



September 21, 2010

United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

We write to express our support for the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. We urge you to vote *yes* this week for cloture on an amendment to add the DREAM Act to the Department of Defense authorization bill.

Each year, about 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school; thousands of them have lived in the United States for at least five years. Among these students are class valedictorians, straight-A students and idealistic young people committed to stabilizing their families and bettering their communities. Yet, because of enormous barriers created by their lack of legal status, many of these students are unable to pursue higher education. The loss to these students, and to our communities and country as a whole, is significant.

The DREAM Act will provide a path to legal status for individuals brought to the United States as undocumented children years ago. The legislation is narrowly tailored. It would apply only to individuals brought to this country at least five years ago as children, who have grown up here, and who have done everything society has asked them to do. They have worked hard, studied hard and are pursuing a college education. Such students could adjust their status to that of a conditional permanent resident and could then have the conditional status lifted if they complete at least two years of college or military service. These new pathways to prosperity and citizenship will provide undocumented children with the kinds of postsecondary opportunities they need, removing the barriers they now face in contributing to America's national security and our collective well-being.

The bill also will have significant fiscal benefits for states and local communities. For example, a 30-year-old immigrant who graduates from college will pay \$5,300 more in taxes and cost \$3,900 less in government expenses each year than if he or she had dropped out of high school. State and local taxpayers already have invested in the education of these children in elementary and secondary school, and through the DREAM Act could benefit from that investment. In addition, the bill will help promote the skilled workforce necessary for our nation to compete globally. Leading businesses have endorsed the DREAM Act because they recognize that our broken immigration system is draining our economy of the talent and resources needed to compete in the global economy.



The Education Trust



*A Union of Professionals*

The DREAM Act is a practical, fair solution that upholds the best of our shared American values. When young people play by the rules—work hard, get good grades, aspire to earn college degrees and lead productive lives—we should support them and their dreams. Erecting barriers to their success will, sooner rather than later, damage us all.

We urge you to support the amendment to add this important legislation to the Department of Defense authorization bill.

Sincerely,

Kati Haycock  
President  
The Education Trust

Randi Weingarten  
President  
American Federation of Teachers