

On Tuesday, September 5, 2017, President Donald Trump ordered the termination of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, unless Congress comes up with a potential replacement. The DACA was established by President Barack Obama in 2012 and allowed eligible immigrant youth who came to the United States as minors to receive a period of deferred action from deportation and a work permit, subject to renewal after two years.

President Trump's decision to rescind the DACA will have drastic and devastating consequences for approximately 800,000 young people referred to as "Dreamers", as well as our economy and our communities. DACA has given Dreamers the chance to work, obtain driver's licenses, go to school, and be actively involved in their communities without fear of deportation. It has given many Dreamers the opportunity to serve in the military and to obtain advanced degrees which has given them the skills to obtain employment and make invaluable contributions to the U.S. economy. The Trump Administration has put many of our Latino families in grave danger to be deported from the only country they know and love.

- An average of 1,400 Dreamers will be forced from their jobs every business day for the next two years.
- Every single Dreamer will be subject to deportation, often to countries they do not even remember.
- The U.S. economy will lose billions — \$460.3 billion to be specific — over the next decade.

In many cases, the United States is the only country Dreamers know; to send them back to a country where they don't possess connections in or knowledge of the community is simply a cruel and inhumane act. Punishing people who have grown up as Americans because they were brought here as minors is not the solution to concerns of domestic security and ultimately damages families, communities, and the U.S. economy. As a community, and as a society, we are not morally or economically prepared to send these people away and endanger their future potential and the fabric of their communities.

In support of DACA, the Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs urges the Trump Administration to put in place a program that will protect the rights of not only the Dreamers, but their families. The Commission cannot support a decision that treats our Latino immigrants in such a callous manner; it is against all the values that we believe and live by as Latinos, allies, and most importantly, Iowans. Furthermore, this decision will only divide the country even more and divide Latino families and their communities. Again, we vehemently urge all our elected officials to understand how this decision will impact our communities, our families, and halt economic growth in all corners of the United States of America and act today for a better future for all!

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