



STUDY: THE IMPACT OF DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS (DACA) PROGRAM REPEAL ON JOBS

A TIMELINE OF THE DEVASTATING AND FAR-REACHING JOB LOSS CONSEQUENCES IF DACA IS REPEALED

Developed by the Center for American Progress (CAP) and FWD.us

SUMMARY

Since the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program was established in 2012, nearly 800,000 young people who came to this country as children have been granted temporary protection from deportation and allowed to live, work, and contribute to the only country most of them have ever known (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2017). Over the past five years, 91% of DACA recipients have found gainful employment, and are currently working for companies across the country (Wong, T., et al., (2017)).

The following report, developed by the Center for American Progress (CAP) and FWD.us, highlights the escalating job losses that will occur over the course of 2 years if DACA renewals are put on hold, even for a short period of time. The findings reinforce the devastating consequences a repeal would inflict on DACA recipients and their families, as well as the dire, far-reaching consequences to communities across the country, to employers, and to the American economy across all regions and sectors. [This report specifically finds that for every business day that DACA renewals are put on hold, more than 1,400 DACA recipients will lose their ability to work and could be let go by American employers.](#) This could result in monthly job losses for more than 30,000 individuals each month. In total, if DACA is revoked, nearly 700,000 individuals who are currently employed and contributing as a productive part of the American

workforce would be stripped of their ability to work and could be fired over the course of the next two years.¹

BACKGROUND

Five years ago, the Department of Homeland Security issued a memo establishing the DACA program (Department of Homeland Security, 2012). The memo delineated a set of criteria by which “certain young people who were brought to the United States as young children, do not present a risk to national security or public safety, and meet several key criteria” would be able to receive a temporary protection from deportation, for a period of two years, and be eligible to apply for work authorization. Individuals who are eligible are required to complete an application process and undergo a thorough background check, including fingerprinting, and are required to renew their deferred action every two years. Further, the DHS Secretary issued a memo directing the heads of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to establish a process to implement this exercise of prosecutorial discretion across their agencies to ensure that “enforcement resources are not expended on these low priority cases but are instead appropriately focused on people who meet our enforcement priorities” (Department of Homeland Security, 2014).

Despite the positive economic benefits of the program and overwhelming public support for DACA recipients², the program has recently come under imminent threat of repeal, putting the safety, livelihoods, and wellbeing of these incredible young people at risk. Ten Republican state Attorneys General and Idaho Governor Butch Otter have threatened to sue President Trump if he doesn’t end DACA by September 5 (Attorney General Ken Paxton, 2017), setting up a virtual collision course where DACA could be put on hold by a federal judge, or where the program could be repealed, with DACA renewal applications being halted immediately by the Administration. Further, recent reports have indicated that the Trump Administration is strongly considering ending DACA.³

DACA recipients are upstanding members of our communities, and everyone in the program has gone through an application process, passed an extensive

¹ See Fig. 1. Benefit Expiration with Loss of Work Authorization & Subject to Deportation and Forced Job Loss Chart

² https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/170409_crosstabs_Politico_v1_AG-2.pdf

³ <https://www.axios.com/trump-seriously-considering-ending-daca-2476724345.html>

background check including fingerprinting, paid the required fee, and is a student, or servicemember, or holds a job. DACA recipients are required to renew their deferral every two years in order to maintain their work authorization and their protection from deportation, and to show that they have continued to meet the program requirements. An estimated 200,000 DACA recipients have had their Deferred Action renewed by President Trump since he took office in January.⁴

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF A REPEAL

Total DACA Recipients

Benefit Expiration with Loss of Work Authorization & Subject to Deportation

Quarter	Months	Total DACA Expirations Per Quarter	DACA expirations per month	Per Week
Q4 2017	Oct-Dec	90,299	30,100	7,167
Q1 2018	Jan-Mar	115,380	38,460	9,157
Q2 2018	Apr-Jun	86,165	28,722	6,838
Q3 2018	July-Sept	152,429	50,810	12,098
Q4 2018	Oct-Dec	120,287	40,096	9,547
Q1 2019	Jan-Mar	36,427	12,142	2,891

DACA Recipients With Job

Forced Job Loss Chart

Quarter	Months	Total DACA Expirations	Estimate DACA Job Loss (91% have jobs)	DACA recipient Job loss per Month	Per Week	Per Business Day (5 days per week)	Per Business Day Hour (8 hours per business day)	Per Business Minute	Every XXX seconds, a DACA recipient loses their job?
Q4 2017	Oct-Dec	90,299	82,172	27,391	6,522	1,304	163.0	2.7	22.1
Q1 2018	Jan-Mar	115,380	104,996	34,999	8,333	1,667	208.3	3.5	17.3
Q2 2018	Apr-Jun	86,165	78,410	26,137	6,223	1,245	155.6	2.6	23.1
Q3 2018	July-Sept	152,429	138,710	46,237	11,009	2,202	275.2	4.6	13.1
Q4 2018	Oct-Dec	120,287	109,461	36,487	8,687	1,737	217.2	3.6	16.6
Q1 2019	Jan-Mar	36,427	33,149	11,050	2,631	526	65.8	1.1	54.7
Average			91,150	30,383	7,234	1,447	180.9	3.0	

