

and we need to listen to what they have to say about what is going on. There was general agreement that when it comes to offering a path to citizenship, the President's proposal was surprisingly generous. Nobody expected the President to offer a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million young adults. That was extraordinarily generous.

Right now, in the program that was created by President Obama, which will expire March 5, there are 690,000 DACA recipients. They are the people who signed up for this deferred action, not for a path to citizenship, not for legal status, but an agreement by the government that we are not going to try to deport them. They also get work permits during the pendency of their DACA status. This President has offered DACA recipients something President Obama never did—a pathway to citizenship for three times as many as are covered by the deferred action program.

The Hispanic leaders I spoke with also supported, in addition to that pillar of what the President proposed, additional border security measures. One spoke about the "collateral benefits" to border communities of new technology, personnel, and improved infrastructure. Jobs increase, restaurants and hotels benefit, communities are safer for the families and the children who live there.

They stress that when it comes to border security, we need to be thinking about it three-dimensionally. In other words, they said that we need to consider a system. I have heard the Secretary of Homeland Security refer to what the President has proposed as a wall system. It is not just a physical barrier; it is access roads, cameras, sensors, radars, aerostats, and other things to try to make sure our border is secure.

Ultimately, my conversation with these constituents was very constructive, but I had to be honest with them. I had to admit that I have been disappointed so far. I haven't heard much in the way of ideas from our Democratic colleagues, other than old proposals that will not become law. Even though they claim to support these young people, the DACA recipients, and even though they claim to support a pathway to citizenship for them, they have done nothing to respond to President Trump's very generous offer and the four pillars of his proposal. So far, they have indicated that they have little interest in negotiating.

The deadline set for those negotiations is February 8, just a couple of days from now. After that, we will be here on the Senate floor with an open and freewheeling debate and amendment process. But we want to achieve a solution that can become law, and so far, we haven't had a willing dance partner in our Democratic colleagues.

The President has made an extraordinary offer. I don't know whether it is because they don't want this President

to claim any credit for any accomplishment or whether they prefer to have a political issue that they want to take to the election in November or whether they are just willing to toy with the lives of these young people because they deem it politically expedient. Well, none of those are acceptable. And it is really puzzling. There is no reason why they shouldn't support closing loopholes for our illegal immigration problem and increasing security on the border.

I have heard many of our colleagues across the aisle say: Border security? No problem—until you start asking them to be specific about what that means, not only in terms of an authorization or plan, but what does that mean in terms of appropriations or money?

According to published reports, the Democratic leader, the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, offered the President \$25 billion toward border security—\$5 billion upfront and \$20 billion more in appropriations and authorization. Then, after they shut down the government, after the President made his proposal, he took that off the table. So far, we have heard nothing from our Democratic colleagues to respond to the President's generous, good-faith offer.

One thing we need to do for sure is to regain the public's confidence when it comes to immigration. We need to reclaim our legacy not only as a nation of immigrants, which we proudly are, but as a nation of laws. That is why people are so frustrated and emotional and angry about the status quo. That is one reason this President was elected. They thought he would bring an end to the lawlessness of our illegal immigration system. But in order to get this done, we have to be able to negotiate in good faith, and we have to be able to compromise, which leads me to wonder, again, whether our friends across the aisle want an issue they plan to take to the election in November or they actually want a solution.

Are they going to actually use these young DACA recipients as a means to accomplish their goal, which is to regain the majority in the House and the Senate after the November 2018 elections? I hope I am wrong, but I don't see any indication so far that I am.

As the President said in last week's State of the Union Message, the ultimate proposal should be one "where nobody gets everything they want, but where our country gets the critical reforms it needs." That is exactly right.

In my home State of Texas, nearly 124,000 DACA recipients are our neighbors. They are an important thread in the fabric of our communities. All of us feel sympathy for these young adults who are in limbo. I remain committed to finding a solution because, in our country, we don't penalize children for the mistakes their parents made. But as the President said last week, "Americans are dreamers, too," and part of their dream is to live in a coun-

try where the law is enforced and respected.

I support the President in his call for upholding the strong rule of law in this country, but the question for today is, Why hold everything else hostage for this unrelated immigration issue? And why, if our Democratic colleagues are willing to shut down the government over that unrelated immigration issue, aren't they willing to respond to the President's generous, good-faith offer to bring a solution to the problem? We need to know what their plans are. What is their proposal that can become law?

The clock is ticking. We know the ending date for this program is March 5. Ultimately, what we are dealing with is people's lives. What do our colleagues care most about? Do they care about political advantage or trying to preserve an issue that will be to their advantage in the upcoming election? Or do they actually care about these young DACA recipients, 690,000 of them, or the 1.8 million that President Trump has offered—an incredibly generous offer—as long as we can deal with these other issues like border security, chain migration, and the diversity lottery visa?

We are waiting for our Democratic colleagues to come to us with a good-faith proposal, but so far all we hear is crickets.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### REMEMBERING CHRISTOPHER FOLEY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I wish to begin this afternoon by offering condolences to the family and friends of Christopher Foley of Louisa County, VA. Mr. Foley was killed last Wednesday when his truck collided with an Amtrak train carrying many of my fellow lawmakers to a conference in West Virginia. He was just 28 years old. He leaves behind his fiancée Adriana and Rylan, their 1-year-old son.

Our thoughts are with them especially, along with Christopher's family, his community, and his colleagues at Time Disposal. They and all those who were injured in the accident are in our prayers.

Our heartfelt thanks are with the first responders who rushed to the scene. It is too easy to take for granted