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Where the DACA Program Ends, A More Permanent Legislative Solution for Immigrant Youth Must Begin, Says the Immigrant Legal Resource Center

Today, the Trump Administration ended the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The Administration's directive instructs the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to stop accepting initial applications for DACA and it will discontinue renewing DACA applications as of March 5, 2018.

The end of DACA means that more than 780,000 individuals who grew up in this country and have benefited from this program under both the Obama and Trump administrations will now lose access to work authorization over the course of the next two years and become at risk of deportation by federal immigration authorities. With nearly a million successful applications, the DACA program has enabled young people to strengthen our labor force, grow our federal, state and local tax pools, attend college, support their households, drive and travel without fear, and demonstrate leadership through increased civic engagement.

Sally Kinoshita, Deputy Director at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, issued the following statement:

“After launching a race-baiting presidential campaign that scapegoated immigrants, and on the heels of the white supremacist violence in Charlottesville and President Trump's pardon of known illegal racial profiler Sheriff Joe Arpaio, the Administration must demonstrate through clear action and leadership that ending the DACA program is not part of a white supremacist agenda that is threatening our communities.

“With the DACA program in place, we worked for years helping the federal government assure young people that those who are part of our communities and were willing to contribute could come out of the shadows. Of those who did so by applying for DACA, nearly 90 percent are now working, adding billions of dollars to our economy and helping schools, communities, workplaces and families thrive in ways that benefit all Americans. The majority of Americans support Dreamers – the young immigrants who grew up here. Why would we end such a successful program? How can President Trump explain that this is not another way he is placing communities of color in the crosshairs?

“The Trump Administration must ensure that renewal applications and pending initial applications are timely adjudicated to avoid delays in eligible individuals participating in this program. And the Trump Administration must immediately reassure Dreamers that their trust in the federal government was not misplaced and that immigration agents will not arrest, detain or deport the hundreds of thousands of young people who now feel a heightened risk.

“The White House must show strong support and leadership to pass legislation to protect the nearly two million young people and their families, recognizing the benefits that employers, schools, taxpayers, and families gained by including these young people more fully in society.”

An Immigrant Legal Resource Center [report](#) found that 87 percent of DACA recipients are currently employed by U.S. businesses and ending DACA would result in an estimated \$3.4 billion in turnover costs to employers and the loss of \$24.6 billion in contributions to Social Security and Medicare over a decade. The ILRC strongly encourages Congress to pass the [DREAM Act](#), which would provide young immigrants who have graduated high school, are pursuing higher education, or serving in the military, a path to citizenship. In the interim, passing the [BRIDGE Act](#), would provide employment authorization and protection from deportation for individuals who currently hold and are eligible for DACA.

The ILRC leads the Ready California coalition to ensure all eligible immigrant youth in the state are enrolled in DACA. The community resources developed by ILRC for those who applied for the program can be found at <https://ready-california.org/resource/>.

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About the Immigrant Legal Resource Center

The Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) is a national nonprofit that works with immigrants, community organizations, legal professionals, law enforcement, and policy makers to build a democratic society that values diversity and the rights of all people. Through community education programs, legal training & technical assistance, and policy development & advocacy, the ILRC's mission is to protect and defend the fundamental rights of immigrant families and communities. www.ilrc.org