



Support our DACA Neighbors – Build a Better Wisconsin
Sponsored by Voces de la Frontera, Wisconsin Council of Churches,
Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice, and WISDOM

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Recipients are Law Abiding

DACA recipients were brought to the United States by their parents or other adults when they were children before 2012 and have continuously resided in the United States since 2007. They have to go through federal background checks every two years in order to keep their status.

Wisconsin Has a Labor Shortage

- **SB 828/AB 822** would directly impact our workforce by allowing individuals who are part of the DACA program to be eligible to receive occupational licenses. In August 2023, Wisconsin had a total of 187,000 job openings across the state. Employers throughout our state are showing concerns about the challenge of filling these positions. (DWD's Job Openings & Labor Turnover Survey). We need more workers.
- At least 16 states have this eligibility for DACA recipients for at least one type of professional license. Most of these states allow for most or all types of professional licenses in the state.
- Associations for professionals such as for health care workers and electricians support this bill. We need to fill our labor shortages.

Let's Help and Not Hinder Young People Ready to Obtain Advance Degrees

- **SB 843/AB 821** would allow DACA recipients to pay in-state tuition for Wisconsin schools like most residents who have lived in the state for only 12 months. Currently, DACA recipients pay out-of-state tuition to attend Wisconsin universities, even if they were raised here. Many have amazing academic backgrounds but have extreme and unnecessary financial barriers placed before them to succeed.
- Because Minnesota offers in-state tuition to DACA recipients and has reciprocity with Wisconsin, we position ourselves to lose good students to Minnesota.
- 25 states allow DACA recipients to pay in-state tuition. By not doing the same, we weaken our competitiveness. Let's help young people excel to be the professionals they strive to be and whom we need.

The Workforce has Hit the Law Enforcement Field

- **SB 78/AB 51** would allow DACA recipients to be considered for hiring as police officers.
- DACA recipients can serve as state troopers, correctional officers, game wardens and serve in our armed services. It's time to allow them to be police officers as well.
- The DOJ reported a record low (since tracking began in 2008) in 2022 of only 13,400 officers in the state. This is not the time for bureaucratic red tape.

Make Wisconsin Fairer and Better

SB 865/AB 820 would create a tax credit for DACA recipients of \$250 for their annual taxes but cannot receive any federal benefits. The tax credit would cover the \$495 they pay for renewing their DACA status every two years. DACA recipients pay taxes. They need to either be enrolled in secondary education, have obtained their high school diploma/GED, or be a veteran of the armed forces or U.S. coast guard to be in the DACA program. The government requires DACA recipients to be responsible. Let's be responsible to them with this small benefit. Make Wisconsin a more appealing place for gifted young adults.

Being fair and just with our DACA recipient neighbors will help us all.



Additional Details

Background of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

In 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced this program which allows certain individuals who came to the U.S. as children under specific guidelines (such as obtaining secondary education/serving in the armed forces and completing a biannual background check) the ability to request deferred action. DACA Recipients have to apply every two years and have little to no criminal history among other requirements to remain. The program is not accepting new applicants due to a decision by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. It is up to Congress to create a permanent legislative solution to this issue. In the meantime, Wisconsin's state government can decide on how these individuals will be part of our society.

The legal limbo the federal government has created for these individuals has led to much confusion about the program so here are some helpful facts to debunk common misconceptions.

Myth: DACA recipients are stealing jobs from hard working Americans.

FACT: DACA recipients are given work authorization but like many states, Wisconsin is facing a labor shortage. Industries such as the police force have had record low job fillings in recent years. The current legislative efforts to allow DACA recipients to obtain occupational licenses and to become police would allow for more economic prosperity for Wisconsin. DACA recipients comprise a finite group of individuals.

Myth: DACA recipients are a drain on our welfare state/do not contribute positively to our economy.

FACT: DACA recipients pay local, state, and federal taxes, register for the draft, serve in our armed forces, and are a vital part of the workforce in the United States, including in Wisconsin. The DACA program allows them to get work authorization (including having a social security card) and driver licenses. But they are ineligible for federal benefits such as social security benefits, food stamps, or other welfare benefits.

Myth: There aren't any reasons for fiscal conservatives to support legislation related to DACA in Wisconsin.

FACT: A strong economy that removes bureaucratic red tape is one of the impetuses behind this legislation. DACA recipients have to prove themselves to keep their status by graduating high school, receiving a GED, or serving in our armed forces. Their federal background checks make them quality candidates for employers that are desperate to fill Wisconsin's labor force. Their contribution to the economy without burdening our social safety net means that there are a win-win for Wisconsin's conservative community.

Four DACA Immigration Bills to Support Wisconsin's Workforce

- **SB 828/AB 822** would directly impact our workforce by allowing individuals who are part of the DACA program to be eligible to receive occupational licenses.
- **SB 843/AB 821** would allow DACA recipients to pay in-state tuition for Wisconsin schools like most residents who have lived in the state for 12 months.
- **SB 78/AB 51** would allow the sheriff of a county or appointing authority of a local law enforcement agency to authorize the appointment of DACA recipients. The bill also prevents the law enforcement standards board from preventing a DACA recipient from participating in a law enforcement preparatory training program.
- **SB 865/AB 820** would create a tax credit for DACA recipients of \$250 for their annual taxes. Currently, DACA recipients have to go through many hurdles to remain in Wisconsin due to their status. This tax credit would target one condition of their status renewal which requires them to pay \$495 every two years for the ability to work and pay taxes in this country.