

Trump retreats on border bill but vows emergency declaration to get wall

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump will sign a border security and federal spending bill to avert another government shutdown but also will declare a national emergency to try to obtain funds for his promised U.S.-Mexico border wall, the White House said on Thursday, drawing immediate criticism from Democrats.

The bipartisan legislation, passed by the Republican-led Senate on Thursday before going to the Democratic-led House of Representatives for final congressional approval, denied Trump the funds he had demanded for a border wall, one of his central 2016 campaign pledges. Senate passes border security bill, sends to House In a move that could infringe upon the power of Congress over the national purse strings and plunge Trump into an extended court battle with lawmakers over constitutional powers, White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said Trump will declare an emergency. Trump's administration has suggested he could use national emergency powers to redirect money already committed by Congress for other purposes toward paying for his wall.

"President Trump will sign the government funding bill, and as he has stated before, he will also take other executive action - including a national emergency - to ensure we stop the national security and humanitarian crisis at the border," White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said.

But the top Democrat in Congress immediately denounced the president's move. Asked by reporters if she would file a legal challenge to an emergency declaration, House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said, "I may, that's an option." The top Senate Democrat, Chuck Schumer, accused Trump of a "gross abuse of the power of the presidency."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican, said he will support Trump on an emergency declaration.

Congressional aides said House Democrats were expected to file a lawsuit when Trump declares a national emergency in order to protect the House's constitutional powers to

decide how U.S. taxpayers' money is appropriated.

FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a campaign rally at El Paso County Coliseum in El Paso, Texas, U.S., February 11, 2019. REUTERS/Leah Millis In denying funding for Trump's wall, Congress has stood in the way of the president's ability to follow through on one of the key promises and applause lines from his 2016 campaign. Moving to an emergency declaration is a next step that Trump has been exploring for weeks.

A source familiar with the situation said that the White House had identified \$2.7 billion in funds previously provided by Congress that could be redirected to barrier funding as part of a national emergency.

The source said White House lawyers had vetted the figures and believed they would withstand a legal challenge.

The Senate passed the federal spending legislation by a margin of 83-16. The House was expected to take it up later on Thursday. The measure would provide more than \$300 billion to fund the Department of Homeland Security and a range of other agencies through Sept. 30, the end of the current fiscal year.

The legislation includes \$1.37 billion in new money to help build 55 miles (88.5 km) of new physical border



barriers. That is the same level of funding Congress appropriated for border security measures last year, including barriers but not concrete walls.

Funding for those agencies is due to expire on Friday, which would trigger another partial federal shutdown on Saturday morning if Congress and Trump do not act quickly. Pelosi accused Trump of doing "an end-run" around Congress and around the Constitution's separation of powers that gives Congress, not the president, federal spending authority.

"It's not an emergency, what's happening at the border. It's a humanitarian challenge

to us," Pelosi said.

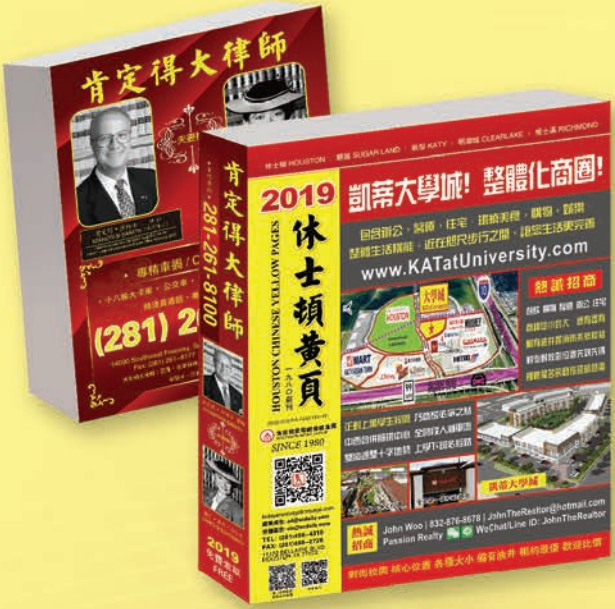
Trump 'not happy' with deal to avert shutdown Earlier in the wall fight with Congress, some of Trump's fellow Republicans had warned him that declaring a national emergency could set a dangerous precedent, opening the door for a future Democratic president to circumvent Congress and declare emergencies on perhaps climate change or healthcare insurance.

Pelosi said, "If the president can declare an emergency on something that he has created as an emergency - an illusion that he wants to convey - just think of what a president with different values can present to the American people." She specifically cited U.S. gun violence as an emergency.

