



Trump's Apparent Willingness to Preserve DACA Disturbs His Conservative Base

Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Senator Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), the minority leaders in Congress, stated that President Trump said at a September 13 White House dinner that he would support enshrining into law protections from deportation for an estimated 700,000 young illegal aliens who entered the United States as children with their parents and came here illegally. These young aliens have been immune from deportation under DACA (the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program), which was formally initiated by a policy memorandum sent from former President Obama's Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano on June 15, 2012.



However, during a press gaggle at Southwest Florida Regional Airport on September 14, after Trump said that no definitive agreement was reached, a reporter asked the president: "Why did the Democrats say there was a deal at dinner?"

Trump replied: "There was no deal and they didn't say they had a deal. In fact, they just put out a statement they didn't say that at all."

Schumer and Pelosi released the following statement, which read, in part:

President Trump's Tweets are not inconsistent with the agreement reached last night. As we said last night, there was no final deal, but there was agreement on the following:

We agreed that the President would support enshrining DACA protections into law, and encourage the House and Senate to act.

What remains to be negotiated are the details of border security, with a mutual goal of finalizing all details as soon as possible. While both sides agreed that the wall would not be any part of this agreement, the President made clear he intends to pursue it at a later time, and we made clear we would continue to oppose it.

Both sides agreed that the White House and the Democratic leaders would work out a border security package. Possible proposals were discussed including new technology, drones, air support, sensor equipment, rebuilding roads along the border and the bipartisan McCaul-Thompson bill. [A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a comprehensive strategy to gain and maintain operational control of the international borders of the United States.]

The top Democrats' statement brought a quick reaction from Representative Steve King (R-Iowa), who wrote on Twitter that if the Democrats' description of the deal is true, "Trump base is blown up,



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 15, 2017

destroyed, irreparable, and disillusioned beyond repair. No promise is credible.”

On the morning of September 14, before leaving for Florida and, therefore, prior to his Fort Myers statement, Trump also said on Twitter, “No deal was made last night on DACA. Massive border security would have to be agreed to in exchange for consent. Would be subject to vote.”

However, Trump’s subsequent tweets represent a far departure from his previously stated positions on DACA. He tweeted:

Does anybody really want to throw out good, educated and accomplished young people who have jobs, some serving in the military? Really! They have been in our country for many years through no fault of their own — brought in by parents at young age. Plus BIG border security.

Trump’s statement is at odds with an announcement that Attorney General Jeff Sessions made on September 5 stating that the program will end in six months, giving Congress time to find a legislative solution for people enrolled in the program.

“To have a lawful system of immigration that serves the national interest, we cannot admit everyone that wants to come here,” Sessions said. “As attorney general, it is my duty to ensure that the laws of the United States are enforced and that the constitutional order is upheld.”

Sessions criticized the Obama administration for implementing an “unconstitutional exercise of authority,” and he described the estimated 800,000 DACA recipients as “mostly adult illegal aliens” who had deprived American citizens of jobs and encouraged further illegal immigration.

“The effect of this unilateral executive amnesty, among other things, contributed to a surge of unaccompanied minors on the southern border that yielded terrible humanitarian consequences,” Sessions said. “It also denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same jobs to go to illegal aliens.”

A report in the *Washington Post* on September 15 noted the obvious contradiction between Sessions’ September 5 statement and Trump’s obvious softening on DACA after meeting with Schumer and Pelosi, running a story under the headline: “The Daily 202: Trump’s DACA ‘deal’ is another humiliation for Jeff Sessions.”

The *Post* article observed:

But it took less than 10 days for Trump to once again undercut Sessions. The president on Thursday signaled his embrace of granting permanent legal status to these “dreamers” as part of a deal with Democrats that he said is close to being finalized. He also acknowledged that he’s not going to make a deal to save DACA contingent on getting funding for the wall he wants to build along the U.S.-Mexico border. (Bold type in original.)

A September 14 article in *Business Insider* reported that some conservative commentators “sounded off Wednesday night about President Donald Trump’s apparent deal with Democrats.” The article continued:

Shortly after, Breitbart News featured a splash on its website that said “Amnesty Don” with an article titled “Trump Caves In on DACA,” the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Though the White House disputed some of the details, Schumer and Pelosi said a Wednesday-night meeting had ended with a bipartisan agreement to codify protections outlined in DACA for some young unauthorized immigrants and address border-security issues.



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While campaigning for the presidency, candidate Trump promised that he would “immediately terminate” DACA after being elected. While it is not uncommon for politicians to renege on campaign promises after assuming office, it would serve Trump well not to abandon the conservative base that elected him. Some of Trump’s supporters have already expressed negative views.

Fox News host Sean Hannity, a Trump supporter, pinned the blame on Republicans: “They caused this. They wanted him to fail and now pushed him into arms of political suicide.”

Author and commentator Ann Coulter expressed skepticism about Schumer and Pelosi’s statement announcing the deal, suspecting that Trump does not intend to keep any promises he may have made to them: “Trump tells his audience what they want to hear. He told 63 million who voted for him he’d build a wall. Get used to it, Chuck & Nancy.”

Conservative radio host Laura Ingraham, said: “THE ART OF THE STEAL: Let’s hope that Pelosi & Schumer misrepresented the #DACA deal.”

The bluntest statement of all may have come from former Republican congressman and syndicated radio host Joe Walsh, who tweeted, “No wall. DACA enshrined. Trump didn’t make a deal w Chuck and Nancy. Trump got screwed by Chuck and Nancy. Trump just screwed his base.”

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