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IL and National Child Health Experts File Amicus Brief in Supreme Court Describing Traumatic Impact of DACA Rescission on Recipients' Children

Cancelling DACA would harm 250,000 children in U.S., including 15,200 in Illinois

Washington, DC - At least [a quarter of a million young children](#)—including **15,200 in Illinois**—would be harmed developmentally, psychologically, and economically by the cancellation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The Trump administration failed to consider their interests when repealing the program in 2017.

On Friday, the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; and Illinois Action For Children; Ounce of Prevention joined nearly three dozen other organizations and leaders in filing an [amicus brief](#) (appendix [here](#)) with the U.S. Supreme Court, asking the court to consider the impact of rescinding DACA on beneficiaries' children, who are U.S. citizens. Oral arguments are scheduled for November 12, 2019.

The DACA case affects children and families in every state, but Illinois is home to one of the largest numbers. More quotes from national and state leaders can be found [here](#).

As the brief [explains](#), society has a moral imperative to protect children from harm; this imperative is recognized in numerous laws and policies, including the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018. Failing to consider the needs of these children puts their futures in jeopardy, to the obvious detriment of the communities in which they live.

The “friend of the court” brief states: “The imminent threat of losing DACA protection places children at risk of losing parental nurturance, as well losing income, food security, housing, access to health care, educational opportunities, and the sense of safety and security that is the foundation of healthy child development.”

Said **Minal Giri, M.D., Chair, Refugee Immigrant Child Health Initiative (RICHI) for the American Academy of Pediatrics, Illinois Chapter**: “As pediatricians practicing in Illinois, which an estimated 72,600 U.S.-born children of DACA recipients call home, we are acutely aware of the long-term effects of trauma resulting from the separation of families and loss of caregivers. DACA rescission will undeniably tear parents away from their children – even newborns – resulting in devastating physical and emotional impacts for these families that will put them at risk for poverty and malnutrition. As citizens themselves, these children deserve the same security and care that we aim to provide all children in the U.S.”

Maria Whelan, President and CEO of Illinois Action for Children, said: “Ending—or even threatening to end—Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals (DACA) adds uncertainty to the lives of 85,000 people in Illinois living in DACA households, including 15,200 U.S.-born children. This uncertainty places children’s growth, health, and educational development at risk—with harmful impacts that will last into adulthood.”

In the amicus brief, **Ounce of Prevention** wrote: “Adverse childhood experiences, such as separation from family and primary caregivers, as well as lack of adequate shelter, food and health services, decrease the potential for long-term social and academic success in adulthood. The harmful effects of the trauma imposed on children as a result of separation from their family members will have a lasting impact throughout their lifetime. As a large segment of the child population in Illinois and across the country, the experiences, development, and education of children of immigrants are significant and will have effects on our entire nation. Our future is tied to their health and socio-emotional well-being across the lifespan, both personally and professionally.”

The brief was co-authored by Persyn Law & Policy and Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP for the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Center for Law and Social Policy, and other children’s advocacy organizations, medical professionals, and child development experts.

Kyle Yasuda, MD, FAAP and President of the American Academy of Pediatrics said: “Rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy would have multi-generational health consequences; it not only impacts the DACA recipients themselves, but also their children. When children live in fear of their family being separated, it can have detrimental effects on their health and development, both in the short- and long-term. As pediatricians, we know children fare best when they can grow up in supportive families and thrive.”

Olivia Golden, Executive Director of the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), said: “CLASP recognizes the critical role the DACA program has played in pulling entire families out of poverty and promoting the healthy development of children. We also know from our 2018 research report that harmful immigration policies—like the Administration’s decision to terminate the DACA program—are subjecting young children to fear, instability, and reduced access to critical health and nutrition supports. We urge the Supreme Court to consider what’s at stake for hundreds of thousands of our youngest citizens and the future of our country should the DACA program be rescinded.”

“The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children gratefully joins many of this nation’s leading child advocacy organizations in opposing the needless termination of DACA, a critically important protection afforded to persons who arrived in the United States as children and have made lives and families here in the only home they know.

The trauma that is being inflicted on the children of DACA recipients by even the threat of their parents' deportation is cruel and serves no meaningful public policy purpose. Over time, these children and the communities in which they live will suffer greatly from this pointless infliction of harm,” stated **David Corwin, President of the APSAC Board; Janet Rosenzweig, Executive Director; and Frank Vandervort, Chair of the Amicus Committee.**

Read the amicus brief filed in *United States Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California*; *Donald J. Trump, President of the United States v. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*; and *Kirsten M. Nielsen, Secretary of Homeland Security v. Martin Jonathan Batalla Vidal* [consolidated cases] [here](#), with [appendix](#).

Additional data about the economic contributions and family ties of DACA beneficiaries in Illinois can be found [here](#).

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