

Rep. Ortiz-Velez: Passage of DACA occupational licensing bill

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Madison, WI – State Representative Sylvia Ortiz-Velez would like to thank the entire Senate and Assembly. I am happy to announce that the Senate in Wisconsin, just passed DACA Occupational Licensing, 31-2. The house passed AB759 on February 20th 97-0.

Rep. Ortiz-Velez gives a special thank you to; “Reps. Kitchens, Snyder, Duchow, Franklin, Novak, Rodriguez, Krug, Allen, Rivera-Wagner. Senators James and Tomczyk, and all of the bi-partisan co-authors and co-sponsors.”

According to [the DWD's Job Openings & Labor Turnover Survey](#) (JOLTS), Wisconsin had 140,000 job openings statewide in July 2025. Employers across the state consistently voice frustration over the difficulty of filling these positions. While lawmakers continue to explore new strategies to attract and retain workers, there's a promising opportunity being overlooked.

There is an untapped, finite group of [525,210](#) workers currently living in the United States (5,370 in Wisconsin). Unlocking the potential of this group can be a pivotal solution to address our workforce shortages in Wisconsin. However, state laws impede their progress and success by presenting unnecessary hurdles. These are well-vetted individuals who:

Yet we bar recipients of the Deferred Action Childhood (DACA) program from working in any profession that requires professional licensure through the state.

“As a state, we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines while other states benefit from the talent we cultivate here at home. Wisconsin invests in educating, training, and preparing young people, we should also ensure they are able to contribute to our

workforce right here in Wisconsin, rather than forcing them to leave.” Rep. Ortiz Velez.

“DACA recipients are among the most thoroughly vetted individuals in our country. They undergo extensive background checks, follow the law, and maintain federal work authorization. These are young people who have proven their commitment to our communities and our values.”