

Collateral Damage: President's Unilateral Actions Punish Legal Immigrants

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Body

The House Judiciary Committee issued the following news release:

President Obama's unilateral immigration actions are not without cost. Not only do they violate the Constitution, allow criminals to evade the law, and make our communities less safe, the President's actions also punish **legal immigrants**.

Legal Immigrants Will **Face Longer Wait** Times:

- **Legal immigrants** playing by the rules and seeking to come to the United States the right way will pay the price for President Obama's executive actions. As U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services shifts attention and resources to the processing of applications for unlawful **immigrants**, **legal immigrants** will **face longer wait** times for their petitions to be processed. This was true under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which has allowed over 600,000 unlawful **immigrants** to stay here so far.

- On February 8, 2014, the New York Times reported that "many thousands of Americans seeking green cards for foreign spouses or other immediate relatives have been separated from them for a year or more because of swelling bureaucratic delays at a federal immigration agency in recent months" and that "the **long waits** came when the agency, Citizenship and Immigration Services, shifted attention and resources to a program President Obama started in 2012 to give deportation deferrals to young undocumented **immigrants**." The New York Times noted that this "play[ed] havoc with international moves and children's schools and keeping families apart."

- With over five million unlawful **immigrants** standing to benefit from President Obama's new executive decree, **legal immigrants** will only **face longer wait** times, even though they've already paid the fees to have their applications processed.

Unlawful **Immigrants** Get A Free Pass, But **Legal Immigrants** Don't:

- **Legal immigrants** and their sponsors are required to pay fees to file their applications but those benefiting from the President's deferred action plan don't.

- For example, U.S. citizens filing an application for a greencard for a family member are required to pay \$420 just to submit their application to determine a qualifying relationship. And some relatives may have to then adjust their immigration status by filing another form, which costs \$985. But DACA and other deferred action applicants don't have to pay anything to cover the processing of the deferred action application. They only pay the fee to cover the work authorization application (\$380) and the fee to cover the fingerprint submission (\$85).

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) stated the following regarding the consequences of President Obama's unilateral actions for **legal immigrants**.

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"President Obama's unilateral immigration actions wrongfully punish legal immigrants who have played by the rules and waited in line for their turn to come to the United States. Not only does this send the message to the world that our immigration laws can be broken without consequence, it also shows that those who break our laws will be ushered to the front of the line. The President's actions provide little incentive to follow our immigration laws and will undoubtedly encourage more illegal immigration."

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