

## President Trump is expected to end DACA. These Republicans say why he shouldn't.

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It's not exactly breaking news when California Democrats and immigrant advocacy groups stand up for "Dreamers." And while important, it wasn't a surprise that Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg and other leaders held an event this week to show their support for undocumented immigrants who were brought here as babies and children.

What is different – and very welcome – is when California Republicans urge President Donald Trump to preserve the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. That's what Congressmen Jeff Denham of Turlock and David Valadao of Hanford have done, signing a letter to Trump with four other GOP representatives.

Good for them. And just in time.

Trump railed against DACA during the campaign, but has been less critical in office. He has until Tuesday to take a stand – a deadline set by 10 top Republican state officials who say they will sue if the administration doesn't take action to end or restrict DACA, which President Barack Obama created by executive action in 2012. According to reports Thursday, Trump is expected to announce as early as Friday he will end DACA, but allow current participants to stay until their permits expire.

The stakes are higher in California than any other state. Of the nearly 800,000 young people approved for DACA nationwide, about 216,000 live in California.

Denham and Valadao are taking some political risk. While they both represent heavily Latino agricultural districts in the Valley, they are also opening themselves up to angry tweets from Trump and criticism from other Republicans.

And while Denham and Valadao toed the Trump line on the terrible health care bill, at least now they are taking the right and compassionate position on a key issue.

The letter, sent last week, clearly lays out the compelling case for keeping DACA – at least, they say, until Congress can pass more comprehensive immigration reform.

Children brought here illegally did not willingly violate the law and "did not have a choice in the matter." Many only know life in America, speak English, have attended schools here, and are contributing to the economy and paying taxes.

The letter cites a study by the conservative Cato Institute that estimates deporting all DACA recipients would cost more than \$60 billion in lost tax revenue and a \$280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next decade. Just Wednesday, Trump complained again during a tax cut speech in Missouri that our growth rate lags other nations.

DACA status – which lasts for two years and can be renewed – shields young people from deportation and grants work permits. According to the Cato study, the average DACA recipient is 22, employed and earns about \$17 an hour. Most are still students and 17 percent are pursuing an advanced degree.

In addition, the letter says, seeking to deport DACA recipients would “divert massive resources” from targeting criminals – you know, those vicious gang members and thugs that Trump repeatedly claims he’s going after.

What Denham and Valadao are saying makes sense, but we have to hope that the president listens to reason. If he does, now *that* would be breaking news.