

Gonzales represents 800 miles along the U.S.-Mexico border, more than any other lawmaker. Calling his district “the epicenter” of migration, Gonzales said “Trying to ban legitimate asylum claims, 1) it’s not Christian, and 2), it’s very anti-American.” Gonzales added: “Border security is extremely important. Reforming our immigration system and fixing it so innocent people aren’t being exploited is equally important.”

Congress hasn’t addressed these issues comprehensively since President Clinton’s 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. On his first day as President, Biden sent Congress a comprehensive bill to reform immigration, strengthen border security, “expedite screening and enhance the ability to identify narcotics and other contraband at every land, air, and sea port of entry.” Rouzer opposed it.

In his FY22 and FY23 Omnibus budget packages, and in a Dec. 2022 request, Biden sought billions of dollars for even more border security. Republicans like Rouzer voted “NO!”

By voting against border security, then blaming Biden for the consequences, Rouzer made himself the poster boy for Gonzales’ condemnation of the problem: “There's a reason we haven't gotten significant border security done and why we haven't seen significant immigration reform done. It is in the interest of many politicians to have this crisis continue to flare up.”

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