

Our View: Denham breaks ranks on slap at Obama

Rep. Jeff Denham was on the *wrong* side of a meaningless vote last week to challenge President Obama's executive action on immigration. By wrong side, we mean he voted with the Democrats. But it was the right decision, and we applaud not only his vote but also that Denham had the courage to stand up against his party.

The Preventing Executive Overreach on Immigration Act passed 219-197. Only three Democrats voted for it; only seven Republicans against it.

The "overreach" was President Obama's executive order requiring immigration agents to concentrate on catching undocumented immigrants who are committing crimes rather than those whose only crime is being here and having a job.

We liked Denham's reasoning: "(This) bill did not offer any solutions to our immigration problems or address border security, internal security, visa reforms or any of the other aspects of our broken immigration system that need fixing. This bill could also potentially jeopardize the future of our DREAMers. Children brought here by their parents, through no fault of their own, cannot be held accountable for their parents' actions."

Denham is "staunchly opposed" to the executive action, which he clearly considers overreach. But he recognizes that something must be done to fix "this broken system."

"I am pushing for a permanent solution," he told us via email. He noted the immigration system has been ignored for decades and is "now a multigenerational problem. ... I won't support political theater by either party or short-sighted executive action that can be overturned by the next president or determined unconstitutional by the courts."

Denham has credibility on immigration issues. He wrote the ENLIST Act, legislation that offers a pathway to citizenship to those who have served honorably in the military. His own party has stalled this legislation for 15 months. If he's frustrated with an overreaching president, he's also frustrated with shortsighted members of his own caucus.

Voting for the slap at President Obama were Valley representatives Tom McClintock, Kevin McCarthy Devin Nunes and Doug LaMalfa. Their districts also include hundreds if not thousands of young people whose status might not be legal technically but who consider themselves loyal Americans. Those representatives weren't just slapping at President Obama, they were taking a shot at those people, too. We're glad Rep. Denham was not among them.