

About Those Rumors of Donald Trump ‘Softening’ on Immigration

Some called it a “shift,” others, a “softening.” Still others called it like they thought they saw it: a “flip-flop” on an issue central to his campaign.

And they were all wrong.

Shortly after holding his first meeting with his National Hispanic Advisory Council, Republican Donald Trump postponed his immigration speech by nearly two weeks amid suggestions that he had a change of heart on key elements of his policy on the issue that moved him to prominence in the GOP primary field. And while his campaign denied there had been a change all along, the mainstream media hyped “the shift” and how it may finally be the issue that brings down his campaign.

And when Trump announced he would be giving that immigration policy speech in Phoenix—in Arizona a border state where immigration is a major issue, which also happens to be a key battleground state in the November election—it suddenly became the must-watch event of the presidential campaign.

So naturally, with everyone tuning in to see what Trump had to say on the issue, they got what they’ve been getting on the immigration issue from the first day of his campaign—albeit in a more focused and easier-to-consume format—strict enforcement of current immigration policy, a border wall with Mexico, more Border Patrol agents and other policies that he said will put Americans first. Here are the 10 points of his formal immigration policy:

- Build a wall along the southern border
- End “Catch-And-Release”

- Zero tolerance for criminal aliens
- Block federal funding for “Sanctuary Cities”
- Cancel unconstitutional executive orders and enforce all immigration laws
- Suspend the issuance of visas to any place where adequate screening cannot occur
- Ensure that other countries take their people back when we order them deported
- Finally complete the biometric entry-exit visa tracking system
- Turn off the jobs and benefits magnet
- Reform legal immigration to serve the best interests of America and its workers

Trump prefaced his speech by saying it was time for Americans to “get the truth” about immigration, U.S. policies and their failures.

“The truth is, our immigration system is worse than anyone realizes,” he said. “But the facts aren’t known because the media won’t report on them, the politicians won’t talk about them and the special interests spend a lot of money trying to cover them up.

“Today you will get the truth.

“The fundamental problem with the immigration system in our country is that it serves the needs of wealthy donors, political activists and powerful politicians. Let me tell you who it doesn’t serve: It doesn’t serve you, the American people.

“When politicians talk about immigration reform, they usually mean the following: amnesty, open borders and lower wages. Immigration reform should mean something else entirely: It should mean improvements to our laws and policies to make life better for American citizens.

“But if we are going to make our immigration system work, then

we have to be prepared to talk honestly and without fear about these important and sensitive issues.”

Trump also addressed his meeting earlier in the day with Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto. He said it was a “thoughtful and substantive conversation,” and the first of what he expects will be “many conversations in a Trump administration” about “creating a new relationship between” the two countries.

“I have just landed, having returned from a very important and special meeting with the president of Mexico—a man I like and respect very much, and a man who truly loves his country, just like I am a man who loves the United States,” he said. “We agreed on the importance of ending the illegal flow of drugs, cash, guns and people across our border, and to put the cartels out of business. We also discussed the great contributions of Mexican-American citizens to our two countries, my love for the people of Mexico and the close friendship between our two nations.”

Although U.S. media hailed the meeting as a major victory for the Trump campaign, it was far less popular on the southern side of the border. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox, himself well-known for his use of brash language, called it a political stunt and slammed Peña Nieto as “a traitor.”

Given the comments coming from Trump’s own National Hispanic Advisory Council, one might think they, too, panned the speech. On the contrary, after it had concluded, state Sen. Dr. Ralph Alvarado (R-Ky.) issued the following statement:

“While many people want to make this campaign about style, Donald J. Trump once again makes it about substance. He has displayed presidential leadership when it comes to dealing with our regional allies. When we talk about behavior that is in this campaign, Mr. Trump’s decision to meet with President Peña Nieto should be at the top of the list.

"Mr. Trump proceeded to follow up this meeting with his most substantial speech to date on how to best handle the illegal immigration crisis impacting our country. Mr. Trump has shown once again why he is the most qualified candidate to become the next president of the United States."