



**Homeland
Security**

September 21, 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 Senators Reid and McConnell:

Recently, with support from both Democrats and Republicans, the Administration implemented reforms to allow qualified spouses and children of U.S. citizens serving in the U.S. military to become legal permanent residents so that those fighting for our country abroad do not have to worry about their families at home. Now, I understand that the United States Senate, in conjunction with pending legislation, is considering the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2009, the DREAM Act (S. 729), to address the immigration status of persons who, because they were brought here at a young age, know no other home than the United States.

The DREAM Act is targeted legislation, providing immigration relief for students who have been raised and educated in the United States and applying primarily to those individuals who: came to the United States when they were under 16 years of age; have lived in the United States for at least five years; have good moral character; are not inadmissible or removable under a number of key grounds; and have graduated from high school, obtained a GED, or have been admitted to an institution of higher education. Individuals who meet these requirements and then attend college or serve in the military for two years would be eligible to obtain permanent resident status.

Indeed, the students who would be eligible for relief under the DREAM Act illustrate the need for a comprehensive approach to immigration reform. I am encouraged by the bipartisan Senate proposal for comprehensive immigration reform, which includes provisions that demonstrate a commitment to serious and effective enforcement, improvements to our family- and employment-based systems, and a firm but fair way to deal with those who are already here as an important step in the right direction.

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This bill underscores the need for comprehensive immigration reform. While the broader immigration debate continues, I urge the Senate to pass the DREAM Act, and allow those who were brought to this country as children to adjust their immigration status. I look forward to working with you on this important piece of legislation.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this letter from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Janet Napolitano". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Janet Napolitano