

ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGAL OUTREACH

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ASIAN COMMUNITY WILL BE IMPACTED BY SUPREME COURT'S DACA DECISION -TAKE ACTION NOW

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San Francisco, CA - Soon the U.S. Supreme Court will issue its decision on the fate of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, known as DACA, a program enacted by President Obama to protect those who came to the United States at a young age and have become contributing members of our communities. While the majority are originally from Latin American countries, many from the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community have also received DACA protections, including thousands from Korea, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, China, and Vietnam.

The Court is currently considering President Trump's attempt to end the program, which would put hundreds of thousands of young people at risk of having their only safeguard from deportation stripped. While DACA recipients should obtain a legal consult to evaluate their specific situation, DACA experts generally recommend that they renew as soon as possible. DACA recipients can renew their status early, even if it does not expire until next year. A renewal may lessen or delay any effects from an adverse court decision. There is always the possibility of a new Federal administration being voted in come November that would change Trump's anti-immigrant policies.

The Trump administration's attack on DACA fits squarely into his anti-immigrant agenda, even as there has been overwhelming bipartisan support for the program. However, we fear that the conservative majority in the Court will allow the administration to end the program, forcing DACA recipients back into the shadows to live with the constant fear of being deported to a country they might not even remember. Trump is sending a message to DACA recipients across the U.S. that they do not deserve the protections that have been afforded to them, further excluding and oppressing the API and immigrant community.

Since it was enacted in 2012, young immigrants from every corner of the world have applied for DACA in order to feel secure in the country they consider home. They have spent most of their lives in the United States, arriving on average at the age of seven. They have attended schools, worked in diverse fields such as education, health, and public service, and have contributed billions of dollars through taxes and spending. If the Court allows the Trump administration to end DACA, API Dreamers would see opportunities to thrive in higher education and workplaces closed to them. Those who have U.S. citizen children would fear being taken not only from their homes, but from their own children.

Trump's efforts to end the program were stymied in part by the lower courts, ruling that no new applications would be accepted but those who have already been granted DACA could renew. We hope to see the Court allow those already relying on this program to continue to do so, as well as to resume accepting new applicants. Any ruling that falls short of this would be a grave injustice to the hundreds of thousands of hard working DACA recipients that are the future of our country.

API Legal Outreach is a non-profit social justice organization with Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, and Tagalog speaking attorneys that provides free legal assistance with DACA renewal applications and other immigration matters.

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