Clinic Calls on Administration to Leave Daca in Place

Description

SILVER SPRING, Maryland – The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. calls on the administration to leave Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, intact, amid numerous reports that the president is considering ending the policy.

DACA provides deportation relief and the opportunity to work to approximately 800,000 young people living in the U.S. who meet certain criteria. Many DACA recipients, often called “Dreamers,” were brought to the U.S. as infants or young children. They have no memory of another country and many only speak English. “Emmanuel” described the impact DACA has had on his life: “Being able to have a work permit, driver’s license, buy my first car my first year, I was able to do so many things that I hadn’t dreamed of. Get a bank account, help my mother, my household.” He added, “A lot of us have dreams, like everybody. A lot of us aspire to be great people, to benefit society in a great way. DACA is an amazing thing, it is life. I get emotional talking about it. I hear every day what it means to be American. To me (keeping DACA) is the American thing to do, it’s the right thing to do.” Jeanne Atkinson, executive director of CLINIC, said, “the administration must protect the lives and dignity of these young people. It would be a violation of our Catholic and American values to take away their ability to go to school, work, and contribute to the only country many have ever known as home. We must not extinguish the potential of a generation. To do so robs the world of their contributions. It would diminish us all.” On July 18, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Migration released a statement expressing the Catholic Church’s solidarity with DACA recipients, emphasizing the inherent worth of these young people and calling for the administration to show compassion. Among the effects of eliminating DACA are an estimated reduction in tax contributions by DACA holders of $24.6 billion. Their employers would face $3.4 billion in expenses for employee turnover. “The administration must not terminate DACA without a legislative solution in place,” said Atkinson. “The livelihoods and way of life for 800,000 DACA recipients and exponentially many more of their relatives who they help support are on the line. The personal costs to those who would lose DACA are enormous. Ending DACA is not just ill-considered, it would represent a failure of our society.”

CLINIC advocates for humane and just immigration policy. Its network of nonprofit immigration programs—300 organizations in 47 states and the District of Columbia—is the largest in the nation.

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