

American Hope Act of 2017

Overview: The American Hope Act of 2017 would:

- Allow DACA beneficiaries and other immigrant youth to apply for conditional permanent resident status (“CPR status”).
- Allow those granted CPR status to obtain full lawful permanent resident (LPR) status (*i.e.*, a “green card”) after 3 years if they stay out of trouble. Time spent with DACA would count toward the required 3 years with CPR status.
- Provide a 5-year path to U.S. citizenship. Time spent in CPR status would count toward the general 5-year period needed for permanent residents to become eligible for U.S. citizenship.
- Allow minors to apply for CPR status through a legal guardian or counsel.
- Improve college affordability for undocumented youth and other immigrants by repealing rules that limit their access to in-state tuition and college loans.
- Treat all immigrant youth who came or were brought to the United States as children the same, regardless of educational level, military service, or work history.

Adjustment to Conditional Permanent Resident Status

Qualifying individuals can apply for initial conditional permanent resident (CPR) status. To be eligible, applicants would have to:

1. be undocumented (including persons in removal proceedings, with final orders of removal, with orders of voluntary departure, or with DACA benefits);
2. have entered the United States *before* the age of 18;
3. have been continuously present in the United States since December 31, 2016;
4. pass a background check;
5. have not been convicted of certain criminal offenses.

Adjustment to Lawful Permanent Resident Status, and Acquiring U.S. Citizenship

After 3 years in CPR status, an individual can apply to remove the conditions and obtain LPR status.

- To qualify, the applicant would have to maintain CPR status for at least 3 years without abandoning her residence or committing any deportable offense. Deportable offenses include convictions for a host of crimes, engaging in smuggling, unlawfully voting, and other infractions.
- Former DACA beneficiaries would be fast-tracked by receiving credit for their time with DACA. For example, an individual who had DACA for 2 years would only need 1 additional year with CPR status before becoming eligible to apply for full LPR status.
- Time with CPR status can be applied to the general 5-year period before permanent residents can apply for citizenship. The bill thus provides a 5-year path to U.S. citizenship for most applicants. (CPR for 3 years ⇒ LPR for 2 years ⇒ Eligibility for U.S. citizenship)
- All undocumented immigrants who came or were brought to the United States as children—regardless of whether they earn a college degree, work in the fields or a restaurant, or are raising a family—would have the opportunity to apply for CPR status, subsequent LPR status, and ultimately citizenship.

College Affordability

The American Hope Act of 2017 would repeal section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), which currently discourages states from making undocumented students eligible for in-state tuition or providing them other higher education benefits.