



June 26, 2018

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we strongly urge you to VOTE NO on the Ryan/Goodlatte bill (H.R. 6136) because it does **not** provide a reasonable pathway to citizenship for DACA recipients and Dreamers, invalidates the *Flores* decision that protects migrant children, and includes other harmful anti-immigrant components. Proponents of the bill have set up a false choice between breaking up families and keeping them together by detaining them indefinitely. Votes on these issues may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 115th Congress.

The Ryan/Goodlatte bill takes the “four pillars” approach that recently got just 39 votes in the Senate. It provides more than \$23 billion for a physical border wall most Americans oppose, along with an additional \$7 billion for construction of family detention centers; drastically reduces family-based migration; eliminates the diversity visa lottery; guts our asylum laws; and does not “solve the DACA problem.”

What bill supporters characterize as a pathway to citizenship is actually a convoluted, merit-based point system not accessible to the vast majority of DACA recipients and Dreamers. A comprehensive analysis by the Cato Institute shows that “only a third of the Dreamer population would likely receive status under the House plan (H.R. 6136), and just 18 percent would likely make it onto the pathway to citizenship. Only 12 percent would likely apply for and receive citizenship” (Cato at Liberty, [82% of Dreamers Won't Benefit from House Bill's Citizenship Path](#), June 19, 2018).

H.R. 6136 also overrules the decades-old Supreme Court *Reno v. Flores* decision, which limits the amount of time children can be held in federal detention to 20 days, among other things. Instead, the administration — in another misguided action — is proposing to detain children and their parents together **indefinitely**. Doing so could severely damage children's physical and mental health, perhaps irreversibly, according to the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

Alternatives exist to detaining children and parents. For example, the Family Case Management Program was a more humane, more effective, and much less costly approach until the administration cancelled it in June 2017. Ninety-nine percent of the people enrolled in the program showed up for all immigration appointments and court hearings (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's](#)

[Award of the Family Case Management Program Contract \(Redacted\)](#), November 30, 2017). Moreover, the program was far less expensive than family detention — it cost just \$36 per day per family, compared to \$319 per day **per person** for family detention. (The Atlantic, [ICE Shuts Down Program for Asylum-Seekers](#), June 9, 2017, and Department of Homeland Security, [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Budget Overview](#), Fiscal Year 2018, Congressional Justification, respectively).

The current crises are products of the administration’s actions. In September 2017, President Trump ended DACA, jeopardizing the lives and futures of 800,000 participants in the program, including more than 9,000 educators who may be forced to leave their classrooms and the only country they have ever truly known. The shameful separation and incomplete reunification of children from their families is a result of the administration’s April 2018 “zero tolerance” policy that effectively uses innocent children as pawns — a negotiating tool — to further political goals, including the already-rejected “four pillars.”

NEA has long supported the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017 (S. 1615/H.R. 3440), which provides a pathway to citizenship via multiple tracks, including higher education, military service, and employment. We could also support a narrowly tailored solution that pairs the Dream Act with reasonable border security measures like those in the bipartisan USA Act (H.R. 4796). It is deeply disappointing that the majority leadership continues to block votes on these measures, especially since they take the approach the American people overwhelmingly support.

Again, we strongly urge you to VOTE NO on the Ryan/Goodlatte bill (H.R. 6136).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association