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# Opinion

## Editorial Board

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## OUR VIEW

# Congress must act to reform immigration

The Trump administration announced last week that it was ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, and kicking to Congress the responsibility to straighten out this and other immigration issues.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, was created by executive order by then-President Barack Obama to address issues of illegal immigrants brought to the United States as children by their parents.

The program was open to illegal immigrants brought to the United States before their 16th birthday and prior to June 2007. Applicants had to either be in school, a high school graduate or be honorably discharged from the military; under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012; and have a relatively clean criminal record.

People accepted in the program were shielded from



Courtesy Department of Homeland Security  
The Tornillo-Guadalupe Port of Entry and International Bridge in Tornillo, Texas.

deportation, granted work permits and could qualify for travel abroad and re-entry into the United States.

Some 800,000 have qualified for the program.

Obama later tried to expand the program to include as many as 5 million illegal immigrants who had been in the country for five years and who have children born in the United States, and to

children brought by their parents prior to Jan. 1, 2010.

We concede that the president has wide discretion in prosecuting deportation cases, even if applying such discretion so broadly stretches the common exercise of the authority.

The president does not have the authority to grant work permits and temporary legal status to illegal immigrants,

no matter how compelling the circumstances.

The Constitution (Article 1, section 8) gives Congress sole power to “establish a uniform rule of naturalization.” Only Congress can change the law.

And so, because Obama exceeded the statutory authority embodied in immigration law, the Trump administration has suspended new applications and allowed current enrollees to apply for extensions over the next six months as Congress works to produce a legislative solution.

Like a fair number of Americans, we are sympathetic to the plight of persons brought illegally to the country as children, particularly those who have no kinship to their native land and know no other place than the United States.

At least within the bounds set up under DACA, Congress should extend to these people a path to permanent residency.

But, it should not stop there.

There are perhaps 12 million illegal immigrants in the country. The majority are economic refugees, drawn here by the promise of opportunities unavailable in their home countries. The agriculture, construction and hospitality industries have come to depend on these workers, despite their status.

We continue to believe the answer is to offer illegal immigrants temporary legal status and a path to permanent residency after 10 years if they meet strict requirements. We think the border should be secured. A viable guestworker program must be established, and employers must verify the work status of their employees.

Only Congress can change the law. Let them stay, or make them go. Keeping them forever in the shadows does not serve the rule of law.

## OUR VIEW



A wildfire burns in the Columbia River Gorge near Cascade Locks, Ore.

Tristan Fortsch/KATU-TV via AP

# Manage forests, or watch them burn

For those who had not witnessed the blast-furnace heat and the eye-stinging smoke of a wildfire along with the mass destruction of timber, homes, businesses and wildlife, last week was a learning experience.

Nearly every corner of the West was on fire. From Arizona to Washington state and from California to Montana, 65 active fires were burning 2.83 million acres as of late last week. Those numbers include only the fires that were 10,000 acres or larger. The average size of those fires was 43,556 acres.

In some areas, including Portland and Los Angeles, the fires got too close for comfort. Drivers on Los Angeles expressways could see flames racing up the hillsides, and Interstate 84 east of Portland was closed as firefighters valiantly worked to keep the wind-driven flames at bay.

For many Western city dwellers, wildfires just got personal. They were no longer something they watched from afar, viewing video snippets from the safety of their homes and apartments. The stench of smoke could be smelled and the raging flames could be seen up close.

Firefighters were forced to prioritize which blazes to fight and which to let go. They hoped to save the lodge at Multnomah Falls in the Columbia Gorge and the

lodge at McDonald Lake in Glacier National Park. They battled to keep fires away from Yosemite and Yellowstone national parks.

Among politicians, the chatter was about how to fund firefighters — talk about fiddling while the West burns. They want to make sure the money for firefighters doesn't come out of the U.S. Forest Service budget but from the money set aside for disasters.

This chatter has been going on for years now, and any effective member of Congress would have gotten it passed and signed by the president. But we haven't really seen much in the way of effectiveness coming out of Congress recently, have we?

What they need to talk about — and take action on — is the absolutely irresponsible and shortsighted way public lands in the West are managed.

