

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 419
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 204
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

The undersigned 131 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) and allied organizations call on Congress to include a clean Dream Act as part of any deal on raising the budget caps or providing further government spending for this fiscal year by January 19th. We are dismayed that Congress left Washington, D.C. in December without putting an end to the cruel uncertainty it puts nearly 800,000 Dreamers through each day it fails to pass the Dream Act.

While we were pleased by a recent federal judge's decision to enjoin the Trump administration from terminating DACA, the Attorney General has appealed the decision, putting Dreamers in a state of continued fear and anxiety for their futures. USCIS's decision to accept certain renewal applications is a small, temporary victory for immigrant youth and allies, but we know that only Congress can deliver permanent relief for Dreamers and it can and must do so now. Until applications and adjudications are completed, more than 16,000 DACA recipients that already lost protection will remain vulnerable to detention and deportation, and an additional 122 DACA recipients will continue to lose their status each day.¹ This means they lose their work permits and jobs, and their ability to support their families, and are subject to being arrested, detained and deported to countries they barely remember.

The country supports a clean Dream Act. This bipartisan bill has the support of a majority of Americans,² including those who identify as Trump supporters.³ Congress has a responsibility to address this issue and to stand up for immigrants by passing the Dream Act without harmful provisions such as increased border or interior enforcement as well as any cuts to other immigration categories, such as refugees, diversity visa lottery recipients, and green card holders.

Dreamers are a part of the American family and help make our communities vibrant. Moreover, passing the Dream Act would add a total of \$22.7 billion to the United States' GDP every year;

¹ Jawetz, Tom and Svajlenka, Nicole, "Thousands of DACA Recipients Are Already Losing Their Protection from Deportation." Center for American Progress, 9 Nov. 2017.
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/11/09/442502/thousands-daca-recipients-already-losing-protection-deportation/>.

² "Morning Consult National Tracking Poll #170817." Morning Consult, Aug.–Sept. 2017.
https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170817_crosstabs_Politico_v1_TB.pdf at 199.

³ *Id.* at 202.

gains that could add up to as much as \$1 trillion over the next decade when including the productivity bump that would result from Dreamers' increased educational attainment.⁴

Under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), thousands of LGBTQ people have been able to pursue higher education, improve their economic security, and live securely with their families and in their communities.⁵ Additionally, DACA has empowered a number of its recipients to come out as LGBTQ to authentically live their lives. If deported, many LGBTQ people will find themselves in a country where they have little to no legal rights and are more likely to experience anti-LGBTQ violence and possibly death. Nearly 80 countries criminalize same-sex relationships and many without explicit laws remain very dangerous for the LGBTQ community.⁶ For example, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reported that nearly 600 people died from anti-LGBTQ violence in Latin America between January 2013 and March 2014.⁷

Adding increased enforcement provisions to the Dream Act is unacceptable because those measures will further endanger LGBTQ asylum seekers seeking protection. Additionally, they will increase the risk of profiling, detention, and deportation for LGBTQ immigrants in the U.S.⁸

Because the LGBTQ community faces discrimination in many aspects of life (i.e. being fired or not hired, or being refused housing), they face higher incarceration rates than those who are not LGBTQ. Given these forms of discrimination, many LGBTQ people have a higher rate of contact with law enforcement, and are therefore at higher risk of deportation because of 287(g) agreements and policies that encourage local jails to identify and hold immigrants for ICE.⁹

The President's decision to end DACA is an attack on immigrant families living in our communities, as well as on our values of fairness, equality, and opportunity. The decision has left many individuals feeling helpless and powerless over their future, and fearing that they may be taken from their families and communities at any moment. For example, the Trevor Project has received multiple contacts from those experiencing suicidal ideation and crisis due to the immigration policies that would return LGBTQ youth to their potentially anti-LGBTQ countries of origin. These calls to national LGBTQ youth suicide prevention services continue to occur as

⁴ Ortega, Francesc. "The Economic Benefits of Passing the Dream Act." *Center for American Progress*. 18 Sept. 2017. www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/09/18/439134/economic-benefits-passing-dream-act/.

