



Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

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Introduction to DACA



DACA was a policy created during the Obama administration in 2012 that prevents the deportation of children under the age of 16, who entered the country undocumented, before June 15, 2012. The program provides them access to benefits including a social security number, a work permit, and a driver's license.

Problem Definition



DACA recipients currently do not have a way to become legal citizens under the DREAM Act, hindering their ability to fully participate and contribute to American society, despite paying taxes and contributing to the economy on the same scale as natural born and naturalized citizens.

Proposed Alternatives



- Alternative 1: Creating a direct, legal pathway to citizenship for DREAMers
- Alternative 2: Revise DACA to allow DACA recipients to receive certain benefits available to US Citizens
- Alternative 3: The U.S. government can offer tax breaks or other monetary incentives to companies actively employing DREAMers, and petitioning for their legal status.

Criteria



Maximize Effectiveness

How does the alternative provide equal benefits and opportunities for DACA recipients as current U.S. citizens?

Maximize Economic Growth

How does each proposed alternative allow for the greatest, positive impact on the economy (revenue, salary, spending), for everyone?

Public Support, Political Feasibility, and Bipartisanship

What are the likelihoods for bi-partisan support, approval, engagement, and funding for each alternative, that will bring the most public support?

Recommendation -



Construct a Direct Pathway for Citizenship

- Provides financial stability: DACA recipients already pay local, state, and federal taxes, but do so without receiving any federal benefits such as social security, food stamps, and FAFSA -> with legal status or opportunity for legal status, more stability and opportunities for higher education (federal aid) and work
- With citizenship, there is also representation (if DREAMers can become citizens they will be allowed to vote)
- More eligible and educated workers to contribute to economy and economic growth of country: more buying/selling of goods, paying taxes, labor
- Policy is already supported by the people and politicians - a proposed Dream Act, many versions of this bill has been introduced in Congress , most recent bill would benefit 3 million Dreamers and attempt to pass the bill has passed in the House of Representatives

Projected Outcomes



- More people will consider and likely join the program if they're eligible
- Likelihood of economic growth with more workers and educated workers through the use of the benefits offered - financial aid and legal status
- Greater political engagement
- Decrease in undocumented immigrants
- DACA will not directly increase the number of future undocumented immigrants due to its guidelines and requirements (applicants must have arrived in the U.S. before June 15, 2012)

Trade Offs



- More competitive job market and loss of feeling of job security for natural-born citizens/working class
- Decrease in competitive educational opportunities for current citizens, college applications will likely rise with financial aid benefits
- Economic loss for cost of implementation (cost of government aid programs), but also economic gain from jobs
- Can affect “political harmony” - implementation of policy fits the more progressive agenda
- May indirectly influence/encourage unlawful immigration as a pathway to citizenship - result in national security/political issues

Sources:



<https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk/what-is-daca-and-who-are-the-dreamers>

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