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5 Reasons Trump Is Wrong On DACA

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Even his fellow Republican leaders believe President Donald J. Trump is making a serious mistake in ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program in six months. Here are five reasons why the president should back off this cruel decision affecting 800,000 young people who grew up in the U.S.

1. DACA beneficiaries try harder.

For the past five years, the program has stopped the deportation of young people who were brought into this country illegally as children and who are now in school or working. There are 10,000 DACA recipients in Connecticut. Eastern Connecticut State University has 116 DACA scholars, including some from other states.

"These students are here on an academic scholarship, so the majority have 3.5 GPA or better, and a lot of them are double majors," said Maribel La Luz, communications director at Connecticut State Colleges and Universities. "Combined, they bring \$8.26 million in committed scholarship funds to our system along with a passion and commitment to their education that enriches the campus environment in ways none of us could have expected."

Yes, DACA beneficiaries are in the U.S. illegally, but through no fault of their own, as former President Obama said Tuesday. They've done nothing wrong. Yet soon they will be punished for pursuing the American Dream because the president believes they're taking jobs away from Americans.

That's not quite true, Mr. President.

One respected study found that immigration has "little to no negative effects on overall wages and employment of native-born workers in the longer term." Even the conservative Cato Institute argues that immigrants' contribution to the economy "allows for greater employment for more Americans."

2. Yes, DACA beneficiaries do create jobs.

They start more businesses than the American public does as a whole, in fact.

This is hardly surprising, given that newcomers to this land have long been entrepreneurial: Half of the Fortune 500 companies in Connecticut today were founded by immigrants or their children. Immigrants make up 21 percent of all entrepreneurs in this state, although they're only 13.7 percent of the state's population.

Deporting future job-creators seems rather counterproductive, Mr. President.

3. They do fill jobs too, and they pay taxes.

The largest study of its kind to date found that "at least 72 percent of the top 25 Fortune 500 companies employ DACA recipients." That's why executives at these companies — including Apple, Facebook, Microsoft and Amazon — are begging the tone-deaf president to leave DACA in place.

With a job comes money to buy a car, a home — and pay taxes. Goodness knows, Connecticut could use more taxpayers. One study found that the nearly 500,000 immigrant residents in this state paid \$1.8 billion in state and local taxes in 2014 and another \$3.3 billion in federal taxes. The DACA program only expands this taxpaying group.

4. Booting them out would be inhumane.

Why punish DACA beneficiaries? Many of them have lived in the United States since grade school. They came with parents who were looking for opportunity or to escape oppression. Some of them can't speak the language of the land their parents took them away from many years ago.

To throw them out of the country they've called home since childhood seems heartless.

5. What about making America great again?

This nation has been "a beacon of freedom and opportunity" for people like Uber's chief technology officer, Thuan Pham. He was just 10 when his mother crammed him and his brother onto an old fishing boat for a terrifying journey from Vietnam that would eventually take them to the U.S.

America should be making citizenship easier for those who risk so much to live, study and work here, and for their families. The nation should be stapling green cards to their diplomas (as Hillary Clinton once said), not putting them in handcuffs.