⁵ Gruberg, Sharita. "What Ending DACA Means for LGBTQ Dreamers." *Center for American Progress*, 11 Oct. 2017. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/10/11/440450/ending-daca-means-lgbtq-dreamers/>

⁶ Dehghan, Saeed Kamali. "Global LGBT Community Still Gripped by Homophobic State-Sponsored Violence." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 26 June 2015. www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/26/lgbt-same-sex-marriage-homophobia-violence-world.

⁷ "An Overview of Violence Against LGBTI Persons: A Registry Documenting Acts of Violence Between January 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014." ANNEX - Press Release 153/14, Dec. 2017. Pp. 1–8. www.oas.org/en/iachr/lgtbi/docs/Annex-Registry-Violence-LGBTI.pdf.

⁸ Gruberg, Sharita. "How Police Entanglement with Immigration Enforcement Puts LGBTQ Lives at Risk." *Center for American Progress*, 12 Apr. 2017. www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2017/04/12/430325/police-entanglement-immigration-enforcement-puts-lgbtq-lives-risk/.

⁹ *Id.*

immigration policies remain uncertain. You have the power to restore to these individuals the hope and opportunity that should be hallmarks of our country.

We call on Congress to stop delaying and include a clean Dream Act as a part of any deal on raising the budget caps or providing further government funding by January 19th.

Sincerely,

1N10, Inc.

AB540 Ally Training Project

Advocates for Youth

AF3IRM Los Angeles Chapter

AIDS Foundation of Chicago

American Association of University Women

American Civil Liberties Union

Anti-Defamation League

API Equality- LA

API Rainbow Parents of PFLAG NYC

APLA Health

Asian Americans Advancing Justice- LA

Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council

Asian Pride Project

Bailey House, Inc.

Bend the Arc Jewish Action

Bi Women Quarterly

BIENESTAR

Blue Ridge Pride Center, Inc.

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Center

California Health Professional Student Alliance

California Physicians Alliance

Cascade AIDS Project

Center for American Progress

Center for Black Equity
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Compass Ventura County
Council for Global Equality
Courage Campaign
DC Center for the LGBT Community
Equal Rights Washington
Equality Alabama
Equality Arizona
Equality California
Equality North Carolina
Equality Texas
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement
Family Equality Council
Florida Legal Services, Inc.
Food Empowerment Project
FreeState Justice
Gay Asian Pacific Islander Men of New York (GAPIMNY)
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center
Gender Rights Maryland
Georgia Equality
GLAAD
GLBT Community Center of Colorado
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Global Justice Institute
Greater Boston Legal Services
Grindr for Equality
Hispanic Health Network

Howard Brown Health
Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center
Human Rights Campaign
Indiana Youth Group
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective
Korean American Rainbow Parents
Korean Resource Center
Lambda Legal
Latino Commission on AIDS
Latinos in the Deep South
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
Legal Aid Society
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Community Center- NYC
LGBTQ Center of Long Beach
LGBT Center of Greater Reading
LGBT Center of Raleigh
LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland
LGBT Technology Partnership & Institute
Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Mazzoni Center
Metropolitan Community Churches
Milwaukee LGBT Community Center
MomsRising
Montrose Center
Movement Advancement Project
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Center for Transgender Equality
National Council of Jewish Women
National Health Law Program
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBT Bar Association
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance
NEAT- the National Equality Action Team
Newark LGBTQ Community Center
NMAC
Oasis, Latino LGBTs Wellness Center
Our Family Coalition
Out Alliance
Outlinc- Lincoln Nebraska
OUTMemphis: The LGBTQ Center for the Mid-South
Out On The Lakeshore
Outserve - SLDN
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Positive Women's Network- USA
Prevention Access Campaign
Pride Action Tank
Pride Center at Equality Park
Pride at Work
Q Center
Rainbow Pride Alliance
Sacramento LGBT Community Center
San Diego LGBT Community Center

Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
SF Peninsula People Power
Social Action Committee, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City
South Bay People Power
Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health
SparkAction
SunServe
Tacoma Rainbow Center
Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition
Thai Community Development Center
The Trevor Project
Triangle Community Center
United We Dream
Unity Fellowship Christ Church
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Virginia Organizing
Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County
Whitman-Walker Health
William Way LGBT Community Center
Wyoming Equality
Youth OUTright WNC, Inc.
Youth Pride, Inc.