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Editor's Choice



The Bank of Nova Scotia (Scotiabank) logo is seen outside of a branch in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, February 14, 2019. REUTERS/Chris Wattie



A store sells Oscars souvenirs outside the Dolby Theatre before the 91st Academy Awards in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, U.S., February 14, 2019. REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson



An Oscars winner's envelope is seen in a souvenir store outside the Dolby Theatre before the 91st Academy Awards in Hollywood, Los Angeles



A store sells souvenir awards outside the Dolby Theatre before the 91st Academy Awards in Hollywood, Los Angeles



Fish seller carries fresh product that he bought from fishermen in Dakar



U.S. first lady Melania Trump makes Valentine's Day visit at the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland



Fish seller waits to buy fresh product from fishermen at the port of Yoff in Dakar



A girl laughs as she jokes with her relatives at their house corridor in Saint Louis

Like many Portland residents, Satish and Arlene Palshikar are serious recyclers. Their house is coated with recycled bluish-white paint. They recycle their rainwater, compost their food waste and carefully separate the paper and plastic they toss out. But recently, after loading up their Prius and driving to a sorting facility, they got a shock.



China's ban means recycling is piling up at Rogue Waste System in southern Oregon. Employees Scott Fowler, Laura Leebrick and Garry Penning say their only option for now is to send it to a landfill. (Courtesy EarthFix)

“The fellow said we don’t take plastic anymore,” Satish says. “It should go in the trash.” The facility had been shipping its plastic to China, but suddenly that was no longer possible. The U.S. exports about one-third of its recycling, and nearly half goes to China. For decades, China has used recyclables from around the world to supply its manufacturing boom. But this summer it declared that this “foreign waste” includes too many other nonrecyclable materials that are “dirty,” even “hazardous.” In a filing with the World Trade Organization the country listed 24 kinds of solid wastes it would ban “to protect China’s environmental interests and people’s health.” The complete ban takes effect Jan. 1, but already some Chinese importers have not had their licenses renewed. That is leaving U.S. recycling companies scrambling to adapt. “It has no value ... It’s garbage.” Rogue Waste Systems in southern Oregon collects recycling from curbside bins, and manager Scott Fowler says there are always nonrecyclables mixed in. As mounds of goods are compressed into 1-ton bales, he points out some: a roll of linoleum, gas cans, a briefcase, a surprising number of knitted sweaters. Plus, there are the frozen food cartons and plastic bags that many people think



are recyclable but are not. **Customs officers check on imported solid waste**

Many Countries Have Imported Plastic Waste To China And Hong Kong For Many Years. China Started Banning The Import Of This Waste In 2018.

China’s Ban On ‘Foreign Waste’ Causes Recycling Chaos In U.S.

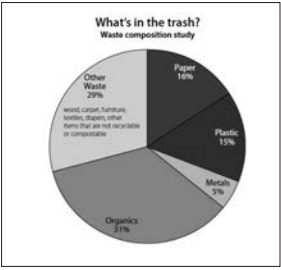
Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

at an examination centre in Qingdao, Shandong province, October 15, 2013. China’s ban on solid waste imports has thrown U.S. waste recyclers into state of chaos. (Courtesy China Daily/Reuters)

For decades, China has sorted through all this and used the recycled goods to propel its manufacturing boom. Now it no longer wants to, so the materials sit here with no place to go. “It just keeps coming and coming and coming,” says Rogue employee Laura Leebrick. In the warehouse, she is dwarfed by stacks of orphaned recycling bales. Outside, employee parking spaces have been taken over by compressed cubes of sour cream containers, broken wine bottles and junk mail. And what are recyclables with nowhere to go? “Right now, by definition, that material out there is garbage,” she says. “It has no value. There is no demand for it in the marketplace. It’s garbage.” For now, Rogue Waste says it has no choice but to take all of this recycling to the local landfill. More than a dozen Oregon companies have asked regulators whether they can send recyclable materials to landfills, and that number may grow if they can’t find someplace else that wants them. At Pioneer Recycling in Portland, owner Steve Frank is shopping for new buyers outside of China. “I’ve personally moved material to different countries in an effort to keep material flowing,” he says. Without Chinese buyers, Frank says U.S. recycling companies are playing a game of musical chairs, and the music stops when China’s ban on waste imports fully kicks in. “The rest of the world cannot make up that gap,” he said. “That’s where we have what I call a bit of chaos going on.”

Adina Adler, a senior director with the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, says China’s new standards are

nearly impossible to meet. The group is trying to persuade China to walk back its demanding target for how clean our recycling exports need to be. But Adler doesn’t think China’s decision is all bad.



What China’s move is doing is probably ushering in a new era of recycling,” she says.

