



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on August 2, 2014

House Votes to End DACA, Spend \$694 Million on Border Crisis

House Republicans voted to end President Obama's Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals in a rare Friday night session called to deal with the Texas border crisis. The DACA policy, announced by Obama in June 2012, allows young aliens who were brought here illegally before their 16th birthday to apply for a two-year protection against deportation actions and receive work permits. It applies to some 550,000 illegal immigrants who arrived before 2007 and has been blamed by Republicans for encouraging more illegal border crossings, including the surge of a reported 57,000 young immigrants, mainly from Central America, crossing the Texas border in the past 10 months.



The 216-192 vote to rescind the deferred action policy was along party lines with only four Democrats voting with the Republicans and 11 Republicans breaking ranks to join the Democrats in opposing the bill. Earlier in the evening the House passed a bill 223 to 189 to provide \$694 million in supplemental funding for a combination of humanitarian assistance and increased security at the border, including \$35 million for states that send National Guard troops to the border on their own. The bill also includes a controversial provision for expedited hearings for the immigrants that opponents of the measure say will deprive the aliens of the due process rights under a federal law against drug and human trafficking. The law guarantees hearings for immigrants from countries other than Mexico or Canada.

Neither bill passed Friday night is likely to become law. The Senate left Thursday to begin its summer recess and the bills are not likely to be considered, not to mention passed, by the Democratic majority in the upper chamber when they return. The president has promised a certain veto should either measure reach his desk. The votes do make it more likely, however, that immigration issues will continue to be the subject of heated partisan debate throughout the congressional election campaigns this fall.

"Only cowards scapegoat children and only those who are ashamed of themselves do it after hours on a Friday night," Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.) charged during the House debate. Rep. Raul Labrador (R-Idaho) blamed Obama and his selective enforcement of the immigration laws for encouraging minors to believe they will be able to stay in the United States once they make it across the border. Many of them never get across alive, he said. "There are reports of discoveries of small, lifeless bodies washed up along the river banks," Labrador said. "Many of these children are abused, they're victimized and they're raped. We must understand that the President is responsible because of his failure to fully comply with the law."



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White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest issued a statement defending DACA as a means of focusing deportation efforts more on dangerous criminals. "It is extraordinary that House Republicans are demanding that we reverse that prioritization as a price for getting the resources needed to deal with the urgent humanitarian situation at the border, reduce the immigration court backlog, and address the root cause of child migration," Earnest said.

President Obama had requested \$3.7 billion to deal with the border crisis. The Senate failed to reach agreement on a \$2.7 billion proposal before adjourning on Thursday.

"I'm going to have to act alone," Obama said at a Friday afternoon press conference. "We've run out of money." About \$44 million has already been diverted from the government's health-related accounts, including the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to pay for food, beds, clothing, and medical care for the crush of new immigrants, the *LA Times* reported Wednesday. The appropriation the president requested also included funding for more judges and lawyers for hearings and deportation procedures, along with enhanced security measures, including increased air surveillance of the Rio Grande region and an expansion Border Enforcement Security Task Force. The president also included an unrelated request of \$615 million for wildfire suppression.

A much smaller \$659 million bill was on the table at the House on Thursday, but Republican "immigration hawks" rebelled against the measure, since it did not repeal the DACA policy and contained no language forbidding the president from further executive action to grant legal status to illegal immigrants. The bill was thought dead and members were heading home for the summer recess when Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) called them back in response to a backlash from members determined to pass something before going home to face their constituents. The anti-DACA measure was passed as a separate bill and the \$35 million for National Guard units was added to the spending bill, bringing the total to \$694 billion.

"The people's House is here working and we're not going to stop working until we pass legislation that actually addresses this crisis," House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) said on Friday, a point the president disputed at his press conference.

"They're not even trying to actually solve the problem," Obama said of the House Republicans. "This is a message bill that they couldn't pull off yesterday, so they made it a little more extreme so maybe they can pass it today. Just so they can check a box before they're leaving town for a month."

Senate Democrats, on the other hand, left town for the same month without passing any bill to deal with the border crisis. They didn't "check a box," but they didn't do anything to help the immigrant children or protect the border either.





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