

Immigration – Keep Families Together

VOICE and Metro Industrial Areas Foundation (Metro IAF) are outraged by the injustice of separating immigrant families and the effect it has on all immigrant children. VOICE and its 22 Metro IAF sister organizations are pressing their state attorneys general to act collectively to stop family separations arising from federal actions aimed at terminating Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programs, implementing travel bans on select Muslim countries, and increasing ICE enforcement.

VOICE and Metro IAF want their state attorneys general to expand their efforts to protect the interests of their U.S.-citizen children. **We know that family separations are an indelible stain on US history**, starting with the violence of slavery and continuing to the present day with the unjust Criminal justice system that targets and incarcerates black and brown people disproportionately

Keep Hard-Working, Tax-Paying Immigrant Families Together

- According to the [Migration Policy Institute](#), there are 4.1 million US citizen children living with at least one undocumented parent. In Virginia the estimate is 74,000; in Maryland, 67,000; and the District of Columbia, 6,000.
- The Migration Policy Institute estimates that **several hundred thousand children have either one or no parents in America** as a result of deportations between 2009 and 2013.
- **When unauthorized parents disappear because of deportation, their U.S.-citizen children suffer immensely.** In fact, the Migration Policy Institute and the Urban Institute report that the effects are similar to those seen for children with parents in prison, including psychological trauma, material hardship, housing instability, family dissolution, increased use of public benefits, and among boys, aggression. One study found that family income dropped by 70% in the six months following a deportation, and one quarter of families in that situation reported going hungry.
- The studies found that many children refused to eat, pulled out their hair, or had persistent stomachaches or headaches. Others turned to more self-destructive outlets such as cutting themselves or substance abuse.
- **Academic performance also suffers.** One grandmother reported the following happening to her grandson: “He was hardworking, he was doing well in school. But after [parents’ deportation], he would not go to school, he wouldn’t work, he just sleeps during the day and is out at night. He’s on a bad path now, he’s always going to court.”
- The Migration Policy Institute and the Urban Institute also found that social service agencies are ill-equipped to handle the special needs of children whose families have been torn apart by deportation.

Support Hard-Working, Immigrant College Students; Support Dreamers

- Virginia has 23,500 persons from El Salvador and Honduras who will lose their TPS status effective September 2019. Virginia TPS residents produce \$1.3 billion in economic activity annually. Virginia has 10,200 DACA recipients from whom Virginia would lose \$10+ million in taxes each year if DACA is terminated.
- Terminating DACA will cause enormous financial costs for Virginia.
- Virginia has 10,200 DACA recipients from whom Virginia would lose \$10+ million in taxes each year if DACA is terminated. Dreamers working in Virginia contribute \$711 million annually to the Virginia economy. Over ten years, Virginia can expect to lose \$1.03 billion in tax revenues, and \$3.68 billion in GDP.
- DACA-approved Virginia college students will receive increased earnings over their life, with most of the money flowing right back into Virginia’s local communities and businesses.
- A recent nationwide survey finds that after receiving DACA, recipients moved to jobs with better pay (63%), gaining greater access to employment that matches their education and training (49%) and to jobs with better working conditions (48%).
- Dreamers have lower incarceration rates than native-born Americans of the same age and education level. Furthermore, undocumented immigrants who are DACA-ineligible and all other legal immigrants are even less likely to be incarcerated.
- The public supports DACA. An April 2017 survey of registered voters found that 78% of American voters support giving Dreamers the chance to stay permanently in America, including 73% of Trump voters. Only 14% of all voters (23% of Trump supporters) believe Dreamers should be deported.

Work to End Ban on Travel from Selected Muslim Countries

- The ban on travel to the U.S. from selected Muslim-majority countries is impacting our communities directly, separating families in myriad ways, such as preventing grandparents and grandchildren from seeing each other. This is wrong!
- VOICE plans to launch a massive listening session campaign with Northern Virginia mosques to learn more about how the Muslim Travel Ban is impacting our communities directly OR because of discrimination.
- This campaign is two-fold. First listen and figure out the specifics of how WE are being impacted. Such as:
 - How many of us are facing delays and rejections in the immigration process?
 - From which countries?
 - How much longer are these delays than from other non-Muslim countries?
 - How many of us are having difficulties or have been refused, such as when trying to bring a wife, husband, parent, or child to this country?
 - How are your children impacted? Hurdles in schools? Bullying?
 - What about you? How have you been affected in your daily life?
- Second, we will build a team of leaders who want to be trained to ACT on the issues WE say are most important to us. We know we can be successful because we will align with VOICE, an organization that already a long track record of success. States attorneys generals have a heightened responsibility to stop family separations that affect U.S.-citizen children of undocumented immigrants.

SOURCES:

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