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11:54 AM
Wed August 15, 2012

Tenn. Immigrants Excited About new Federal Program

By AP/WMOT

WASHINGTON (AP/WMOT) — Tennessee's most prominent immigrant rights group say the state's undocumented population is excited about the launch of a new federal program that allows illegal immigrants to stay in the U.S.

Starting today, young illegal immigrants can apply for a new Homeland Security Department program that lets them stay in the U.S. and get work permits.

Critics of the program have called the policy backdoor amnesty and say they worry about fraud.

Eben Cathey of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition says the program isn't the sweeping reform to U.S. immigration policy rights groups were hoping for, but believes it's a start in the right direction.

"This policy change is good for our communities, and it will add thousands of educated, motivated young people to our work force. Youth will still have to pay \$465 to apply, which offsets a lot of the cost to the government."

Cathey notes that the new federal program does not provide a path toward citizenship.

Tags: illegal aliens immigrants refugees tennessee



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