



WOMEN AND MOMS URGE PASSAGE OF THE DREAM ACT

It is no surprise that women overwhelmingly support the [DREAM Act](#), bipartisan legislation that would provide a path to legal status for thousands of young people who have been raised in the United States, worked hard in school, and pursue a higher education or serve their country in the military. In fact, [a poll commissioned by First Focus](#) shows that 72 percent of women voters, many of whom are also mothers, favor the bill. Legal Momentum and MomsRising have partnered to reveal the reasons why women want Congress to pass the DREAM Act.

Why Women Support the DREAM Act:

- ✓ The DREAM Act is the right thing to do on behalf of children. Each year, approximately 65,000 immigrant students graduate from U.S. high schools facing an uncertain future, including barriers to a higher education and no means to work legally. The DREAM Act would provide hope for thousands of young people and save them from deportation to a country they may no longer remember.
- ✓ The Dream Act would encourage more immigrant students, including immigrant girls, to complete high school and beyond. For example, an estimated 436,000 girls currently under the age of 18 would be eligible to benefit from the DREAM Act should they fulfill the bill's higher education or military service requirements.ⁱ
- ✓ The DREAM Act would enhance our country's economy for years to come. A recent study by the UCLA North American Integration and Development Center (NAID) finds that the estimated 800,000 youth potentially legalized through the DREAM Act will potentially generate \$1.38 trillion dollars over their work-life.ⁱⁱ

Mothers Speak Out:

MomsRising initiated a social media project in October 2010 to ask mothers to describe **why** they believe the DREAM Act would be good for our country. The following is a selection of the comments received from mothers (grandmothers, aunties and sisters) across the country.

"I am a mom of a gorgeous 3-year-old girl, and I support the DREAM Act because it would break my heart if my child was ever denied the opportunity to become a college student just because of where she was born." -- **Alina**

"I'm a mom and I support the DREAM Act because any hardworking student who grows up in the United States deserves to further their education and give back to society. This is a win-win situation for everyone:

the students, the universities, the communities, employers, the economy, and society! It's time to do what's right for these students. The consequences of doing nothing are devastating to everyone." -- **Tammy**

"I'm a mother and a grandmother and a teacher with 20 years of classroom experience. In fact, I was the Utah Teacher of the Year who taught in both the suburbs of Salt Lake and its homeless shelters. I know kids. I love kids. My kids and other people's kids. Some of those kids live in the shadows. They are good kids who work hard in school and play on the team and join the chess club and sing in the musical. But that life is in limbo unless we can do the right thing and give them a path of citizenship. They live in our communities and if we care about our communities we must bring these precious children into the light of a country they love. Pass the Dream Act. Now." -- **Lily**

"[The DREAM Act] ties in with one of the major ideas throughout this country's history of the promise of America and what it means to be American: that what you make of yourself is more important than where you're from and what your background is." -- **Margaret**

"I started advocating for the DREAM Act while volunteering for the internationally known Carl Hayden High School's robotics program. They have been profiled on Wired Magazine, Readers' Digest in several languages and on TV Nightline. There I found the most talented and accomplished students and discovered that some of them are undocumented. My family made a pact of solidarity with them and I took the advocacy of the DREAM Act students as a full-time job (unpaid, BTW). I could not have asked for a more exhilarating experience than to fight alongside some of the best human capital of the USA to attain a legalization process. It has also been heartbreaking and frustrating. Knowing the challenges they face and especially the **danger** of detention, incarceration and deportation sometimes keeps me awake at night. As a good mother, I care about them as I care for my own children." -- **Carmen**

Legal Momentum is the nation's oldest legal defense and education fund dedicated to advancing the rights of all women and girls. Over the past 40 years, Legal Momentum has made historic contributions through litigation and public policy advocacy to advance economic and personal security for women. The Immigrant Women Program (IWP) of Legal Momentum strives to protect and expand the rights of immigrant women and their children.

MomsRising is an online and on-the-ground grassroots organization of more than a million people who are working to achieve economic security for all families in the United States. Established in 2006, MomsRising and its members are organizing and speaking out to improve public policy and to change the national dialogue on issues that are critically important to America's families. In 2010, *Forbes.com* named MomsRising's web site as one of the Top 100 Websites for Women.

ⁱ Batalova, J., McHugh, M. Migration Policy Institute, *DREAM vs. Reality: An Analysis of Potential DREAM Act Beneficiaries*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Center, 2010.

ⁱⁱ Hinojosa, R., Cruz, P., Castillo, G., Flores, G., Monroy, A., Sargeant, D. *No DREAMers Left Behind: The Economic Potential of DREAM Act Beneficiaries*. University of California, Los Angeles North American Integration & Development Center, 2010.