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Will ‘Dreamers’ See Their Dreams Come True?

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WASHINGTON, DC, Oct 10 — DACA is making headlines once again. The ten year old Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program has been “kind of” shut down by a new appeals court decision. The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the Obama administration, in 2012, didn’t have the authority to create the controversial program in the first place. The appeals court agreed with Andrew Hanen, U.S. district court judge for the Southern District of Texas, who found that DACA was illegal because it bypassed judiciary requirements for a public notice and comment periods.

However, the new ruling doesn’t mean the program has been entirely shut down. For the time being, the government will continue to accept renewal applications from immigrants currently enrolled in the program, known as “dreamers.” According to [the Wall Street Journal](#), the “ruling is expected to add fresh urgency to sputtering bipartisan immigration talks in Congress. Democrats and many Republicans favor creating a permanent legal status for the dreamers, though they disagree about what other measures—such as creating additional penalties for migrants illegally crossing the southern border—should accompany such a proposal.”

Judge Hanen's ruling bars new dreamers' applications; those who already are in the program will remain in the program; they will be allowed to continue renewing their requests for DACA status. But it doesn't mean they get permanent legal status or citizenship. In addition, they have to prove that they entered the U.S. before they were 16 years of age and before June of 2007. They are required to go to school or serve in the military and, in general, they must show that they are law abiding residents.

The libertarian Cato Institute has a history of supporting conservative initiatives and with regard to its view of dreamers, it has taken a positive approach. In a report on DACA, Cato noted that "opponents have argued that the rule in its current form hurts American-born workers by reducing their employment opportunities. This argument is wrong on two counts ... First, the opponents often assume that if DACA were ended, its beneficiaries would leave the United States. Because nearly all DACA-eligibles have spent most of their lives in the country, and many do not even speak the language of their native country, voluntary self-deportation is extremely unlikely. Instead of leaving the United States, these people would disappear into the shadows of the gray and black economy."

In addition, a group of 14 business leaders who call themselves "lifelong Republican" donors have sent a message to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy urging them to cut a bipartisan deal to make DACA permanent, according to Politico. It notes that "Taking hundreds of thousands out of the labor force will further fuel inflation, exacerbate supply chain challenges and tip the economy into recession ... Our policies must allow us to compete for the workers we need to fuel our economy and retain the young talent that already exists here but lacks the security of permanent legal status."

While the donors make a compelling plea for support of an ongoing DACA program, it appears that it won't happen as long as Democrats control Congress. Perhaps, if Republicans wrest control of the Senate and the House, a rational, bipartisan solution might be achieved. "For now," the National Immigration Law Center says, "those who currently have DACA or had it at any time in the past can file for renewals of their DACA and work permits. However, the federal government is currently not granting applications from first-time applicants and anyone whose DACA status expired more than one year ago. In fact, the government is not even processing these applications. Further, the government has chosen, without explanation, to treat renewal applications from DACA recipients whose previous DACA grant expired more than one year ago as first-time DACA applications, which it cannot decide on under the Texas court's decision that has now been affirmed by the Fifth Circuit."