



United We Dream Network

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February 25, 2015

U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear U.S. Senator,

On behalf of United We Dream, the first and largest immigrant youth-led organization in the nation, made up of 53 local affiliates in 26 states, we write in **strong opposition to S. 534**, the Immigration Rule of Law Act of 2015, which would prohibit funds to implement the expansion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Legal Permanent Residents (DAPA) policies. These executive actions on immigration are the largest victories our community has won in over two decades and are critical measures in light of the congressional gridlock on this issue. Defunding expanded DACA and DAPA does the opposite of fixing our broken immigration system; it would put millions of individuals at heightened risk for removal, waste resources, and separate U.S. citizen children from their parents.

This proposed bill is a direct attack on Dreamers, young people who entered the U.S. as children, and our families. Expanded DACA would protect individuals who entered under the age of 16, but were older than 31 on the date the initial 2012 DACA was announced. These older Dreamers would be eligible for the DREAM Act included in S.744, but were excluded from the original DACA. In many ways, they are the “original” Dreamers, since they have been in this country the longest and consider the United States their home. In addition, expanded DACA would change the initial physical presence requirement from June 15, 2007 to January 1, 2010. For example, this change will be significant for a Dreamer who arrived in the U.S. in July 2007 when he was 11 and is now an 18-year-old college student. S. 534 would deny protection to the 290,000 potential DACA expansion beneficiaries, leaving them in limbo and at risk of deportation, even though by default, they have lived in the United States for most of their lives.

S. 534 defunds “any substantially similar policy changes issued or taken on or after January 9, 2015.” There is a strong argument that issuing a memorandum authorizing DACA renewals is a “substantially similar policy change” and would be prohibited under S. 534. The bill also states that expanded DACA and DAPA and “any substantially similar policy changes issued or taken on or after January 9, 2015 ... have no statutory or constitutional basis and therefore have no legal effect.” The author and supporters of S.534 fail to recognize that this bill is a direct threat to the more than 650,000 Dreamers who have been granted DACA and whose lives have improved through access to driver’s licenses and work permits.

Lastly and most importantly, denying parents of U.S. citizens and Legal Permanent Residents protection from deportation and the opportunity to work legally is an attack on our families and does nothing to fix our immigration system. For the past

five decades, both Republican and Democratic presidents have rightfully and constitutionally used their executive authority to ameliorate the pain our broken immigration system inflicts on the community, preventing families from being separated and allowing millions of people to live out their American dream.

Once again, United We Dream, and our more than 120,000 members, strongly urge you to stand with Dreamers and our families on the right side of history, oppose S. 534, and any measure that attempts to undermine the implementation and success of DACA and DAPA.

We would be pleased to address any questions you or your staff may have. Please do not hesitate to reach me at Julieta@unitedwedream.org.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julieta Garibay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a decorative flourish at the end.

Julieta Garibay
Co-founder and Deputy Advocacy Director
United We Dream