ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 300

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

217th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 7, 2017

Sponsored by:

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District 37 (Bergen)
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District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)
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District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Congress to enact legislation to codify Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION urging Congress to enact legislation 2 codifying the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) 3 program. 4 5 WHEREAS, In 2012, former President Barack Obama established by executive action the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals 6 7 (DACA) program; and 8 WHEREAS, Under DACA, some unauthorized immigrants who were 9 brought to the United States as minors, a group sometimes called 10 "Dreamers," are given a chance to stay in the country, provided 11 they meet certain conditions; and 12 WHEREAS, The conditions include coming to the United States under 13 the age of 16, being enrolled in school, or having a high school 14 degree or GED equivalent, or being an honorably discharged 15 veteran of the Coast Guard or United States Armed Forces, and not 16 having a serious criminal conviction; and 17 WHEREAS, Although DACA does not give permanent lawful status to those approved for the program, it provides a temporary relief from 18 19 deportation, along with a social security number and work permit 20 for a two-year period, along with the ability of to renew these 21 benefits; and 22 WHEREAS, To many undocumented youth, DACA represented the 23 first real opportunity to pursue the American Dream by permitting 24 them to secure a job that matched their skill set. Since many 25 DACA-eligible individuals are from low-income families, and 26 undocumented individuals do not have access to federal financial 27 aid, the ability to get a higher-paying job was important in their ability to finance higher education more easily; and 28 29 WHEREAS, Since its inception, about 800,000 young people across the 30 nation, including 22,000 in this State, have received the benefits of 31 the DACA program and its recipients have capitalized on the 32 opportunity, getting better jobs, earning higher wages, increasing 33 their participation in the consumer economy and paying taxes; and 34 WHEREAS, President Donald J. Trump in September of 2017 ordered 35 an end to the program which may result, as early as March 2018, in 36 making some of the DACA recipients eligible for deportation, 37 unless Congress acts to save the program before it is phased out; 38 and 39 WHEREAS, Ending the program would significantly harm our State's 40 economy. Eighty-seven percent of New Jersey's 22,000 DACA 41 recipients are working and contributing \$66 million in State and 42 local taxes each year and it is estimated that ending the DACA 43 program would cause an immediate 32 percent reduction in those 44 tax payments; and 45 WHEREAS, The State would also lose an estimated \$1.6 billion each 46 year in State Gross Domestic Product, which would be the fifth

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largest dollar loss of all states; and

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- WHEREAS, The negative effect on the State's economy is important,
 but it does not compare to the profound impact that ending DACA
 will have on the individual lives of young people in communities
 across our immigrant-rich State; and
 WHEREAS, The decision to end the program will result in turning the
 lives of enterprising immigrant youth upside down, stealing their
 economic futures, and putting them in desperate fear of being
 - WHEREAS, Ending the DACA program is cold-hearted, shortsighted, and cruel, because it targets young people who are here in the United States through no fault of their own and will stifle their opportunity for a better shot at success and a chance to participate in America's economy and society; and,

separated from their families and communities via deportation; and

WHEREAS, It is therefore critical that the United States Congress take immediate action to enact legislation to codify the provisions of the DACA program so that the Dreamers may continue their pursuit of a better future for themselves, and through their efforts and achievements, a better future for this country; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. This House urges the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to codify the provisions of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program to protect the young people of this country who have taken advantage of that program to pursue a better future and, through their efforts and achievements, the future of this country.

2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State, shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, and to every member of Congress elected from this State.

STATEMENT

This resolution urges the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to codify the provisions of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

In 2012, former President Obama established by executive action the DACA program. Under DACA, unauthorized immigrants who were brought to the United States as minors, a group sometimes called "Dreamers," are given a chance to stay in the country, provided they meet certain conditions including, coming to the United States under the age of 16, being enrolled in school, or having a high school degree

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- 1 or GED equivalent, or being an honorably discharged veteran of the
- 2 Coast Guard or United States Armed Forces, and not having a serious
- 3 criminal conviction. DACA does not give permanent lawful status to
- 4 those approved for the program, but it does provide a temporary relief
- from deportation, along with a social security number and work permit
- 6 for a two-year period, with the opportunity to renew. The recipients of
- 7 DACA have capitalized on the opportunities afforded by the program
- 8 by getting better jobs, earning higher wages, and thereby increasing
- 9 their participation in America's economy and society.
- New Jersey has over 22,000 young immigrants participating in
- 11 DACA. The State stands to lose considerable tax revenues through
- 12 the elimination of the protections of DACA, and would also suffer
- an estimated \$1.6 billion loss each year in State Gross Domestic
- 14 Product. The harm to our economy, however, does not compare to
- 15 the devastating effect this decision to eliminate DACA will have on
- 16 the lives of our youth who through no fault of their own were
- brought to the United States as children and who have relied on the
- 18 opportunities afforded by DACA to attempt to realize the promise
- 19 of the American Dream. The decision to end DACA is cold-
- 20 hearted, shortsighted, and cruel, and this House strongly opposes
- 21 the decision.
- 22 This resolution urges Congress to take immediate action to
- codify the provisions of DACA.