



17-09-07

## **AWC Statement on Presidential order to end DACA**

As many of you have seen, on Tuesday President Trump ordered an end to the DACA program. While a very small percentage of farm workers participate in DACA, below are a few clarifications you might find helpful.

### **What is DACA?**

DACA, or the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, was established with an executive order by President Barack Obama in 2012 and allows unauthorized immigrants who came to the U.S. as children to be protected from deportation. It also allows participants to legally work in the U.S. It is estimated by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services that the program has about 800,000 participants.

### **What does this mean for current participants of DACA?**

While the announcement orders an end to DACA, it does not immediately impact those who are currently in the US under the DACA program. The current understanding is that DACA will expire in six months and any new applications will be halted. Anyone who has a DACA permit expiring between now and March 5, 2018, can apply for a two-year renewal. For others, legal status ends as early as March 6, 2018. The CATO Institute estimates that about 24 percent of DACA recipients, or 190,000, will be able to renew their permits before March 5. The rest, roughly 595,000, will have their permits expire. As mentioned above, a very small percentage of farm workers participate in DACA. However, if anyone does have a current employee authorized under DACA, they will continue to have work authorization until March 5, 2018, at a minimum.

### **Why now?**

In June of this year, 11 attorneys general threatened to sue the Trump Administration unless it took steps by September 5, 2017 to end the program. Senior Trump administration officials believed that DACA would not stand up in court, and in that case the program would have been immediately invalidated.

### **How will Congress respond?**

The President has said that policies such as DACA should be passed by Congress, not by executive order. He has given Congress six months to pass immigration reform legislation or else he will revisit DACA. Speaker Ryan has indicated that DACA is one of the many immigration issues, including border security and interior enforcement, that Congress needs to legislate on to provide a permanent solution.

### **Does this announcement impact H-2A or ag workers?**

While DACA does not directly impact the current H-2A program, it does however provide urgency for Congress to take up immigration reform. Many Republicans are willing to support reforms to our immigration system and guestworker programs, including H-2A and DACA, so long as increased enforcement and border security is also addressed.

### **What is the latest on Chairman Goodlatte's AG Act of 2017?**

Earlier this week Judiciary Committee staff indicated their intent to introduce the Chairman's AG Act on Friday (tomorrow) with a mark up in Committee the following week. However, as we are getting closer to the end of the week, that is seeming more unlikely. As soon as we see the revised language we will send our analysis to

you all and schedule a full coalition meeting to walk through the bill and discuss our messaging strategy to ensure we are coordinated in our efforts.

**ICYMI:** Senior Judiciary Committee Republican and former Chairman, Rep. Lamar Smith, released two immigration related bills today. The first, the Immigration in the National Interest Act, is a companion bill to Sen. Cotton and Sen. Perdue's RAISE Act that would reduce legal immigration and create a merit based points system for higher skilled jobs. The second bill, the Legal Workforce Act, would expand E-Verify to all new hires. It will continue to be the coalition's position that we will not support mandatory E-Verify in any vehicle unless it is coupled with a legislative solution that will provide agriculture with a reliable, legal workforce.

**Good Read:** [This Op-Ed by Chairman Goodlatte](#) discussing the need to reform our current agricultural guest worker program was reposted by the Farm Journal.