Let's start with forests.

At some point the Obama administration decided nearly all federal forests were off-limits to logging, the best and only way to manage forests. For years, foresters have been warning that letting forests go unmanaged will only mean bigger and badder wildfires in the future.

We need federal managers who are allowed to effectively manage publicly owned forests. Instead of taking out roads from national

forests, they need to leave them in place. They need to sell timber in strategic ways that will make fighting the next wildfires easier.

In the vast open spaces of the West they need to allow more cattle grazing, which has been shown to be an effective way to keep down cheatgrass and other weeds that burn hot and kill the ecosystem. Juniper trees need to be taken out of all areas, including wilderness, where they are destroying the countryside and hindering the recovery of the greater sage grouse and other important species.

The people who know the West best are those who live there. Federal managers need to listen when people tell them that they are setting up the region for disastrous fires. That has happened time and time again, especially in Oregon and Washington state.

And don't listen to critics who holler that people just want to clearcut the West. In decades past, federal land was actively managed — logged — and the forests are still a beautiful resource. Those who say they don't want one tree cut down are simply denying the fact that forests need to be managed, or they will eventually be destroyed by wildfire, bark beetles or disease.

Managing forests and open spaces will not put an end to wildfires, but it will reduce their size and number.

## Readers' views

### Congress must retain renewable fuel standard

The devastating impacts of climate change in our state, country and world are a stark reminder that continued reliance on fossil fuels is not an option. Public transportation is great. Electric vehicles are fantastic. But those options are not viable or affordable for every individual, business or family. Those of us who live in more rural parts of Washington County, Ore., away from the MAX and WES, know this better than most.

Gasoline-powered cars will continue to dominate the roads for the foreseeable future, so it's critical that we embrace solutions that can cut emissions from vehicles on the road today.

Thankfully, America is the world's top producer and exporter of biofuels. We have vast renewable resources and the capacity to replace millions of gallons of imported oil with clean, homegrown biofuels like ethanol. That's the goal behind America Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), a law that have been working for over 11 years to grow the market for biofuels.

Our Cornelius-based company, Summit Natural Energy, has demonstrated the success of the RFS, which incentivizes low-carbon fuels and innovation. We produce pure, clean-burning ethanol distilled from food processing and agricultural waste byproducts, the stuff that is not fit for human consumption. Better yet, once this biomass byproduct has been distilled, the remaining fiber can be used as livestock feed.

The ethanol we produce costs less than petroleum-based fuel, promoting competition at the gas pump, and it is cleaner — helping to cut down on cancer-causing toxins and smog-forming pollutants in our air.

Despite the economic and environmental benefits of the RFS, oil companies are pushing Congress to undercut the law and remove the alternative fuel policies that help businesses like ours offer consumers a

better choice at the gas pump that can combat global warming.

We do not have oil refineries here in Oregon. We do have a robust alternative fuels sector and thousands of fruit growers, food processors, farmers and timber operations who can contribute to the next generation of clean fuels. Congress must not buckle to oil industry pressure. The result would be a major step back for our climate and for our economy.

Currently, the RFS remains the single most successful clean energy policy working to keep our air clean. Summit Energy is proud of the role we play in helping develop alternative fuels and we are proud of the role we play in our local economy. Now is the time to embrace alternative fuels, not move away from them, and I hope that fact is appreciated by our Oregon leaders.

Mark Smith  
Cornelius, Ore.

### The language wolves understand best

I couldn't help but chuckle as I read the headline of your article, "Some wolves may have become 'habituated' to eating cattle." Gee, do you really think that is possible? Oh, now I remember, that is why our ancestors eliminated them from the landscape a hundred years ago or so. Back then there was even more wild game available for the wolves to hunt, yet they chose to attack livestock.

I do believe that wolves have a place in the ecosystem, but the only way that wolves will come to respect (fear) people is if we kill some of them. They are a top predator by nature, and only then will they realize that they are subordinate to us.

They kill for a living, and that is the language they understand best.

By the way, my opinion is not a reflection on Eric Mortenson's writing, as I enjoy his articles and believe he is one of your best.

Denver Johnston  
Scott Bar, Calif.