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CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER / CENTRO DE RECURSOS CENTROAMERICANOS

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**CARECEN: REPUBLICAN EFFORTS TO DEFUND DAPA/DACA,
AS WELL AS LAWSUIT TO BLOCK THESE PROGRAMS, ARE CYNICAL ATTACKS ON IMMIGRANTS**

(January 16, 2015, Los Angeles) – This week’s efforts by Republicans in Congress to defund deferred action programs for immigrants, as well as a lawsuit by 25 states claiming the programs are unconstitutional, are cynical, mean-spirited attacks on immigrants that show Republicans’ lack of commitment to immigration reform, said CARECEN Executive Director Martha Arévalo.

“We believe the President’s actions have a sound foundation, especially in light of the fact that Congressional Republicans have so far failed to come up with an immigration reform plan of their own,” Arévalo said. “The vote and the lawsuit are just attempts to confuse and scare vulnerable immigrants.”

Congress on Wednesday voted 218-209 to deny funding for President Obama’s two-year-old Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which grants protection from deportation and work permits to young people without status who arrived in the United States as children. They also barred funding for programs President Obama announced November 20 that extend similar protections to the parents of U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents (known as DAPA, Deferred Action for Parental Accountability), as well as removing additional conditions for DACA and provisional waivers.

A day later, U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen of Brownsville, Texas began hearing arguments in the states’ suit, which asserts that DACA and DAPA are unconstitutional and seeks an injunction that would halt preparations for DAPA request processing as well as leave thousands of DACA beneficiaries in legal limbo. An estimated 5 million undocumented immigrants could benefit from DAPA, and about half a million have received protection under DACA since it began in August 2012. Nonprofit organizations including CARECEN are preparing to help those who qualify file their requests under DAPA and have been processing renewals and first-time DACA requests.

“We don’t know how Judge Hanen will rule in this case, but we hope he bases his decision on the law,” Arévalo said. “However, we will continue advocating for immigrants and keeping them informed.”

CARECEN has worked for 31 years to protect the rights and dignity of Central American and Latino immigrants in Southern California. Since its founding in 1983, when thousands of Central Americans were fleeing the brutality of civil war, CARECEN has worked to change unjust immigration policies, win legal status for immigrants, and foster community activism on issues such as education reform, workers and immigrant rights, economic justice and community strengthening.

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