



# Trump Just Called DACA Recipients 'Hardened Criminals' Hours Before Their Supreme Court Case

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Hours before the Supreme Court would hear arguments in a case to determine the legal status of nearly 700,000 immigrants who came to the U.S. as children, President Trump tweeted a message for them.

“Many of the people in DACA, no longer very young, are far from ‘angels.’ Some are very tough, hardened criminals,” wrote Trump, referring to immigrants who benefitted from Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA.

The missive came as protestors and activists swarmed the Supreme Court ahead of its hearing on the Obama-era law that gives certain immigrants temporary legal status and a work permit, which they can renew every two years. Recipients need to have come to the U.S. before age 16, graduated high school (or be enrolled), and passed a background check.

Trump’s Tuesday morning tweet echoes the language he frequently uses to describe immigrants. But according to a 2017 report from the libertarian think tank CATO Institute, DACA recipients have lower incarceration rates than people born in the U.S. And to be eligible for the program, applicants can’t have been convicted of a felony — or even a string of misdemeanors.

After he took office, Trump initially waffled on whether his administration would preserve the policy. In February of 2017, Trump called DACA beneficiaries “absolutely incredible kids.” But facing pressure from immigration hard-liners, Trump swiftly changed his tune. By September of that year, he announced that the Department of Homeland Security would end the program completely.

That fight has now arrived at the Supreme Court, which will decide whether it’s lawful for the Trump administration to end the program. Nearly 700,000 immigrants rely on DACA to live and work in the U.S, the vast majority of which are women under the age of 25.

Despite the fact that his own administration is pushing to dismantle the program, Trump has punted the issue to Democrats in Congress. He added in his tweet that, if the Supreme Court rules in his administration’s favor, the White House will work with Democrats on a plan to keep DACA beneficiaries in the U.S.

“President Obama said he had no legal right to sign order, but would anyway. If Supreme Court remedies with overturn, a deal will be made with Dems for them to stay!” Trump wrote.