



Takano responds to constituents during community event

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In an attempt to hear constituents' concerns about current issues, Congressman Mark Takano, who represents District 41, held a community event at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Riverside on Aug. 17.

Organized in part by Mi Familia Vota, a national civic engagement organization, the event brought together dozens of people who had questions on climate change, transgender persons in the military, deportation raids and immigration in general.

Responding to a question by Chloe Marie, a 20-year-old transgender person, Takano said he will vote against any bill that attempts to block transgender participation in the military.

“Bottom line, you are not alone. I will fight for you,” said Takano.

President Donald Trump announced last month through Twitter that he wanted a ban on transgender people from serving in the military, although no official policy has since been implemented.

Takano then received a question from Dalila Valdez, a recipient of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA. Valdez asked what would happen with her job in case Trump decides to eliminate the program. Valdez also asked what other options are there for people with DACA.

Takano responded that Trump does not favor DACA and given the opportunity he would be likely to eliminate it. There are two solutions to the problem -- pass a federal Dream Act or pass immigration reform, Takano said.

The federal Dream Act is bipartisan legislation introduced in Congress in 2001, receiving a big push in 2010. However, it failed to pass. The bill would have provided a path to legal status for the thousands of undocumented students who graduate from high school each year.

The federal Dream Act is separate from the California Dream Act, which was approved in 2011. The California Dream Act was divided into two bills, AB 130 and AB 131, both signed by Gov. Jerry Brown. The bills allow children who were brought into the country under the age of 16

without proper visas and documentation and who have attended school on a regular basis to apply for financial aid benefits.

Trump was given an ultimatum by the state of Texas on DACA. If by Sept. 5 DACA was not eliminated, Texas would amend a lawsuit against DACA.

Eliminating DACA would affect the lives of about 800,000 undocumented young students and workers whose lives changed dramatically when then-President Barack Obama signed DACA in 2012.

The economic impacts of stopping DACA would be tremendous, said Takano. According to a CATO Institute report, the fiscal cost of immediately deporting the approximately 750,000 people currently in the DACA program would be more than \$60 billion to the federal government along with a \$280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next decade.

Another resident, Andres Mares Muro, asked Takano why Latinos should continue supporting the Democratic Party, when in fact it was Obama who also deported hundreds of thousands of immigrants.

Takano responded that the Republican Party has no intention of helping the immigrant community and that the Democrats were close to passing an immigration reform bill that would have legalized more than 11 million undocumented residents.

“We were very close. We should continue fighting. We have to be persistent. You can count on me,” said Takano.