

AFL-CIO

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

October 3, 2017

Senator Charles Grassley, Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member
Senate Judiciary Committee
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

The AFL-CIO urges you to support the DREAM Act of 2017 (S.1615) without amendment. Nearly 800,000 productive members of our society are currently in danger of having their status and work permits stripped away if the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program is terminated. There is simply no reason to expand the pool of vulnerable workers in our country or return to a time when each year, thousands of our nation's students found the path to decent jobs and educational opportunity closed.

The DREAM Act would not only preserve the work authorization of DACA holders, but would also afford them a long overdue pathway to citizenship. This bipartisan legislation would allow young men and women who are part of our workforce, serving in the military, or, pursuing higher education to plan for the future and contribute more fully to our communities, our unions, and our economy. Although other bills, such as the SUCCEED Act, also purport to help this population, they place harmful and unnecessary restrictions in the path for working people.

The ability to exploit any worker lowers standards for all, which is why we need policies like the DREAM Act that protect a vital part of our workforce and help to raise the floor for all. The broadly shared benefits of DACA help make clear that the right way to use immigration policy to raise wages and reduce exploitation is by expanding rights and protections, not through criminalization and punitive enforcement policies that generate fear in our workplaces and communities. That is why we continue to support comprehensive immigration reforms that protect workers' rights and create a broad pathway to citizenship.

The AFL-CIO stands ready to work with you to see the important worker protections in the DREAM Act enacted into law as part of our larger efforts to overhaul and update of our nation's broken immigration system. However, we reject the idea that to secure these commonsense protections, we must be willing to expand captive work programs or put millions of other vulnerable workers at greater risk of retaliation and deportation. That is why we ask you to hold firm in moving this forward as a clean bill.

We strongly urge you to support the DREAM Act of 2017 without amendment as one important step toward the creation of an immigration system that will ensure safer workplaces, build a stronger economic future for our nation, and support the basic rights and dignity of all working people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Samuel".

Bill Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department

BS/aeb

cc: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 16th St., N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006 • 202-637-5000 • www.aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

TEFERE GEBRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

815 16th St., N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006 • 202-637-5000 • www.aflcio.org

RICHARD L. TRUMKA
PRESIDENT

ELIZABETH H. SHULER
SECRETARY-TREASURER

TEFERE GEBRE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT