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Supreme Court Splits on Immigration Relief

JUNE 23, 2016 – Today, the U.S. Supreme Court split 4-4 on *Texas v. United States*, upholding *per curiam* the existing injunction delaying any implementation of expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA). This means that the lawsuit filed by the State of Texas and joined by 26 other states against the President’s administrative action will continue through the merits phase of the case. The Supreme Court did not rule on the merits of expanded DACA or DAPA, leaving open the possibility of another appeal after the case in Brownsville concludes. The Court’s decision does not affect the existing DACA program, which has been in place since 2012.

Under DAPA, 3.6 million unauthorized immigrants who are parents of U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents may be able to gain work authorization and protection from deportation. An estimated 200,000 individuals in the greater Houston area may qualify for the DAPA or expanded DACA programs. Those programs, however, remain on hold after today’s ruling.

The Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative (Collaborative) is a network of trusted organizations that provide accurate and high-quality legal services to immigrants for free or very low cost. The Collaborative’s member organizations should be the go-to sources of information for members of the community seeking free or low-cost immigration legal services.

The Collaborative hosted a press conference today at MECA, home to United We Dream, featuring members of the collaborative and community members impacted by the Supreme Court’s non-decision.

“Today’s supreme court ruling may leave some people confused about their legal status,” said Kate Vickery, Executive Director of the Collaborative. “Even without DAPA and the expanded DACA program available right now, however, many people may qualify for some other form of immigration relief, including DACA 2012, that they aren’t aware of. We encourage Houstonians to seek assistance from one of our member organizations. We want people to get high quality legal assistance from trustworthy organizations.”

It is very important to note that the original DACA program, launched in 2012, remains in place and active. More than 700,000 individuals have received DACA in the United States and the benefits are well-documented. Individuals seeking deferred action through the DACA program should seek legal advice from one of the Collaborative's trusted partners, listed at www.houstonimmigration.org.

There is a lot of misinformation about deferred action programs. Unscrupulous individuals, often called "*notarios*," take advantage of immigrants, scamming them out of money and often putting their ability to obtain legal status in jeopardy forever.

Tips for avoiding immigration fraud:

- Before speaking with an immigration legal services provider, make sure he/she is a licensed attorney or Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representative. *Notarios* are not authorized to practice law in the United States unless they are also licensed attorneys.
- Do not listen to consultants, *notarios*, or lawyers who ask for money to place you or your family on a waiting list to submit your application for some form of relief.
- Avoid telephone scammers posing as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) personnel or other government officials. USCIS will not call you to ask for any information over the phone.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. When in doubt, check with a trusted organization and with the USCIS website for answers.

More about the Collaborative: www.houstonimmigration.org.

 [Supreme Court Decision Explained: English](#)

 [Entiende La Decision de La Corte Suprema: En Espanol](#)

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