

June 18, 2013

Dear Senator,

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to support the Little DREAMers amendment (Blumenthal 1327), sponsored by Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), which would ensure that the youngest DREAMers have access to the same 5-year path to citizenship as older DREAMers.

Children of immigrants comprise one quarter of the U.S. child population, and will make up a critical segment of our future workforce. While the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act (S.744) is a historic step in the right direction for young immigrants, under the bill some of our most vulnerable children would be required to wait more than a decade before they are eligible for citizenship.

The DREAM Act in S.744 provides a 5-year path to citizenship for youth who entered the U.S. prior to age 16, have graduated from high school or earned a GED, and earned a college diploma, attended two years of college, or spent four years in the military. However, the bill does not allow those who entered the U.S. as children but are too young to have graduated from high school or completed a GED to qualify for the 5-year path to citizenship under the DREAM Act. Instead, these children are required to follow the standard adult path to citizenship, which could mean up to a 13-year wait for the youngest children.

The Little DREAMers amendment would ensure that young children are not excluded from the DREAM Act's pathway to citizenship simply because of their age. Specifically, the amendment would allow DREAMers who are under the age of 18 upon completing five years of registered provisional status and are enrolled in school or have completed a GED to adjust to lawfully permanent resident status and be eligible for citizenship. The Migration Policy Institute estimates that **630,000 children currently under the age of 13** could benefit from the Little DREAMers amendment.

Ultimately, allowing our youngest DREAMers to also have access to a 5-year path to citizenship under the DREAM Act will ensure that every child in America has the opportunity to achieve his or her dreams and give back to the country they call home. Furthermore, by taking away the challenges that come with attending school as a noncitizen and making higher education more attainable, the Little DREAMers amendment will help the country by increasing high school graduation, college entrance, and college graduation rates.

The Little DREAMers amendment is supported by the First Focus Campaign for Children, the National Education Association (NEA), United We Dream, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) as well as a coalition of over 185 child advocacy, faith-based, education, labor, and immigrant rights groups.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Action for Children North Carolina
Adrian Dominican Sisters
Advocacy for Justice and Peace Committee of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia
Advocates for Children of New Jersey
AFL-CIO
African American Ministers In Action
African American Ministers Leadership Council
Alliance for a Just Society
Alliance for Children & Families
America's Voice Education Fund
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE.org)
American Association of Community Colleges
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
American School Counselor Association
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
Americans for Immigrant Justice, formerly Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)
Apostle Immigrant Service
Arab American Institute
Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
Arkansas Coalition for Peace and Justice
Arkansas Interfaith Alliance
Arkansas voices for the Children Left Behind
Asian American Justice Center, member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago
Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission
Asian Pacific American Legal Center, a member of the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
BioLogistics, LLC
Breakthrough
Bring Rodrigo Home
Campaign for Community Change
Capuchin Justice & Peace Office, Milwaukee
CASA de Maryland
Center for Gender & Refugee Studies
Center for Latino Progress - CPRF
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Center for Public Policy Priorities
Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers
Children's Alliance, Washington
Children's Defense Fund
Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland
Christ Our Redeemer AME Church (DC)
Church World Service
Claire Heureuse Community Center, Inc
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)

Coalition on Human Needs
Collaborative Center for Justice
Columbian Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Community Action Partnership
Community Works
Concerned Educators Allied for a Safe Environment (CEASE)
Congregation of St. Joseph
Council for Opportunity in Education
Crossing Borders-Dubuque
CT Students for a DREAM
DEW Consultants, Inc.
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Education Equals Making Community Connections
Elev8
El Zócalo Immigrant Resource Center
Entre Hermanos
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)
Faith Action Network
Family Voices of NJ
Farmworker Association of Florida
Farmworker Justice
First Focus Campaign for Children
Florida Council of Churches
For Families LLC
Fortin de las Flores
Franciscan Action Network
Franciscans for Justice
Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona
Humanitarian Border Solutions
Humanitarian Border Solutions, Bisbee, AZ
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Jefferson County Child Development Council
Jesuit Conference of the United States
Junta for Progressive Action
Justice not Jail
Kentucky Youth Advocates
Kids In Need of Defense (KIND)
Korean Resource Center
La Plaza, Indianapolis
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
Latin America/Caribbean Committee of the Loretto Community
Latino Education & Training Institute
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Leadership Team of the Sisters of St Francis, Dubuque, Iowa
League of United Latin American Citizens
Litchfield Public Schools Early Childhood Programs
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Main Street Alliance
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
MICAH
Micah Leadership Council
MomsRising.org
Multilingual Chicago
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP)
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association (NEA)
National Employment Law Project
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Law Center (NILC)
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Latino Children's Institute
National Primitive Baptist Convention, USA
National WIC Association
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
New Mexico Voices for Children
New York Immigration Coalition
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project
Office of Peace, Justice and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth
OneAmerica
Pathfinders of Oregon
PB&J Family Services, Inc.
PeterCares House
PFAW
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Princeton Community Village
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
Provincial Council of the Clerics of St. Viator
PSR, Arizona
Public Advocates
Real Life Resource Center, Inc.
Religious for Immigration Reform
Religious Sisters of Charity
Samaritans
SCLC Florida
Senior Community Outreach Services, Inc.
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas South Central Community
Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community
Sisters of the Presentation, New Windsor
Social Action Committee of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Tucson AZ

Social Justice Council of Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden
Sojourners
Srs. of St. Joseph of Carondelet
St. John's UMC
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Templeton Knolls Civic Assn.
TESOL International Association
32BJ Local Union
The Bridge Project
The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families
The Episcopal Church
The Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project
The Imani Group (AAMIA)
The National Association for Bilingual Education
The Osborne Association
The Prince of Peace Baptist Church
The Restoration Project at Casa Mariposa
Tucson Samaritans
United Action Connecticut
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
United Church of Christ Justice & Witness Ministries
United Church of Peace
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
United We Dream
University of Arizona Immigration Support Services Project
Voces de la Frontera
Voices for Utah Children
Voices for Virginia's Children
WI Council on Children and Families
Wider Opportunities for Women
Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice
Women's Refugee Commission
Workers' Rights Center, Wisconsin
World Education, Inc.
ZERO TO THREE