Fig. 1. Benefit Expiration with Loss of Work Authorization & Subject to Deportation and Forced Job Loss Chart

New research has brought to light the dramatic consequences to U.S. employers if DACA is repealed and renewals are put on hold, even for a brief period of time. The chart above outlines the chronological job loss consequences of repealing DACA, resulting in the potential for an average of 30,000 DACA recipients to lose their jobs each month. Furthermore, for every business day that DACA renewals are put on hold, an average of more than 1,400 individuals can be fired from their jobs. And because DACA recipients live in all fifty states and the District of Columbia (U.S.

⁴ Estimate based on average monthly renewals during first quarter of the Trump Administration, expanded to include estimated 2nd quarter renewals.

Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2017), the economic consequences will be felt all across the country.

This data further shows that job loss resulting directly from the repeal of DACA will begin immediately, and will continue over the course of the next 2 years until all employed DACA recipients, nearly 700,000 individuals, are removed from the work force, and all nearly 800,000 are subject to deportation. This study found that firings will increase over the course of the next 2 years to reach a high point in the 3rd quarter of 2018, when more than 11,000 individuals can be fired each week, a total of nearly 140,000 total individuals fired during that quarter. During the 3rd quarter of 2018, a DACA recipient can be fired from their job every 13 seconds.

**EVERY BUSINESS DAY DACA RENEWALS ARE HALTED,
OVER
1,400 JOBS ARE
LOST.**

For the purposes of this study, the number of jobs lost is reflective of the number of DACA recipients who would lose work authorization if they are unable to renew their DACA. While individual job loss will be determined on a case by case basis, individuals who are unable to renew their DACA and therefore fall out of DACA protection will be unable to legally work in the United States.

Work authorizations issued to DACA recipients are no different than those issued through countless other visa categories, meaning many U.S. businesses may not even know whether they are employing a DACA recipient. Revoking the ability for current DACA recipients to renew their deferrals would force businesses into the impossible and extremely costly position of having to fire productive employees for no other reason than an arbitrary change in federal policy, potentially resulting in backlash from other employees, or their broader community. DACA recipients are already living openly in our communities. They are our coworkers, teachers, nurses and home health care workers, among many other professions. Repealing this program and forcing businesses around the country to fire hundreds of thousands of people within our communities will have a devastating impact. Further, such

action by the federal government would place a staggering cost, both financially and in relationship to their employees, on businesses in nearly every sector of the economy, and, in turn, in the communities across the United States.

REPEALING DACA MEANS 7,234 JOBS LOST EVERY WEEK.

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Reporting by the Center for American Progress has found that nearly 91% of DACA recipients (Svajlenka, Jawetz and Bautista-Chavez, 2017) are currently employed across the country, contributing billions of dollars to our communities, our economy, and in tax revenue. Removing DACA recipients from the workforce will cost \$460.3 billion in GDP loss over a decade (Svajlenka, Jawetz and Bautista-Chavez, 2017). It will cost employers \$3.4 billion in unnecessary turnover costs, and would cut contributions to Medicare and Social Security by \$24.6 billion over a decade (Magaña-Salgado, 2016). Moreover, DACA recipients have been important drivers of economic growth in their communities. Nearly 6% of DACA recipients have launched businesses, many employing American citizens (Wong et al., 2016). Further, almost 55% of DACA recipients purchased a vehicle, and more than one in ten have purchased their first home (Brannon and Albright, 2017).

CONCLUSION

By every measure, DACA has been extraordinarily beneficial, allowing nearly 800,000 individuals in the United States to live, work legally, and contribute to the only country most of them have ever known. The economic benefits of this program are clear and profound, and the dire consequences of repeal would be devastating. As this report has outlined, even a temporary hold on DACA renewals

would cause tens of thousands of individuals to lose their ability to live and work in the United States. Every day that DACA renewals are put on hold will result in more than 1,400 individuals losing their ability to work legally. In addition to the reprehensible moral consequences, ending DACA would place severe economic strain on businesses around the country, putting them into the impossible and extremely costly position of having to fire productive employees for no other reason than an arbitrary change in federal policy, potentially resulting in backlash from other employees, or their broader community.

DACA was always designed to be temporary, but repealing the program without a process for individuals currently protected by it to continue to live and work in the United States will place an extreme hardship on U.S. businesses, on local communities, and on the American economy. Congress is considering a number of pieces of legislation to protect current DACA recipients statutorily, and the Administration should not take action to change the existing DACA program without first signing legislation to address the urgent challenge of protecting DACA recipients.

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