



July 21 2017

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN DEFENDS DACA PROGRAM***Madigan & 19 Attorneys General Demand President Affirm His Commitment to Dreamers***

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan, along with 19 other attorneys general, today issued a letter to President Trump urging him to maintain and defend the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. In the letter, Madigan and the other attorneys general explain how DACA has benefited their states and the nation as a whole and call on Trump to fulfill his public commitment to Dreamers.

Since DACA's inception five years ago, nearly 800,000 young immigrants who were brought to this country as children have been granted DACA status after paying application fees, submitting to and passing background checks and applying for work permits. Illinois has the third highest number of approved initial DACA applications, trailing only California and Texas. Since 2012, over 42,000 Illinoisans have been approved to participate in the DACA program. Many of those individuals have already successfully renewed their DACA status for an additional two-year period.

The attorneys general wrote:

"Mr. President, now is the time to affirm the commitment you made, both to the 'incredible kids' who benefit from DACA and to their families and communities, to handle this issue 'with heart.' You said Dreamers should 'rest easy.' We urge you to affirm America's values and tradition as a nation of immigrants and make clear that you will not only continue DACA, but that you will defend it. The cost of not doing so would be too high for America, the economy, and for these young people. For these reasons, we urge you to maintain and defend DACA, and we stand in support of the effort to defend DACA by all appropriate means."

The letter refutes arguments set forth by those opposing DACA and threatening litigation, saying they are "wrong as a matter of law and policy," and urges the President not to "capitulate" to their demands:

"DACA is consistent with a long pattern of presidential exercises of prosecutorial discretion. DACA sensibly guides immigration officials' exercise of their enforcement discretion and reserves limited resources to address individuals who threaten our communities, not those who contribute greatly to them. Challenges have been brought against the original DACA program, including in the Fifth Circuit, but none have succeeded."

Joining Madigan in sending the letter are the attorneys general from: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawai'i, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Vermont, Washington and Washington, D.C.

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

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