



The Daily Dish

November 20th Edition

DOUGLAS HOLTZ-EAKIN | NOVEMBER 20, 2014

Tonight, President Obama will [give a speech](#) laying out his executive action plan on immigration reform. Speaker Boehner's office is calling the approach an overreach of [constitutional authority](#). Douglas Holtz-Eakin has more on the issue in Eakinomics below and you can read AAF Co-Founder Norm Coleman's take on Obama's impending immigration moves from earlier this week.

Negotiations are making progress in the House to extend lapsed tax breaks. The list of "tax extenders" expired in late 2013 and lawmakers only have until December 11, when they adjourn for the year, to strike a deal. According to [Bloomberg](#), "the Internal Revenue Service has warned that delays could slow tax refunds in January."

Bids have reached \$24.2 billion just five days into the government's largest wireless spectrum auction since 2008. According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), the auction has attracted over 70 different companies looking to leverage the opportunity to purchase wireless licenses. Demand for more licenses rises as consumers continue to watch videos, stream music, and play games on their phones.

Eakinomics: Obama's Immigration Indulgence

The president is planning to announce his long-threatened "executive action" on immigration tonight. This move will exacerbate the already-difficult politics of immigration reform.

Politico is [reporting](#) that "President Barack Obama will announce Thursday that he is shielding about 5 million undocumented immigrants from deportation, circumventing Congress to provide the most sweeping changes to immigration policy in decades." One might think that this means the president will fundamentally rewrite the Nation's future. Not so fast.

The president himself has said for his entire presidency that he does not have the power to unilaterally change our immigration laws. Executive action now is thus not grounded on any policy foundation. Obama's immigration indulgence is a move designed to be politically palatable to a coveted demographic without actually making any substantive, positive changes.

The proposed executive action does not fix long term problems in our immigration system—it is a short term bandage at best. Not only does it not contain any substantive policy and legal solutions, future administrations can reverse or decline to extend this action, leaving the people relying on this action with nothing but an empty promise. Indeed the action does not confer any legitimate legal status on any undocumented immigrant, nor does it give them any pathway to legal status or citizenship. For that reason, it cannot help the people Obama professes to most want to help. Instead, it is a temporary stand-down on focusing enforcement resources on specific immigrants.

Similarly, the actions designed to appease the tech community do not address the systemic problems in our legal immigration system. Recapturing unused employment-based green cards from previous years is essentially

“immigration stimulus”, a one-time bump in green card availability that will not even dent the current backlog.

Immigration policy should be about people, not politics. Congress needs to act on long-term immigration reform for our security, our economy and our society. Obama’s immigration indulgence does not further that goal.