

Protecting Dreamers After Ending Daca

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Hi readers,

In the article last month, I had mentioned that the next article (which is this article) would be about the repeal of DACA. In past couple of weeks, however, there have been many other additional announcements which cannot be ignored. Therefore, in this article I will be touching briefly upon some of the recent updates which may impact many of us in the future.

The important updates range from bills in congress aiming to protect Dreamers, monitoring of social media and new travel ban introduced by the current administration.

Protecting Dreamers After Ending DACA:

The repeal of DACA was very harshly critiqued by a vast majority of people. Even though there has not been a dearth of such unwelcoming decisions *ending DACA remains one of the most unpopular actions* taken by the current administration.

Therefore, congress is now under tremendous pressure to come up with a solution to protect the Dreamers and pass some kind of legislation such that the Dreamers may continue to stay legally in the U.S. and be allowed some sort of a path towards Citizenship in the future. In this context, the Dream Act of 2017 remains to be one of the most balanced bill with bipartisan support allowing three step approach to the future citizenship (I had written in detail about that bill in one of my previous article).

In addition to that another similar but more restricted proposal under the name of Recognizing American Children (RAC) Act has also been introduced in Congress. This bill however lacks the bipartisan support and is just supported by a majority of Republicans and only **one** Democrat. This bill will cover fewer people for ultimate Citizenship as compared to Dream Act of 2017.

Yet another proposal has also been introduced by few other Republican Senators which is even more restricted than above mentioned RAC Act. The proposal is called "Solutions for Undocumented Children through Career Employment Education and Defending our Nation (SUCCEED) Act" Whew!! Such an inconvenient name must have a proposal aimed at inconvenience only, and yes, no surprises it is very restricted and even fewer Dreamers will be protected under it. This proposal even renders any one with minor traffic offences ineligible to be protected under it.

Lastly another bill American Hope has also been introduced by the Democrats and is by far the most generous of all proposals.

Out of the four proposals above, I personally feel that American Hope Act or Dream Act 2017 are the most balanced of all.

Nevertheless, one thing is for sure that Congress appears to be very inclined to continue to protect Dreamers one way or the other. Let's just hope no one in a position of authority does anything drastic to change that altogether, say like "congress you are fired!" just kidding.

Monitoring Social Media of Immigrants

IMMIGRATION

MONITORING SOCIAL MEDIA OF IMMIGRANTS:

Yet another bizarre action by the administration, stretching the legal bounds and testing the constitutional values. This is nothing but utter encroachment upon privacy.

If you are under the misconception that this pertains to those who are going through some kind of an immigration process then wake up and read it again. This monitoring is broader based than one can imagine. To quote this rule exactly which appeared in the Federal Register on September 18, 2017, Department of Homeland Security announced that it will begin gathering information on “social media handles and aliases, associated identifiable information, and search results,” of all immigrants in the country - including green card holders and naturalized U.S. citizens.

The government is aiming to monitor posts of not only foreign born naturalized citizens but also of the U.S. born individuals if they are in communication with a Permanent Resident or the foreign-born U.S. Citizen. So yes, no one is out of the bounds for the implementation of this rule. Once again, the purpose or the information being gathered through this action is not clarified anywhere. Therefore, there is no transparency at all!

While the rule is as disturbing ethically, I feel, it also appears to be most impractical. There are millions and millions of Naturalized Citizens in this country, some newer, some who have lived here for decades, and some who already have their third or fourth generation being born and raised in the U.S.

First of all what mechanism will be adopted to find out who is a naturalized citizen and who is not, even if you figure out a mechanism, what kind of staff will be required to make the lists and keep them updated (as these days Naturalization Oath ceremonies are taking place almost every day, hence the lists need be updated constantly). Now let us assume, that the Government comes up with a special formula to filter all immigrants to be monitored, how many eyes would they need to conduct that kind of monitoring? Would it be feasible to divert the existing Department of Homeland Security staff to do that or would the Government be inducting thousands of more people... or wait a minute... is that what the administration had in mind when they talked about creating millions of jobs ... oh well.

Coming back to the monitoring, since we do not know for what reason the monitoring will be done or what information is aimed to be gathered, it could be anything. The administration may want to monitor us to see if we have the religious views of their choice, or if we have political opinion of their choice, or whether we are fans of the administration or not. So technically you need to be careful about anything you post on social media. You have to be cautious about voicing your political or religious opinions especially if they do not resonate well with the sitting administration. You may want to avoid criticizing the current administration and delete all your posts indicating any such thing. I would even go further and say that even being an Obama fan could potentially make you a target. Now, this is a way of taking away freedom of speech, freedom of religion and even freedom of thought in some cases. Does that mean we all have to surrender and be enslaved by the administration which is gradually encroaching upon all our liberties guaranteed by the Constitution?

In a statement, the national political director at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) said, “the agency (Department of Homeland Security) is going to put a freeze on free speech by defining an enormous group of people whose online presence is now subject