

My Plan for Dreamers, DACA, and Illegal Aliens

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Immigration, particularly illegal immigration, is a passionate issue which has greatly divided our nation. There is no denying that a large number of people in the US were brought here illegally as children. By now, for most of them, this is their home; it is the only country they have known and they truly want to be accepted as Americans.

Mercy demands that we ask the question, “Why did these parents make the decision to leave their homeland in the first place?” For them to take the risks -- to leave their family and friends behind – we can only imagine it had to have been an extremely difficult and desperate decision.

I have a common-sense solution. Be forewarned, while my plan is very strict, it may not please those who think we should simply kick all Dreamers and their families out of the country. If that is you, I would ask you to put yourself in their shoes. Do you really believe these young adults, who have set roots down here, should be punished because their parents made a decision to enter the US illegally?

MY PLAN

Dreamers, I would categorize as age 18 and over, who were brought to the US by their parents, have lived here for years, and consider the United States to be their home country.

Minors, I would categorize as having been brought to the US by their parents, but are under the age of 18

Parent-Adults would be labeled as the adults who entered the US illegally with minor children.

Non-Parent Adults: Those who entered the US as either single or married adults and no children. Or whose children have reached the age of Majority (age 18)

Dreamers would have six months to register with the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and declare their intention to become US citizens. They would then have six years to become citizens. During this time, they would be required to undergo thorough background checks to verify they are eligible for citizenship. This would verify that they:

- Have not been convicted of a felony

- Have not been charged with a felony
- Have not participated in protests against the United States of America
- Are not members of a gang or a terrorist organization
- Are employed and have proof of employment, or
- Is a student, or
- Is serving in the US Military

Once the Dreamer has registered with USCIS, they:

- Would not be eligible to receive any federal assistance, such as:
 - No federal food stamps
 - No federal student loans
 - No HUD housing subsidies
 - No welfare assistance
- States and counties would have the option to provide assistance to the Dreamers. However, those funds cannot come from any federal grants or other federal funds, such as:
 - Student Loans
 - Housing Subsidies
 - Food Stamps (SNAP)
 - Other financial assistance
- Marriage to a US citizen would not negate any of the above requirements.
- Children in the US, to parents who are not in the US legally are not automatically US Citizens, unless the father is a US Citizen at the time of the child's birth. This follows the intent of our Founding Fathers, under Natural Born Citizen, as well as the intent of the 14th Amendment.^{1,2}
- Joining the US Military does not waive any of the citizenship requirements

FEES

The current Naturalization fee is \$725³. Virtually every person immigrating to the United States pays a USCIS Immigrant Fee. Therefore, those applying for citizenship, would also need to pay the Immigrant Fee which is currently \$220⁴. This fee would be in addition to the Naturalization fee.

Upon notifying the USCIS of their intent to become a US citizen, the applicant will also need to pay the same Declaration of Intention Fee, which is charged to permanent alien residents who are intending to become US Citizens⁵. The applicant

would need to have all fees paid prior to the acceptance of their application and would be required to pay the biometric fee prior to the background check.

Some immigrants have stated it is a challenge to come up with the fees at one time. Therefore, the applicant would be able to make payments into their Citizenship Application Account. Should the fees increase, they would be grandfathered in. In addition, if for any reason the applicant does not become a US citizen within the six-year time frame, all funds deposited become non-refundable *and they are subject to deportation*.

There are two exceptions:

1. Major medical reason, for example hospitalized, have a communicable infection or disease which would endanger others, the applicant may apply for a deferral of up to 6 months. Failure could constitute a reason for deportation.
2. Active duty in the US Military and are unable to complete or attend the Naturalization process. Again, joining the US Military does not give the applicant instant citizenship, nor does military service guarantee approval to becoming a US citizen. Applicant may apply for a 6-month extension.

EMPLOYMENT:

Dreamers would be authorized to work after passing the background check and paying for the biometric fee -- currently \$85. At this point, they would receive a temporary work permit and number, similar to a Green Card.

PARENT-ADULTS:

These adults (those who entered the US illegally or remained after expiration of their Visa) and brought their minor children to the U.S, would *not* be eligible to become US citizens. However, *we do want them to come out of the shadows*. Therefore, they would also have no more than 6 months to declare that they are in the US illegally and that they wish to remain here. In essence, this means they would be “self-deporting.” This “self-deportation” would take place at either the USCIS office or an ICE office or other approved Federal Agency office.

For parents of Dreamers to remain in the US, they would have to:

- Show they are employed by a legitimate company or have proof of consistent income or financial support.

- Provide letters of recommendation from an employer, clergy or a member of their community with standing. (i.e. city councilor, someone who serves on a board of a corporation or city commission, etc.)
- Pass the background check by paying the Biometrics Fee when they register.
- Not be a convicted felon
- Pay all the same fees as the Dreamers
- Complete their US citizenship within 6 years

They would not be eligible for any federal financial assistance. (*See Dreamers section for details.*)

If the Adults refuse to “self-deport,” they would be subject to immediate deportation along with any minor children, whether born in the US or not. The only exception to this would be if one of the parents is a US citizen. In that case, minor children could remain with that US Citizen parent in the US. Additionally, if they choose to not register, or are found to be non-compliant, they will have to prove why they should not be immediately deported, and any minor children would *not* be eligible to become US Citizens.

RECAP

- All Adults would have to meet the same guidelines as their Dreamer offspring.
- Any children born in the United States, while the parent/mother was in the US without legal authority, would not automatically become a US citizen – unless the child’s father is a US citizen.
- For any minor children still at home, once they have reached age 16, may apply for citizenship and would have the same 6-year time frame and same rules as the Dreamers. (*However, if their parents do not “self-deport, they -- the minor children -- would not be eligible to become US Citizens, thus making it crucial that parents(adults) of Dreamers declare they are living in the US*)

NON-PARENT ADULTS:

This segment of the population is subject to deportation. However, they may self-deport as above and will have 3-months to Declare they are in the US and must pay fees as above. They may not become US Citizens. Should they be convicted of a felony, at the end of their incarceration, they will be immediately deported.

They will not be eligible for any federal assistance as listed above. Because they entered the United States without legal authority, or overstayed their visa, they have forfeited the opportunity to become citizens of these United States of America.

This is a common-sense plan. It does not punish Dreamers for something they had no control over and also provides a path to citizenship for the parents who wrongly chose to bring their children into the US illegally. My plan shows we care about people who desire to come here -- some of whom risked everything to do so – but also places strict requirements for a path to citizenship. By implementing my plan, we would be able to find out who is in our country illegally and finally end one of the greatest issues dividing this nation.

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1. <https://capsweb.org/blog/original-intent-14th-amendment-part-2-birthright-citizenship-and-14th-amendment/>
2. Slaughterhouse Cases [112 US 94 (1884) and 83 US 36 (1873)].
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/83/36>
3. <https://www.uscis.gov/n-400>
4. <https://my.uscis.gov/uscis-immigrant-fee/>
5. <https://www.uscis.gov/n-300>