

Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSpS, statement on administration's decision to end DACA

I join my voice with my brother bishops from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), who have denounced the administration's termination of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program after six months. Also, as the U.S. bishops have stated, I strongly urge Congress to find a legislative solution to protect the almost 800,000 youth who have received assistance from this program since 2012.

Earlier this summer, the prelates of Texas advocated for the 117,000 young people who applied for and received deferred status through DACA in our state. We explained that these individuals contribute to the economy, serve honorably in our Armed Forces, excel in our schools and universities, minister in our churches, and volunteer in our communities. Texans should be proud to claim them as our own, we emphasized.

On many occasions, Pope Francis has stressed that Catholics must welcome, protect and integrate the children and young people who are forced to live far from their homeland and who are separated from their loved ones. They are particularly vulnerable and need protection, he says.

The pope advocates a "shared response" to this crisis by the political community, civil society and the church. He said that effort could be described with four verbs: to welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate.

Congress must act now to support these children of God and restore a sense of hope for these youth.