



America's Children Act of 2025: Bill Summary

The America's Children Act of 2025 ([S. 2886/H.R. 5528](#)) would allow Documented Dreamers - noncitizens who grew up in the U.S. as the children of visa holders but "aged out" of their parent's visa status when they turned 21 - to obtain legal status if they meet certain requirements. The bill could allow about [250,000 Documented Dreamers](#) to stay in the U.S. and obtain permanent legal status.

Senators Alex Padilla (D-California) and Rand Paul (R-Kentucky) introduced the America's Children Act of 2025 ([S. 2886](#)) in the U.S. Senate on September 18, 2025. Reps. Deborah Ross (D-North Carolina) and Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-Iowa) introduced a companion bill ([H.R. 5528](#)) in the U.S. House a day later, on September 19, 2025. The bill has [eight co-sponsors](#) in the Senate (4 Republicans and 4 Democrats) and [20 co-sponsors](#) in the House (9 Republicans and 11 Democrats).

Who are Documented Dreamers?

Documented Dreamers are non-citizens who grew up in the U.S. as children as long-term visa holders with legal status, but have "aged out" or are at risk of "aging out" at age 21 and forced to self-deport or remain in the U.S. undocumented. These individuals arrived in the U.S. as children because their parents hold employment visas, such as H-1B, L-1, E-1, or E-2 visas.

Before the age of 21, these children were authorized to be in the U.S. legally as derivative beneficiaries under the visa of their parent(s). However, some of these visas do not have a direct pathway to citizenship or have long wait times to obtain permanent status, so children "age out" at 21 before their parents are able to obtain green cards. Normally, children of long-term non-immigrant visa holders are not authorized to apply for green cards at the age of 21 and older, even when they have deep roots in the U.S., leading many to "age out" of qualifying for derivative permanent residence through their parents.

What Would the America's Children Act Do?

- The America's Children Act of 2025 would authorize access to **lawful permanent resident** status ("green card") for dependent children of parents holding valid employment-based visas. This would protect Documented Dreamers from deportation, allow them to work legally in the U.S., and permit them to travel outside the country.
- **Part 1: Documented Dreamers.** To qualify for lawful permanent resident status, Documented Dreamers would need to meet the following requirements:
 - Demonstrate that they were lawfully present in the United States for **at least 10 years**, including eight of those years as a dependent child of an individual holding a valid employment-based visa; and,
 - Graduate from a U.S. institution of higher education.
- **Part 2: Age-out Protections.** To prevent future cases of Documented Dreamers "aging out" from their parent's visa at age 21, the bill would implement the following changes:

- Lock in a dependent child's age on the date on which their parents file for a green card as opposed to the current process of locking in the child's age on the application's final action date.
 - The relevant age used to determine the dependent child's age is the earliest of 1) the date on which they filed a green card petition with the Secretary of Homeland Security or 2) the date on which they filed for labor certification with the Secretary of Labor.
- Allow a dependent child of a parent with an employment-based nonimmigrant visa to lock in their age on their parent's nonimmigrant visa if the child has lawfully lived in the U.S. for at least eight years before turning age 21.
 - Documented Dreamers under this section who qualify for age-out protections could request employment authorization.
- Permit Documented Dreamers to move to reopen or reconsider a denial of a petition or an application if such petition/application would have been approved if the bill had been in effect at the time of adjudication of the petition/application. The motion must be filed within two years of the bill's passage.

Conclusion

The America's Children Act of 2025 is a bipartisan, bicameral measure that aims to fix unintended shortcomings in the U.S. immigration process. Current gaps force non-citizens who grew up in the U.S. as children of long-term visa holders and graduated from U.S. institutions of higher education to leave the country. The bill provides Documented Dreamers with a path to permanent legal status after residing and growing up in the U.S.