A helping (mechanical) hand

Bulk Handling Systems is betting that robots can be the future of recycling. At its research facility, bits of waste pass by on a conveyor belt as robotic arms poke down, sucking up plastic bags and water bottles then dropping them into bins. CEO Steve Miller says the robot uses cameras and artificial intelligence to separate recycling from trash “in the same way that a person would do it,” but faster and more accurately. “It actually moves at a rate of 80 picks per minute,” he says. “A person might only get 30 picks per minute.” Miller believes technology like this could let the U.S. make its recycling clean enough for China. But the robots are expensive, and few companies have them.



Trash being recycled on automated conveyor belt. For now, the best bet may come back to the curbside bin.

Recycling companies are considering changing the rules for what’s allowed in them or adding an additional bin for paper only to help streamline the sorting process. Steve Frank says Pioneer Recycling is even looking into adding cameras to collection trucks to catch people putting trash in their recycling bins. (Courtesy <https://www.npr.org/>)



Related

China Is Officially Enacting a Plastic Waste Import Ban

For years, the world has imported plastic waste to China and Hong Kong. In a recent development, China will ban the import of this waste starting in 2018.

PLASTIC WASTE

Starting in January, China’s government is enacting a plastic waste import ban, in an attempt to cut down on millions of tons of plastic and other recyclables they receive every year. This change may drastically affect how the world recycles and disposes of waste. The Guardian reports that, according to an analysis of customs data by Greenpeace, British companies alone have imported over 2.7 million tons of plastic waste to China and Hong Kong since 2012. According to Industry Week, China accepted 51 percent of global plastic scrap imports in 2016. The biggest chunk of that trash came from the US, where the majority of “recycled” plastics are actually shipped abroad to then be recycled; as such, trash has actually become one of the US’s biggest exports. Europe, Hong Kong, Japan and Southeast Asia ship their recyclables to China as well. All of this trash has historically been used to fuel China’s manufacturing industry.



Chinese authorities inspect bales of imported waste. China’s plastic waste import

ban could lead to certain types of plastic no longer being collected, and it has the potential to increase environmental pollution. Quartz reports that this is already happening elsewhere: due to a Chinese ban on certain plastics enacted in 2013, Oregon recycling centers have stopped accepted the plastic “clamshells” that hold berries, as well as hospital gowns and plastic bags; in Olympia, Washington, plastic bags are no longer accepted; and central California built a new recycling center simply to keep up with agri-

cultural plastics that had nowhere else to go.

RETHINKING POLLUTION

So, where will our waste go when China stops importing it? Action will need to come soon: in Hong Kong, mountains of paper waste that would normally go to China have been piling up since a July ban on 24 types of “foreign garbage.” That ban is already driving up the prices of paper products. A paper mill manager in southern China told Reuters in September that the price of finished paper had doubled as a result, from 3,000 yuan (US \$453) per ton to 6,000 yuan (\$906) per ton. Stuart Foster from Recoup, the UK’s national charity for developing plastics recycling, told The Guardian that there were inklings of possible import restrictions years ago. However, there was no action taken in the UK. This is despite the fact that, Foster says, that this could be an opportunity for the UK to create their own plastics infrastructure, which could add to the economy.



China no longer wants trash from the U.S. and other countries.

The plastic pollution problem is especially bad in the oceans, as seen from the marine debris accumulated on a beach of the remote island of Kaho’olawe in Hawaii. (Image credit: NOAA) But while government officials worldwide consider how to move forward after China’s plastic waste import ban, the main focus has to be on the environment. This ban may undo the decades-long effort to build a plastics recycling industry, and lead to even more plastics being produced; IndustryWeek reports that China has already begun investing in brand new plastic to replace what they’re no longer recycling, to the delight of US chemical companies. That’s especially bad news as plastic waste continues to harm the environment, particularly marine animals. The U.N. has called our plastics problem a “planetary crisis,” and action needs to be taken soon. Unless another country steps in to fill the recycling gap China has created, this issue will only get worse. As Foster told The Guardian, “Whatever happens we need to maintain control of the material because the bigger worry is about leakage of plastic into the environment.” (Courtesy <https://futurism.com>)

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Possibly The Largest Caravan Yet New Caravan Of 12,000 Migrants Heading To U.S.



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Another massive migrant caravan is on its way to the U.S. from Central America. The possibly largest-ever caravan from Central America has amassed more than 12,000 people, some of who intend to pursue refugee status in Mexico, while many more are headed for the U.S., the New York Times reported Friday. The number in the caravan isn't just an estimate – it's the number of migrants who have requested visas from the Mexican government.

