

**FIRST FOCUS CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN
STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD**

**THE FISCAL COSTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ACTIONS ON
IMMIGRATION**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT & GOVERNMENT REFORM

March 17, 2015

Chairman Chaffetz, Ranking Member Cummings, and Members of the House Committee on Oversight & Government Reform, we thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record on this hearing to examine the fiscal costs of the President's Executive Actions on Immigration.

The First Focus Campaign for Children is a bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions. As an organization working to promote the safety and well being of all children in the United States, we support the recent Executive Action that expands the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program and the Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) Program. If implemented, these initiatives would improve the lives of over 4 million children and family members who are now eligible for important supports and rights that are vital to their healthy development and long-term stability, which will contribute to the long-term stability and economic progress of the entire nation.

The expansion of the DACA program means that up to 300,000 youth who have grown up in the U.S. will be better able to access affordable higher education and employment opportunities as well as obtain a driver's license in some states.ⁱ In addition, the new DAPA program has the potential to benefit an estimated 4.1 million parents of U.S. Citizens and lawful permanent residents by protecting them from deportation and providing them with work authorization.ⁱⁱ Research shows that a parent's deportation, or even the fear alone of a parent being deported, can harm children's mental and physical health, and overall well being.ⁱⁱⁱ And the deportation or separation due to immigration enforcement of a parent often leads to housing and nutrition instability for children, negatively impacting their growth and development.^{iv}

The DAPA program also enables parents to better provide for their children. By obtaining Social Security numbers and paying taxes, parents would be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit as well as the Child Tax Credit, both of which keep millions of children out of poverty every year.^v Additionally, obtaining work authorization would allow parents to find more stable employment to better provide for their families.^{vi}

These Executive Actions would also be beneficial for the American taxpayer. The individuals who are eligible for and apply to DACA and DAPA would pay their fair share in to the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds and would be able to claim these benefits through the same criteria as everyone else after working and paying taxes for over a decade.^{vii} In addition, the CBO has found that the additional taxes paid as a result of DAPA and DACA exceed the costs of the executive actions by half.^{viii} In other words, DACA and DAPA recipients pay for more than processing and tax credits with their taxes. Finally, these individuals would not be eligible for welfare, food stamps, non-emergency Medicaid services, or Marketplace benefits under the Affordable Care Act.^{ix}

We thank you again for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record. We look forward to working with Congress to ensure that DACA and DAPA eligible individuals are able to enroll in educational programs, receive Social Security numbers and granted work authorization. These actions will not only improve the well being of hundreds of thousands of children in the United States, it will also grow and benefit the U.S. economy as whole. Should there be any questions regarding this statement, please contact Richa Mathur, Policy Research Associate and Program Manager, at rricham@firstfocus.org.

ⁱ Department of Homeland Security Fact Sheet. (November 2014). *Fixing Our Broken Immigration System Through Executive Action- Key Facts*. Available at: <http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-action>

ⁱⁱ Id.

ⁱⁱⁱ Chaudry, A., Capps, R., Pedroza, J.M., Castañeda, R.M. Santos, R & Scott, M. (February 2010). *Facing Our Future: Children in the Aftermath of Immigration Enforcement*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute

^{iv} Satinsky, S., Hu, A., Heller, J., & Farhang, L. (June 2013). *Family Unity, Family Health: How Family-Focused Immigration Reform Will Mean Better Health for Children and Families*. Oakland, CA: Human Impact Partners.

^v Id.

^{vi} Department of Homeland Security Fact Sheet. (November 2014). *Fixing Our Broken Immigration System Through Executive Action- Key Facts*. Available at: <http://www.dhs.gov/immigration-action>

^{vii} Battistelli, E. S., Moussavian, A., Padilla, A. (December 2014). *DACA and DAPA Access to Federal Health and Economic Support Programs*. Washington D.C. : National Immigration Law Center. Available at:

<http://allianceforcitizenship.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/DAPA-DACA-and-fed-health-economic-supports.pdf>

^{viii} Congressional Budget Office (Januray 29, 2015). *Budgetary Effects of Immigration-Related Provisions of the House-Passed Version of H.R. 240, An Act Making Appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security*. Available at:

<http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/hr240.pdf>

^{ix} Battistelli, E. S., Moussavian, A., Padilla, A. (December 2014). *DACA and DAPA Access to Federal Health and Economic Support Programs*. Washington D.C. : National Immigration Law Center. Available at:

<http://allianceforcitizenship.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/DAPA-DACA-and-fed-health-economic-supports.pdf>