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## DONALD TRUMP SAYS HE'S OPEN TO 'SOFTENING' IMMIGRATION LAWS

Town hall-style interview with Sean Hannity dominated by raucous audience support for policies aimed at stopping illegal immigration

By Janet Hook  
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Donald Trump on Tuesday said he was open to "softening" laws to accommodate law-abiding people who are in the country illegally if they "contribute to society," but the Republican presidential candidate also continued to appeal to voters' fear and anger about illegal immigration.

Amid signs from his campaign that he was reconsidering his past support for deporting all 11 million people believed to be in the U.S. illegally, Mr. Trump struck a conciliatory note in a town hall-style interview with Fox News host Sean Hannity. But the event was dominated by raucous audience support for Mr. Trump's policies aimed at stopping illegal immigration, such as his promise to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.

After taping the interview in Austin, Texas, Mr. Trump appeared at a rally, where he was greeted with loud chants of "Build the wall!" and brought to the stage the parents of children who had been killed by illegal immigrants.

"Your children did not die in vain, because we are not going to allow it to happen to others," he told the parents.

In the TV interview, Mr. Hannity, who is supporting and advising Mr. Trump, led him into a line of questioning that set a different tone in addressing the question of what to do about illegal immigrants.

"Is there any part of the law that you might be able to change that would accommodate those people that contribute to society, have been law-abiding, have kids here?" Mr. Hannity asked. "Would there be any rule in your mind?"

"There certainly can be a softening, because we're not looking to hurt people," Mr. Trump said in response. "We want people—we have some great people in this country."

Mr. Trump has been setting a softer tone on immigration in recent days, amid signs that his rhetoric is weighing him down in his race against Hillary Clinton. But Mr. Trump also said, on Monday, that he wasn't "flip-flopping" on his signature issue of cracking down on illegal immigrants.

During the GOP primary season, Mr. Trump used blunt language in describing his plans for removing illegal immigrants, although he suggested that many could return to the country if they did so through legal avenues.

"You're going to have a deportation force, and you're going to do it humanely," he said on MSNBC in November.

A subtle shift in rhetoric was signaled last weekend when the new Trump campaign manager, Kellyanne Conway, said it was "to be determined" what his stance on deportation would be.

In another interview on Fox News, broadcast Monday night, Mr. Trump didn't directly respond to whether he would rethink his mass deportation policy. He said: "The first thing we're going to do, if and when I win, is we're going to get rid of all of the bad ones. We've got gang members, we have killers, we have a lot of bad people that have to get out of this country."

In the Tuesday interview, Mr. Hannity asked Mr. Trump what should be done about people who have overstayed visas. Mr. Trump suggested they should be removed from the country. "We have to get them out," he said.

Advocates of liberalized immigration laws dismissed Mr. Trump's recent rhetorical shift.

Frank Sherry, executive director of America's Voice, a liberal immigration group, said Mr. Trump was "attempting to cynically repackage a truly radical policy" to broaden his appeal among centrist voters. "But the underlying deportation-focused policy doesn't seem to be evolving alongside the rhetorical tweaks," he said.