



# Obama DACA Program Grants Amnesty to 664,607 Illegal Aliens

The Obama administration has extended amnesty from deportation to 664,607 illegal aliens by means of executive orders. This has been done through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) program, which began in 2012.

President Obama initiated DACA with an executive action after Congress failed to pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). DREAM was first introduced in the Senate in 2001 and reintroduced in the 107th through 111th Congresses. It never passed both houses, but Obama was determined to implement it anyway. So on June 15, 2012, he announced that his administration would stop deporting young illegal immigrants who met certain criteria previously proposed under the DREAM Act.

The DACA program was formally initiated by a policy memorandum sent from then-Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano on June 15, 2012, to the heads of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), ordering them to practice “prosecutorial discretion” toward some individuals who were brought to this country before their 16th birthday.

Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson expanded DACA when on November 20, 2014 he sent an executive action memorandum to the heads of CBP, USCIS, and ICE that removed its age cap and extended work authorization to three years. Johnson’s order also expanded “deferred action” (another name for amnesty) by directing USCIS to establish a process, similar to DACA, for exercising prosecutorial discretion through the use of deferred action, on a case-by-case basis, to those individuals who have a son or daughter who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident; have continuously resided in the United States since before January 1, 2010; and were physically present in the United States on the date of his memorandum, and at the time of making a request for consideration of deferred action with USCIS.

In response to that expansion of DACA, U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen of the U.S. District Court in Brownsville, Texas, issued an injunction on February 16 blocking the executive action, which granted amnesty to four million illegal aliens. Hanen issued his injunction at the request of a coalition of 26 states, led by Texas, which have filed a lawsuit (*State of Texas, et al v. United States of America, et al*) to stop the administration’s executive action, asserting that it is unconstitutional.

Hanen’s injunction banned the government from implementing the action directed by Johnson, which





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included extending two-year work permits for qualifying illegal aliens to three years. However, Justice Department attorneys later had to apologize to Hanen for a delay in correcting the expansion of DACA, which they claimed was an error. During a June 23 hearing, Hanen expressed visible frustration with the delay in changing the three-year work permits to two-year ones, and asked the government attorneys: "How hard is it to correct your own computer system? How hard is it to change a three to a two?"

A report posted on July 30 by NumbersUSA, an organization that favors reducing the legal annual U.S. immigration quota to 200,000, cited USCIS data revealing that between the time DACA started in 2012 through March 2015, the agency has processed 748,789 initial immigration requests and 355,805 renewals. The result: 664,607 of those initial requests and 243,872 renewals have been approved and only 43,375 initial requests and 414 renewals have been denied.

A July 29 report in the *Washington Examiner* noted that applications for permanent residence in the United States have increased substantially from 3,000 to 7,500 a month, which is much higher than projections. The article cited figures supplied by the USCIS to Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee's Immigration and the National Interest Subcommittee. During a question-and-answer period following the hearing, it was also revealed that the administration employs 331 workers just to handle DACA applications.

Breitbart News reported on July 29 that it had obtained copies of USCIS's replies to questions presented to it at the subcommittee hearing and that the Obama administration admitted it has found 16 DACA requests that had identified "possible national security concerns," but of those identified just seven applicants have been denied amnesty to date.

"Each case was individually vetted and deconflicted with the appropriate law enforcement agency, and each request was considered on its individual merits," USCIS responded in its written response.

While only 16 DACA applicants have been identified as security concerns out of the nearly one million applicants, one reason for the small number of such risks being identified is that, as of April 30, USCIS has interviewed in person only 283 DACA applicants.

Breitbart reported that this means that the Obama administration has conducted in-person interviews with about only .03 percent of initial DACA applicants and about .02 percent of all DACA applications.

In addition to the expansion of DACA through executive action being unconstitutional, as the 26 plaintiffs state in *State of Texas, et al v. United States of America, et al* have asserted, it is evident that the administration of DACA is sloppy and that inadequate resources have been dedicated to interviewing applicants and identifying those who pose a risk to our nation's security.

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