Dan Bongino
√ @dbongino

Newest Migrant Caravan Grows to More Than 12,000 Members

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The migrant caravan that formed on January 15 in Honduras has now grown from 2,000 to over 12,000 members, according to Breitbart. 3,830 people are talking about this

On Jan. 17, Mexico's new president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, has vowed to issue one-year humanitarian visas that will allow migrants to travel and settle in Mexico. It is part of Obrador's policies aimed at reducing migration and spurring job growth in Mexico. As of Thursday, 8,446 adults and 1,897 children had applied for the visas, most of which are Honduras nationals, according to the Washington Post. Obrador's new visa policy is said to be a huge attractor of migrants, though less than 1,000 visas have been granted so far. President Trump tweeted to acknowledge the caravan on Saturday, saying, "We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!"

Donald J. Trump
√ @realDonaldTrump

We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!
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Trump later followed up with, "Only fools, or people with a political agenda, don't want a Wall or Steel Barrier to protect our Country from Crime, Drugs and Human Trafficking. It will happen – it always does!"

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71.6K people are talking about this

The Mexican government released data showing that 132,000 illegal immigrants were detained throughout 2018. The U.S. Border Patrol captured nearly 400,000 illegal immigrants between Oct. 2017 and Sept. 2018 – before the Central American caravans even began in the fall. Mexican authorities stopped 18,000 migrants in October, and another 12,000 in November. With the new humanitarian visas, they are completely shifting their approach on migration.

Thousands of migrants still remain in Tijuana, Mexico, where the last major caravans stopped in their attempt to cross into the U.S. There, migrants are awaiting asylum interviews with U.S. immigration agencies after the U.S. mandated that migrants must remain in Mexico while their asylum cases are pending.

Mexico had offered jobs and assistance to migrants in the previous caravans, but the migrants refused, instead wanting to pursue asylum in the U.S. (Courtesy americanmilitarynews.com)

Related

Mexico Moves to Encourage Caravan Migrants to Stay and Work



Migrants in Huixtla, Mexico, try-

ing to get a free ride on a sugar cane truck during their journey toward the United States. (Photo/Reuters)

CIUDAD HIDALGO, Mexico — Mexico's new president has moved decisively to encourage migrants fleeing poverty and violence in Central America to stay and work in Mexico, making it easier for them to get visas and work permits and promoting investments and ambitious public works projects to create jobs.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's policies are already proving to be a magnet for migrants, who are finding it harder to enter the United States given President Trump's antipathy toward immigration. A migrant caravan heading to Mexico from Central America — the largest ever — has already swollen to over 12,000 people, with many saying they intend to remain in Mexico, at least for the time being.

The new Mexican president's generosity toward immigrants, officials say, dovetails with his broader commitment to protect human rights, reduce inequality and prioritize the poor.

Mr. López Obrador's pro-immigrant stance also serves as a dramatic counterpoint to the White House, without directly challenging Mr. Trump. But these policies could ultimately put pressure on the Mexico-United States border, as most in the caravan eventually hope to cross into the United States.



A Honduran man in Tecun Uman, Guatemala, part of a caravan of Central American migrants, washed his clothes in the Suchiate River, which runs along the Guatemala-Mexico border. (Photo/Getty Images)

Many in the caravan said they decided to migrate after a decision by the Mexican government to drastically speed up the process for securing a yearlong humanitarian visa that allows migrants to legally travel and work in Mexico.

"The humanitarian visa that they're giving

now is the reason we are here," said Carlos del Valle, a Guatemalan teacher who was standing in line with his family this week to apply for the visa on the bridge connecting Guatemala with Mexico. "Later, if possible, we can get to the United States," he said.

Under the streamlined process, which began last week, the government is seeking to issue the humanitarian visa in an average of five days rather than a month. Migration officials said the policy would be permanent.



Migrants from the caravan playing cards this month to pass the time in the Barretal shelter in Tijuana, Mexico. (Photo/The New York Times)

The initiative, officials say, is part of the president's strategy to make Mexico's immigration policy more humane, after years of stepped-up deportations under pressure from the United States. But it could also draw even more migrants to trek north to the border with the United States, inflaming tensions with a Trump administration determined to build a border wall and lower immigration numbers.

On Thursday, the Trump administration said it would institute a new policy to return most asylum-seekers to Mexico if they had arrived at the southwest border by land. Under the policy, which is intended to discourage Central Americans from migrating to the United States and to ease pressure on the asylum system, the petitioners would be required to remain in Mexico while they await the outcome of their cases.

The Mexican government initially said it was speeding up the application process for humanitarian visas as an "exception" for the current migrant caravan only. But on Thursday, a spokeswoman with Mexico's national migration agency said the expedited process would be permanent. (Courtesy The New York Times)

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