



## MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA)

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The DACA program was created in 2012 and allowed certain undocumented immigrants who entered the U.S. as children a temporary reprieve from deportation, legal authorization to work and the ability to obtain a driver's license.

In September 2017, the current administration announced that DACA would be repealed beginning in March 2018. Since then, there have been court decisions that temporarily project people with DACA status, as they allow for DACA renewals to continue for the 800,000 young people with DACA. While positive, these measures are temporary and tenuous. Without more permanent action by Congress, people with DACA status remain in legal limbo.

### *Myth 1: The DACA program hurts the economy*

**REALITY:** Research shows that DACA has been beneficial to the U.S. economy and repealing it would cause economic harm. The Cato Institute estimates that repealing DACA would result in a \$280 billion economic decline over the next decade, largely due to the loss of tax income that would have been contributed by DACA recipients during that time. Additionally, repealing DACA would cost employers \$6 billion in turnover costs (to hire and train new employees to the same level of productivity).

### *Myth 2: DACA recipients take jobs from American citizens*

**REALITY:** There is no evidence that DACA recipients take jobs from U.S. citizens. Contrary to popular perception, there is not a fixed amount of work available. Often, an increase in the number of workers actually boosts the economy and increases the number of jobs available. Currently, there is a shortage of skilled workers for many jobs in the U.S. and DACA recipients, who tend to have higher levels of education, are filling many of these gaps in our labor market.

### *Myth 3: The DACA program provides a pathway to citizenship*

**REALITY:** The DACA program allows for a temporary reprieve from deportation, work authorization, and the ability to obtain a driver's license. DACA recipients must renew every two years and the program does not provide a pathway to citizenship.

### *Myth 4: DACA recipients are eligible for benefits*

**REALITY:** DACA recipients are not eligible for federal welfare benefits, insurance through the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, or other federal benefits. DACA recipients are eligible for emergency Medicaid services and some states have opted to provide additional benefits.

### *Myth 5: DACA recipients do not pay taxes*

**REALITY:** DACA recipients pay personal income, property and sales taxes. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that DACA recipients and those immediately eligible for DACA contribute \$2 billion a year in state and local taxes.

### Sources:

The Cato Institute      Barron's      The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy      NPR

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