



Lily Eskelsen García
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John C. Stocks
Executive Director

September 15, 2017

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the 50 million students they serve, we strongly urge you to co-sponsor and swiftly pass the Dream Act of 2017 (S.1615/H.R. 3440).

The decision to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is an attack on the 800,000 participants in the program — people like Texas teacher Areli Zárate. She came to the United States at the age of eight with her family, graduated from the University of Texas at Austin and, thanks to DACA, was able to become a high school teacher in Austin. Educators like her are working in public schools, colleges, and universities all across our nation, inspiring the next generation of Americans. We cannot afford to lose their talents, creativity, and contributions.

The Dream Act of 2017 provides the certainty and permanent protections DACA recipients and Dreamers — people brought to this country as children — deserve, including multiple pathways to citizenship via higher education, military service, and employment. To qualify, individuals must have entered the United States as minors and have a continuous presence in the United States for four years before the date of the bill’s enactment. Other bills have been introduced to address DACA, but they fall short of providing a pathway to citizenship for all current or eligible DACA recipients and Dreamers.

America’s acceptance of all immigrants reflects the values we strive to adhere to as a nation. Now, more than ever, we need an inclusive and permanent legislative solution to protect DACA recipients and Dreamers. This is a moment for Congress to show the leadership and bipartisanship America is seeking. We strongly urge you to co-sponsor and swiftly pass the Dream Act of 2017.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association