



UNITED WE DREAM

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DREAM Act 2009 Talking Points

- 1. IMMIGRANT YOUTH WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE DREAM ACT CAME TO THIS COUNTRY AT A VERY YOUNG AGE AND THE U.S. IS THEIR HOME.**
 - a. They contribute to every aspect of their community. Many volunteer at community organizations or at their churches, participate in school clubs and sports teams, and often work to help support their families yet they are not fully integrated into our society. They live in the shadows and in fear of deportation because of their immigration status.
 - b. Some of these students have grown up in mixed status families, with U.S citizen siblings and/or documented parents that have permanent roots in this country. All these students strive to continue to be with their families.
 - c. Some have already petitioned for family-based immigration relief, but continue to wait in a badly backlogged immigration line.
- 2. CONGRESS CAN ACT NOW TO MAKE THE DREAMS OF AMERICAN YOUTH A REALITY.**
 - a. Soon to be introduced legislation would create a pathway to legalization for certain eligible immigrant youth. The DREAM Act is tailored legislation that has enjoyed growing bipartisan support in the House and Senate since it was first introduced in 2001. (See accompanying fact sheet for more information).
- 3. DREAM ACT IS ABOUT EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.**
 - a. As a society, we have a responsibility to provide all young people, regardless of immigration status, hope for the future and a chance at education.
 - b. Undocumented students study and work just as hard as their US-born classmates, but they do not have the same opportunities to pursue higher education. By allowing these students to pursue higher education, we are investing in the future of our country.
- 4. THE U.S. ECONOMY WILL BE STRENGTHENED WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE DREAM ACT.**
 - a. Several reports show that by providing access to higher education to these students, our communities, states, and nation would reap significant benefits, including reduced high school dropout rates and increased revenue from taxes paid by a more educated immigrant population.
 - i. A RAND study showed that a 30-year-old Mexican immigrant woman who graduates from college will pay \$5,300 more in taxes and cost \$3,900 less in government expenses each year than if she had dropped out of high school. This amounts to an annual fiscal benefit of over \$9,000 every year, money that can be used to pay for the education of others..
 - b. The students who would benefit under the DREAM Act have been raised and educated in the U.S. They are the nation's future innovators and entrepreneurs and will make up part of the educated workforce needed to help the U.S. compete in the global economy. In our globalized world, their multilingual and bicultural skills, and contributions are more important than ever to the success and global competitiveness of the United States.
 - c. State and local taxpayers have already invested in the education of these children in elementary and secondary school and deserve to get a return on their investment.
- 5. WE SHOULD NOT PUNISH YOUNG PEOPLE FOR BEING PRODUCTS OF AN INHUMANE AND BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM.**
 - a. They arrived to the U.S. as children; they had no control over the conditions in their home countries that forced their parents to come here.
 - b. The DREAM Act ensures that no child in America is denied their dream of having a better life if they're willing to work for it.

Immigrant youth have waited long enough. Pass the DREAM Act in 2009!

THEY SAY	WE SAY
<p>Why don't undocumented immigrant students go back to their countries?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The U.S. is these students' home. Since they arrived here at a young age, most of them have no recollection of their country of origin. • They contribute to every aspect of their community. Many volunteer at community organizations or at their churches, participate in school clubs and sports teams, and are often working to help support their families.
<p>DREAM Act gives special treatment to immigrant students/benefits that American kids don't get.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The students benefited by the DREAM Act will have the same requirements and obstacles as the rest of the students. • The DREAM Act is not a free pass; in order to benefit from the legislation students must work hard, graduate from high school and attend college or the military. • The DREAM Act is about equal opportunity. Undocumented students work just as hard as their U.S.-born classmates, but they do not have the same opportunities. • The DREAM Act ensures that no child in America is denied their dream of having a better life if they're willing to work for it.
<p>Immigrant students are taking resources away.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DREAM Act will increase the educational attainment of our youth, thereby increasing the amount of taxes they pay towards safety-net programs such as Social Security and Medicare. • A single person with a bachelor's degree who earns an average \$60,000 of taxable income will contribute \$9,640 to taxes and welfare annually; in a 40-year span he/she will have contributed \$385,000. • We have already invested in the education of these students and should allow them to reach their full potential and contribute to our society.
<p>Why don't they come legally/get in the back of the line?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For most of these students, there is simply no line at all in which to stand, given the antiquated quotas and categories hobbling our broken immigration system. These students were brought to the U.S. as children; they did not partake in the decision to come here; they had no control over the economic conditions in their home countries that forced their parents to come here; and they did not design our failed immigration system. The only decision that these young people have made is to keep their families together.