

# Valley Interfaith Project



## What Congregations and Other Institutions Can Do to Support DACA

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was created by executive order in 2012 to give undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children protection from deportation. Successful applicants to the program were granted deferred action on deportation in two-year increments, along with a work permit. Individuals could request DACA status if they were under the age of 31 by June 15, 2012, had come to the country before the age of 16, and could prove continuous residency in the U.S. since 2007. No one with a criminal record could be approved for DACA, and applicants had to be either high school graduates (or GRE), honorably discharged from the military, or still in school.

About 800,000 young people are DACA recipients in the U.S.; in Arizona, there are about 28,000 recipients.

### DACA Interrupted

On Tuesday, September 5, 2017, the Trump administration announced their plan to end the program, by phasing it out:

- No new applications for DACA will be processed after September 5th.
- If a DACA recipient's work permit expires before March 5, 2018, they can apply for a two-year extension before October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- If a recipient's work permit expires after March 5, 2018, they cannot apply for an extension.

The Trump administration did NOT cancel the work permits of any current DACA recipient – these are good until their expiration date. The announcement did end the recipient's right to apply to travel abroad (Advanced Parole).

The Trump administration has attempted to reassure DACA recipients that they will not be a high priority for detention by immigration authorities; however, the administration has also been quoted as saying that recipients should use this six-month window to make preparations to leave.

It is now up to Congress to pass a law protecting these young people, and they must do it by March 5, 2018, to avoid interruption of the protections offered under the current program.

### What Institutions Can Do

**STUDY:** Most religious traditions have developed guidelines and/or position papers outlining their stand on immigration and immigration reform. Congregations can form small groups to study these documents, a minister could preach on the topic, and/or a DACA recipient could share his or her story with the institution.

**REAL CONVERSATION:** When there's a great deal of controversy over an issue, it's good to talk. Invite all members to small group conversations to share the story of how *they* came to this county. Next, TEACH the immigration history of the United States – not every group was welcomed when they arrived, and often, immigration policy was slow to keep up with actual immigration.

**PRAY (Congregations):** For immigration reform and especially the safety of DACA recipients, many of whom have no memory of their country of origin.

#### ACT:

1. Invite your institution to call both their U.S. senators and representative (contact information below). Thank them, especially our Senators Flake and McCain, for expressing support for DACA recipients, and encourage them to sponsor legislation like the Dream Act to protect the Dreamers. For everyone else, urge them to support DACA and the Dream Act of 2017, a bipartisan bill that would create a path to citizenship.
2. Attend the ACTION immigration action team meetings, and be part of the conversation about how we strategically act together to change this.
3. Identify voters who care about this issue, and consider bringing them together for a public meeting or accountability session with candidates running for office.
4. Reach out to nearby congregations and institutions to get them engaged in supporting DACA.

## Arizona Congressional Delegation

Senate Contact Information				
Name	DC Phone	Local Phone	Contact Form	
Senator John McCain	(202)224-223	(602) 952-2410	<a href="http://www.mccain.senate.gov">www.mccain.senate.gov</a>	
Senator Jeff Flake	(202)224-4521	(602) 840-1891	<a href="http://www.flake.senate.gov">www.flake.senate.gov</a>	
House of Representatives Contact Information				
<a href="http://www.house.gov">www.house.gov</a> (enter zip code to find your representative)				
District	Name	DC Phone	Local Phone	Contact Form
1	O'Halleran, Tom	202-225-3361	520-316-0839	<a href="http://ohalleran.house.gov/contact">ohalleran.house.gov/contact</a>
2	McSally, Martha	202-225-2542	(520) 881-3588	<a href="http://mcsally.house.gov/contact">mcsally.house.gov/contact</a>
3	Grijalva, Raul	202-225-2435	(520) 622-6788	<a href="http://grijalva.house.gov/email-raul">grijalva.house.gov/email-raul</a>
4	Gosar, Paul A.	202-225-2315	(928) 445-1683	<a href="http://paulgosar.house.gov/contact">paulgosar.house.gov/contact</a>
5	Biggs, Andy	202-225-2635	(480) 699-8239	<a href="http://biggs.house.gov/contact">biggs.house.gov/contact</a>
6	Schweikert, David	202-225-2190	(480) 946-2411	<a href="http://schweikert.house.gov/contact">schweikert.house.gov/contact</a>
7	Gallego, Ruben	202-225-4065	(602) 256-0551	<a href="http://rubengallego.house.gov/contact/">rubengallego.house.gov/contact/</a> email
8	Franks, Trent	202-225-4576	(623) 776-7911	<a href="http://franks.house.gov/contact-me">franks.house.gov/contact-me</a>
9	Sinema, Kyrsten	202-225-9888	602-956-2285	<a href="http://sinemaforms.house.gov/forms/">sinemaforms.house.gov/forms/</a> writeyourrep/

### What is the Dream Act 2017? (From National Immigration Law Center)

- Authors: Lindsey Graham, Dick Durbin, Jeff Flake, Chuck Schumer
- Provides direct path to citizenship for undocumented people, including DACA recipients
- Repeals “section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which currently discourages states from making undocumented students eligible for in-state tuition or providing them other higher education benefits.”
- More generous than previous bills – includes those who are not in school, anyone who entered the U.S. before 18

The DACA crisis underscores the need for reform of our broken immigration system. For more information about DACA or how to host a local conversation and Civic Academy on the issue, contact VIP at [vippbx@gmail.com](mailto:vippbx@gmail.com).