

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 29, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations representing the nation's two- and four-year public and private colleges and universities and the nearly 20 million students they serve, I write in support of the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act and urge you to pass it this year.

The DREAM Act would do two things to make the future brighter for students who have worked hard, aspire to do more, and in whom this nation has already invested a great deal of resources. First, the bill would return to the states the ability to decide whether to extend in-state tuition to undocumented students, though it does not require them to take any particular action in this area.

Second, the DREAM Act would establish a six-year conditional permanent residency status for students who were brought to this country before the age of 16, have been here at least five years as of the enactment date, graduate from a U.S. high school or obtain a GED credential, and meet other requirements. DREAM-eligible individuals may qualify for permanent residency after six years by completing at least two years of higher education or military service.

This bill is designed to focus on the special case of undocumented young people who came to this country because of the actions of their parents. Many of them have no ties or even memories of the countries from which they came. They consider themselves to be American, just like their classmates, and in most ways they are.

The DREAM Act is an important tool for achieving our national goal of returning the United States to world leadership in higher education attainment. It has been estimated that 65,000 DREAM-eligible students graduate from American high schools each year.

These students often have to overcome significant barriers to graduate from high school, and we cannot afford to stymie their aspirations to continue their education and contribute to our economy and society.

We strongly urge you to pass the DREAM Act this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Molly C. Broad".

Molly Corbett Broad
President

MCB/ldw

On behalf of:

ACPA – College Student Educators International

ACT, Inc.

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Association of University Professors

American Council on Education

American Dental Education Association

American Indian Higher Education Consortium

Association of American Universities

Association of Community College Trustees

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Association of Research Libraries

College Board

Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

Council for Opportunity in Education

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

NAFSA: Association of International Educators

National Association for College Admission Counseling

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

National Collegiate Athletic Association

UNCF

United States Student Association