

# Statements from DREAM Act Supporters

NOVEMBER 2010

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## Military Leaders

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“[Republicans have] got to take a hard look at some of the positions they’ve been taking. We can’t be anti-immigration, for example, because immigrants are fueling this country. Without immigrants, America would be like Europe or Japan with an aging population and no young people coming in to take care of it. We have to educate our immigrants. The DREAM Act is one way we can do this. . . . America is going to be a minority nation in one more generation. Our minorities are not getting educated well enough now. Fifty percent of our minority kids are not finishing high school. We’ve got to invest in education. We should use the DREAM Act as one way to do it.”

**Gen. Colin Powell (Ret.), Former Secretary of State  
and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff  
NBC’s “Meet the Press,” September 19, 2010**

“Since the Revolutionary War, non-citizens have enlisted in the armed forces for service during periods of national emergency. Today, about 35,000 non-citizens serve, and about 8,000 permanent resident aliens enlist every year. The DREAM Act represents an opportunity to expand this pool, to the advantage of military recruiting and readiness.”

**Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense  
SOURCE: Letter to Senator Durbin, September 21, 2010**

“The DREAM Act will materially expand the pool of individuals qualified, ready and willing to serve their country in uniform. Of the 50,000 youth coming of age every year in the terrible predicament of being ineligible to work, enlist, or receive federal financial aid to attend college, many of those are not yet ready to pursue full time education. Military service is a highly appealing way to better themselves, give back to their country and earn their residency and eventually citizenship. I have no doubt many of these enlistees will be among the best soldiers in our Army.”

**Louis Caldera, Former Director of the White House Military Office  
and Secretary of the Army  
SOURCE: Press Conference Call, “Military Experts, Future Enlistees Discuss the DREAM  
Act and Defense Authorization Bill,” September 17, 2010**

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## Labor Unions

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“Now is the time to pass the DREAM Act and give hope to our nation’s youth. Every year, thousands of students graduate from high school and are barred from serving in the military or attending college—solely because of their immigration status. Despite their achievements and dreams, these graduating seniors’ lives are paralyzed, and our country is deprived of their



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contributions. . . . The DREAM Act would provide a chance for immigrant youth to earn conditional residency, to attend college and to serve in our nation's military.”

**Richard Trumka, President, AFL-CIO**

**SOURCE: AFL-CIO Media Center, September 20, 2010**

“College shouldn’t be just a dream, it should be a reality for all qualified students, including immigrants. Demographics—whether it’s a student’s background or birthplace—should not determine a student’s destiny. Each year, about 65,000 undocumented immigrant students who were brought to this country at a young age by their parents receive their diplomas from American high schools, but their immigration status bars them from opportunities that make a college education affordable. . . . The DREAM Act will empower these motivated students, who have worked hard to attain a high school degree, to continue on the road to fulfilling the American dream.”

**Cynthia Garza, Spokesperson for the American Federation of Teachers**

**SOURCE: American Federation of Teachers News Release, September 21, 2010**

## Educators

“[T]he DREAM Act will stop the punishment of innocent young people for the actions of their parents, and give them the chance to earn their legal status by pursuing a higher education, or by serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Many of these individuals came to the United States as young children and know no other country. Like their peers, they have done what was asked of them in their schools, and now hope to achieve even more through the pursuit of a college education.”

**Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education**

**SOURCE: Letters to Senators Harry Reid and Mitch McConnell, September 21, 2010**

“The DREAM Act is a resounding affirmation that education remains the key to economic security and prosperity for all students. But under the current, outdated immigration system, undocumented children of immigrants who grew up in this country and who call America home are being deprived of such opportunities. We believe this legislation is a fair, practical solution that upholds the best of our shared values of fairness, accountability and strong work ethic.”

**Dennis Van Roekel, President, National Education Association**

**SOURCE: National Education Association Press Release, September 21, 2010**

## Business

“Our nation is in need of a highly educated workforce. Allowing young people to contribute to our economy, which contributes to our tax base, is precisely the economic stimulus we need in these hard times. Supporting the Dream Act will allow students to attain academic success, serve in our military and make contributions that will help stimulate our nation’s dire economy by increasing tax revenues resulting from higher incomes.”

**Gary Toeppen, President/CEO, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce**

**SOURCE: Letters to Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, September 20, 2010**

“Passage of the DREAM Act is a necessary first step towards comprehensive immigration reform. As we work towards the economic recovery of our country, it is necessary to include our hard-working young talents as part of the solution. The DREAM Act is a smart bill because it

encourages our youth, who through no fault of their own came to this country, to continue to work hard and study hard. . . . This bill does not reward breaking the law; instead, it rewards the principles our country was founded upon—family, hard work and perseverance.”

**Javier Palomarez, President and CEO, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

**SOURCE: United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Press Release, September 20, 2010**

## Members of the House

“Many teenagers in our country are faced with the difficult possibility of having no chance of pursuing a college education after they graduate from high school based on decisions their parents took to get them to the U.S. This crushes the dreams of young men and women who call this country their home. . . . The Dream Act would give these students the ability to study, work hard and achieve the American Dream. It also gives them the option of joining our Armed Forces.”

**Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL, 18th)**

**SOURCE: Press Release, “Diaz-Balarts, Ros-Lehtinen Meet with Trail of Dream Walkers in U.S. Capitol,” April 29, 2010**

“I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of legislation that will give legal immigrant children the opportunity to continue their education past high school by enabling them to attend college. These young adults are hard-working students with bright futures ahead. They carry with them a desire to succeed and give back to our nation and deserve access to quality higher education.”

**Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL, 25th)**

**SOURCE: Press Release, “Diaz-Balart Co-Sponsors the American DREAM Act,” March 27, 2009**

## Members of the Senate

“I happen to be one—perhaps a minority on my side of the aisle—who is in favor of the DREAM Act. I want to be the one who will vote for the DREAM Act.”

**Senator Bob Bennett (R-UT)**

**SOURCE: Senate Floor Statement, September 22, 2010**

“Many in my state support the DREAM Act. It is a very difficult situation for kids who were brought to this country by their parents, through no fault of their own, have gone through public school, now go to a university and may not have the chance to stay and work in this country. I understand and I am sympathetic to that.”

**Senator George LeMieux (R-FL)**

**SOURCE: Senate Floor Statement, September 22, 2010**

## Mayors

“In New York City, tens of thousands of public school students do not have legal status. We are investing in them all the same, which is required by federal law and—just as importantly—honors the values on which the United States was built. New York has increased education spending by billions of dollars over the past seven years, and we have raised graduation rates and test scores

significantly. Our city—and our country—can only reap a return on that investment if Congress allows all students to pursue higher education and legitimate careers. In today’s global economy, we simply cannot afford to chase home-grown talent out of our country.”

**Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City**

**SOURCE: Letters to Senators Richard Durbin and Richard Lugar, May 27, 2009**

“I have set ambitious education attainment goals for the City of Philadelphia, knowing that a skilled workforce is necessary for the city’s economic future. Philadelphia and the surrounding counties will not continue to thrive unless more of our residents go to college—including undocumented children who currently have no pathway to citizenship. The DREAM Act would benefit Philadelphia and the rest of Pennsylvania by providing young people with the tools needed to become citizens, go to college or enlist in the military and achieve the American dream. In the current economic situation, we cannot afford to have young children who want to attend college or serve the nation they grew up in be barred from doing so.”

**Michael Nutter, Mayor of Philadelphia**

**SOURCE: Letters to Senators Arlen Specter and Robert Casey, September 17, 2010**