

## **Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACCA) and the DREAM Act**

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was an American immigration policy that allowed some individuals who entered the country as minors, and had either entered or remained in the country illegally, to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and to be eligible for a work permit. As of 2017, approximately 800,000 individuals—referred to as Dreamers after the DREAM Act bill—were enrolled in the program created by DACA. The policy was established by the Obama administration in June 2012 but rescinded by the Trump administration on September 5, 2017. President Trump gave Congress six months to offer a legislative fix before the program officially ends.

In November 2014 President Barack Obama announced his intention to expand DACA to cover additional illegal immigrants. But multiple states immediately sued to prevent the expansion, which was ultimately blocked by the courts. The United States Department of Homeland Security rescinded the expansion on June 16, 2017, while continuing to review the existence of the DACA program as a whole. The DACA policy was rescinded by the Trump administration on September 5, 2017, but full implementation of the rescission was delayed six months to give Congress time to decide how to deal with the population that was previously eligible under the policy.

Research shows that DACA increased the wages and labor force participation of DACA-eligible immigrants, and reduced the number of unauthorized immigrant households living in poverty. Studies have shown that DACA increased the mental health outcomes for DACA-eligible immigrants and their children. There are no known major adverse impacts from DACA on native-born workers' employment while most economists say that DACA benefits the U.S. economy. To be eligible for the program, recipients may not have felonies or serious misdemeanors on their records. There is no evidence that DACA-eligible individuals are more likely to commit crimes than any other person within the U.S.

A legislative solution is the obvious next step to ensure that the nearly 800,000 individuals will continue to be able to live their lives, work legally and serve in the military. DREAMers are young people who were brought here for a chance at a better life and this country is their home. DREAMers are our friends, neighbors and patrons and have gone to school, volunteered in their communities and serve in our armed forces. Those dreams will turn into a nightmare for hundreds of thousands of young people if enough members of the House do not do the right thing.

Emgage supports Congress passing a clean DREAM Act that does not include funding for anti-immigrant efforts or policies.