

December 6, 2010

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: DREAM Act

Dear Senator:

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On behalf of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, we support for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). The latest iteration (DREAM Act No. 5), however, falls short of the comprehensive and necessary incentives promulgated in previous versions of the bill. Many of these immigrants have worked unyieldingly to become valuable members of society and the Lawyers' Committee finds the denial of the equal access they so richly deserve an unsustainable position. We are particularly concerned with the denial of in-state tuition to college; disqualification for other government benefits like Medicaid; and the drop in maximum age of eligibility. Conditional permanent resident status should be one of opportunity not limitation, otherwise what is the incentive?

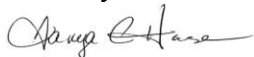
Founded in 1963, the Lawyers' Committee's major objective is to use the skills and resources of the bar to obtain equal opportunity for minorities by addressing factors that contribute to racial justice and economic opportunity. Particularly, our Educational Opportunities Project seeks to guarantee that all students receive equal access to public schools and institutions of higher learning. The DREAM Act supports such goals by incentivizing education as a way to achieve permanent resident status for immigrants.

The Lawyers' Committee believes education is a civil right and equal access to education should be protected regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity or national origin. Students should not be penalized for their parents' decisions to come to the United States illegally. Approximately 65,000 students per year, who arrive in the United States as children, desire to continue their education after successfully navigating elementary and secondary education. The DREAM Act rewards those students who seek academic achievement and encourages individual professional development by requiring them to demonstrate either a significant investment in their human capital or service to the United States through membership in the armed forces, in-turn, benefiting long-term American sustainability.

The DREAM Act serves as a noble investment in our country's future by encouraging educational and professional development for immigrants who are committed to advancement. While we support moving forward with this legislation, we firmly believe that we should not deny these students a continued opportunity to advance themselves and ultimately become full productive contributors to our society.

Thank you for considering support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Tanya Clay House  
Director of Public Policy