

Trump ends DACA immigrant program, but gives Congress window to save it

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff on 09.06.17

Word Count **685**

Level **860L**



Supporters of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) demonstrate on Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House in Washington, D.C., September 3, 2017. Photo from AP

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Donald Trump will end a program called DACA. It protects hundreds of thousands of young immigrants who were brought into the country by their parents, against the law.

Immigrants are people who move to a new country. There are rules in each country about who can come live there and how. In the United States, immigration can be challenging and some people come without permission. This is against the law, but lawmakers often disagree about what to do with people who break this law.

Former President Obama Started DACA

DACA was started under President Barack Obama. It let kids who were brought to the U.S. without permission stay. It let them work legally. It also gave them protection from being deported. Deportation would force them to go back to countries many of them may not even remember.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions is the head of the Justice Department, which runs the nation's courts. He said the program was against the law. Sessions said that societies that follow their laws are societies that succeed and do well.

The changes mean that the government will stop taking new applications under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program.

Trump Turns To Congress

Trump is giving Congress six months to come up with a new law. After that, the government will stop the DACA program.

Trump suggested in an earlier tweet that it would be up to Congress to decide what to do.

Sessions' announcement came the same day as a deadline set by a group of Republican state officials. They said they would challenge DACA in court unless Trump ended the program.

Many believe the program would not hold up in court.

Republicans Have Struggled With Issue

Trump plans to be harder on young immigrants unless Congress does something. Republicans have long struggled with the issue. Many Republicans do not agree on what to do with people who have come to the United States without permission.

Trump has spent months wrestling with what to do with DACA. He was against it when he was running for president. Many of his closest advisers argue that the program is against the law. They have urged Trump to follow through on his promise to end it.

Trump describes the decision as one of the most difficult he's had to make as president.

He called the young people using DACA "terrific."

Trump still wants to let lawmakers in Congress decide what to do with DACA. It is still unclear what will happen.

Some Republicans say they are ready to decide what to do about the issue. Republican Senator Lindsay Graham said they will work to find a law that solves the problem.

Party Politics And Internal Divisions

DACA was created in 2012. At the time, Obama was pushing for bigger changes to immigration laws. He wanted lawmakers in Congress to make the changes but they were unsuccessful in getting enough people to agree on what to do. Many Republicans say they opposed DACA because it showed the president using too much power.

Republican leader Paul Ryan and a handful of other Republicans urged Trump last week to hold off on ending DACA. They want to give lawmakers time to come up with a new law to replace it.

Lawmakers have repeatedly tried and failed to create new immigration laws. Too many people disagree with one another.

It's unclear what kind of law the president would support. He could encourage the writing of a new bill tied to other things he wants, like a border wall.

It's also unclear how much the president would be willing to risk. His supporters are strongly opposed to DACA.

Trump's expected move has sparked protests. Many people are upset by his decision.

Obama Speaks Highly Of Program

Obama responded to Trump ending the program. He wrote on Facebook that DACA was not illegal. He continued, adding that we "shouldn't threaten the future of this group of young people who are here through no fault of their own, who pose no threat, who are not taking away anything from the rest of us."