November 29, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
522 Hart Senate Office Building
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Reid:

The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of the 30 leading Hispanic organizations in the country, strongly urges you to vote for the DREAM Act should this important legislation come to the floor of the United States Senate. Votes associated with this legislation may be included in NHLA's Congressional Scorecard for the 111th Congress.

The DREAM Act would create a path to legalization for individuals without documentation who were brought into the U.S. as children, by no choice of their own, and have since proven their commitment to succeeding in America by excelling in high school and choosing to serve our nation in our armed services or pursue a degree in higher education. Passage of the DREAM Act is good for our defense posture and our economy. Enacting this bill is the right thing to do, and reflects the best of who we are as a nation. Often, these young people learn about their immigration status when they are applying for college or the armed forces.

The DREAM Act will have a positive economic impact in this country. According to a recent study by researchers at UCLA, the combined income generated by all the individuals who would be eligible for adjustment of status under the DREAM Act would amount to $3.6 trillion over the next 40 years. Keeping this academically gifted, motivated and patriotic segment of the population in the U.S., rather than deporting them, would also result in increased tax revenue for local, state and federal treasuries. Furthermore, maintaining a supply of highly skilled students would also advance U.S. competitiveness in the global economy.

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The Latino community has waited too long for passage of the DREAM Act, a bill that has historically enjoyed bipartisan support. Passage of the DREAM Act is a moral imperative for the United States. In fact, Defense Secretary Robert Gates recognizes the necessity of these community members and lists the passage of the DREAM Act as part of the Department of Defense's strategic plan. We urge you to bring this important bill to the floor and support its passage.

On behalf of the NHLA, we urge you to demonstrate your support in the coming days for the young people who know no other country as their own but America and have demonstrated that they possess the qualities and character that help strengthen our nation.

Sincerely,

Lillian Rodríguez-López
Chair

On Behalf of:

ASPIRA Association, Inc.  National Council of La Raza
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities, Inc.  National Hispana Leadership Institute
Hispanic Federation  National Hispanic Council on Aging
Hispanic National Bar Association  National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement  National Hispanic Medical Association
League of United Latin American Citizens  National Puerto Rican Coalition, Inc.
Mexican American Legal Defense & Educational Fund  National Conference of Puerto Rican Women
National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives  Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund  United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
National Hispana Leadership Institute  U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute