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## Five Myths About DACA

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If we're going to debate the merits of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, we should know what we're talking about. Here are some common myths.

### **MYTH NO. 1: DACA incentivized an increase in illegal immigration.**

DACA applies only to immigrants who entered before their 16th birthdays and who have lived in the country continuously since at least June 15, 2007 — more than a decade ago. No one entering now can apply.

And although the majority of DACA beneficiaries are of Mexican origin, the increase in children crossing the border stems from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. These countries share one common trait: Much higher than average levels of violence than anywhere else in North America.

### **MYTH NO. 2: DACA has taken jobs from Americans.**

This myth supposes that the number of jobs in the economy is fixed, and that any increase in workers results in unemployment. Yet this notion is easily disproved. From 1970 to 2017, the U.S. labor force doubled. Rather than ending up with a 50 percent unemployment rate, U.S. employment doubled.

### **MYTH NO. 3: Repealing DACA would benefit taxpayers.**

The opposite is true. According to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), first-generation immigrants who enter the United States as children pay, on average, more in taxes over their lifetimes than they receive in benefits, regardless of their education level. And DACA recipients end up contributing more than the average, because they are not eligible for any federal means-tested welfare.

### **MYTH NO. 4: The DACA repeal protects communities from criminals.**

Those in the applicant pool for DACA are much less likely to end up in prison. More important, to participate in DACA, applicants must pass a background check. They have to live here without committing a serious offense. If they are arrested, DACA can be taken away even without a conviction.

### **MYTH NO. 5: The DACA repeal is just about politics.**

The timing [of President Trump's decision] coincided with a deadline that several states imposed on the administration, stating that if the president did not wind down DACA by Sept. 5, they

would sue. If President Trump wanted to end DACA for political reasons, he could have done so on his first day in office.

President Obama implemented DACA without going through Congress. The Trump administration would have confronted a real possibility of defeat had it had chosen to defend DACA in court.

The correct response, however — for economic reasons and security reasons, but above all for moral reasons — would have been to actively push for Congress to enact the program, not to announce its demise and leave the chips to fall where they may.

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