



# Poll: Two-thirds of Republicans back citizenship for DACA recipients

BY JONATHAN EASLEY - 09/22/17 11:32 AM EDT

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About two-thirds of Republicans support a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, according to a new poll.

The latest [Harvard-Harris survey](#) found broad support for a pathway to citizenship for everyone in the country illegally, providing certain conditions are met. And by a nearly 2-to-1 margin, Republicans say that young immigrants brought to the country through no fault of their own should be shielded from deportation.

Overall, 77 percent of voters — and 66 percent of Republicans — favor a pathway to citizenship for those in the country illegally if they learn English, pay fines or back taxes and have jobs that pay taxes.

On the question of DACA — the Obama-era program that protects an estimated 800,000 people from deportation — 77 percent of all voters and 65 percent of Republicans say they favor work permits and a path to citizenship.

Earlier this month, President Trump infuriated the left and thrilled his supporters by announcing he would phase out the DACA program. Voters are split 50-50 along partisan lines over Trump's announced six-month phaseout.

The president has long wrestled with the issue, acknowledging that there is a human element in determining what to do with young people who

Poll: Two-thirds of Republicans back citizenship for DACA recipients | TheHill  
have established lives in the U.S. since being brought here illegally.

Trump has expressed hope that Congress can find a legislative solution.

Eighty percent of voters say DACA should be settled through an act of Congress, as Trump seeks, rather than by executive order, which is how it was originally implemented by former President Barack Obama.

After visiting with Trump last week, Democratic leaders Chuck Schumer (N.Y.) and Nancy Pelosi (Calif.) said they believed they'd struck a deal with Trump on DACA, although the White House has sought to tamp down that talk.

Immigration hawks on the right and some of Trump's allies, like Breitbart News, are furious with the president for dealing with Democrats and backtracking on the issue. They say Trump gave away his greatest bargaining chip in the effort to secure funding for a border wall.

The White House has said any potential DACA bill does not have to be tied to border wall funding, though other border security measures would likely need to be included.

Fifty-three percent of voters polled said the restoration of work permits to DACA recipients should be passed on its own by Congress, while 47 said it should come as part of a deal that increases border security. Sixty-eight percent of Republicans said the deal should include more border security.

"There is very strong support for restoring the DACA program through congressional legislation, with wide majorities of Republican voters supporting a deal with increased border security," said Harvard-Harris co-director Mark Penn. "President Trump put himself in a win-win position by using it as a leverage for more border security and dodging a legal fight over DACA with Republican governors."

The poll found widespread support for a merit-based immigration system. Sixty-seven percent said priority should be given to those who have job skills, compared to 33 percent who said priority should go to those whose relatives are already here.

The Harvard-Harris survey found that 57 percent oppose a California law under consideration known as the "Sanctuary State" bill that would prohibit state and local law enforcement officials from working with federal immigration authorities in most instances.

Seventy percent said the police should check a person's immigration status and cooperate with federal immigration authorities when an arrest is made.

"Voters oppose the California sanctuary state law by a wide margin, and 70 per cent believe that when the police arrest someone for a crime, they should check the immigration status of the person and work with federal immigration authorities," Penn said.

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“There is no question that the Trump administration is on solid ground when it wants local authorities to cooperate with [Immigration and Customs Enforcement], so Democratic intransigence on this is out of step with public opinion,” he continued. “You see the public showing widespread support for the Dreamers and for comprehensive immigration reform, but their widespread sympathy for the 11 million here stops when it concerns arrests for a crime.”

The Harvard-Harris Poll online survey of 2,177 registered voters was conducted from Sept. 17 to Sept. 20. The partisan breakdown was 37 percent Democrat, 31 percent Republican, 28 percent independent and 4 percent other.

The Harvard-Harris Poll is a collaboration of the Harvard Center for American Political Studies and The Harris Poll. The Hill will be working with Harvard-Harris Poll throughout 2017.

Full poll results will be posted online later Friday. The Harvard-Harris Poll survey is an online sample drawn from the Harris Panel and weighted to reflect known demographics. As a representative online sample, it does not report a probability confidence interval.

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