



December 2, 2010

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), I urge you to support consideration and passage of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) prior to adjournment this month.

Each year, about 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school; many of them have lived in the United States since they were young children. Among these students are class valedictorians, straight-A students and idealistic young people committed to 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 who have graduated from a U.S. high school, or have obtained a GED, or have been accepted into an institution of higher education; entered the U.S. before the age of 16 and have been present in the United States for five consecutive years; and have good moral character. These students could adjust their status to that of a conditional permanent resident and then have the conditional status lifted if they complete at least two years of college or military service. These new pathways to residency and a solid future 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 collective well-being.

The DREAM Act is a practical, fair solution that upholds the best of our shared American values. When young people play by the rules, stay in school and keep out of trouble, we should support their aspirations to earn college degrees and lead productive lives. Erecting barriers to their success will, sooner rather than later, damage us all. To this end, I urge you to support immediate consideration and swift passage of the DREAM Act.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten
President

RW:emc opeiu#2 afl-cio

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Healthcare

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202/879-4400
www.aft.org

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Antonia Cortese
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Lorretta Johnson
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENTS

Shelvy Y. Abrams
Mary J. Armstrong
Barbara Bowen
Linda Bridges
Kenneth Brynien
Elsie P. Burkhalter
Stacey Caruso-Sharpe
Kathy A. Chavez
Lee Cutler
Edward Doherty
Kathleen M. Donahue
Thomas A. Dooher
Marietta A. English
Eric Feaver
Andy Ford
Ed Geppert, Jr.
David Gray
Judy Hale
David Hecker
Richard C. Iannuzzi
Keith R. Johnson
Jerry T. Jordan
Dennis Kelly
Ted Kirsch
Francine Lawrence
Karen GJ Lewis
Bonnie K. Luisi
Louis Malfaro
Michael Mulgrew
Maria Neira
Ruby J. Newbold
Candice Owley
Andrew Pallotta
Sharon M. Palmer
Marcia B. Reback
Laura K. Rico
Pat Santeramo
Sandra Schroeder
Phillip H. Smith
John Tarka
Christine Trujillo
Ann Twomey
Adam Urbanski

