

Arizona Responds to Deferred Action Program by Blocking Privileges for DREAMers

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On August 15, 2012, the same day that **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** began accepting applications under the Obama administration's new [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program](#), Governor Jan Brewer issued an executive order preventing the state of Arizona from issuing driver's licenses and public benefits to young undocumented immigrants who receive deferred status and work authorization under the new program. In addition to driving privileges, Governor Brewer's order bars undocumented immigrants who qualify for deferred action from receiving state-subsidized child care, health insurance, unemployment benefits, business and professional licenses, and government contracts.

Legal experts say that the executive order is almost certain to trigger a legal challenge, not least because the [REAL ID Act of 2005](#) specifically lists immigrants who have been granted "deferred action" as eligible for state driver's licenses. In addition, Governor Brewer's order may conflict with state and other federal statutes.

In contrast to the Arizona development, California's Department of Motor Vehicles announced that it would treat deferred action immigrants as "temporary legal residents" after a grant of work permits, despite a state law that bans granting driver's licenses to illegal immigrants.

The impact of the deferred action program, modeled after the stalled DREAM Act, is proving to be even more widespread than expected: on the day the application opened, [The New York Times reported](#) that thousands of young immigrants "flooded" public information sessions, churches and law offices in major cities across the country.

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