



What is the Dream Act?



THE 2017 DREAM ACT is a permanent, bipartisan and bicameral legislative solution for over 2.1 million immigrant youth and young adults who came to the U.S. as children but have no pathway to citizenship.¹ This includes the 800,000

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACDA) recipients who are currently left in uncertainty and limbo after the termination of the DACA program on September 5, 2017.

WHO QUALIFIES?

Those who:

- entered the U.S. before age 18,
- have been in the U.S. for 4 years, and
- can pass a background check.

WHAT IS THE PATHWAY TO CITIZENSHIP?

1. Qualifying applicants would first qualify for a conditional permanent residence (CPR) status. Under CPR status, they would have to work, join the military, earn a higher education degree, or meet a hardship exception.
2. After 8 years and after meeting these and other requirements, they would obtain lawful permanent resident (LPR) status.
3. After 5 years in LPR status, they would be eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship.²
4. DACA recipients would be on a faster track to citizenship.

What would a *clean* Dream Act be?

A clean Dream Act would create a pathway to U.S. citizenship without using young immigrants as bargaining chips to harm immigrant communities. A clean Dream Act means:

- **NO funding for a border wall and increased border security.** The infamous border wall is costly and unnecessary. Estimates to continue building it currently run between \$15 to \$25 billion,³ and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently released a report which concludes that our southern border is the most “secure” since at least “2000, and likely since the early 1970s.”⁴ Any increase in border security means an increase in surveillance, invasion of privacy, and racial profiling by Border Patrol officers who already have a long history of abuse towards communities of color.⁵
- **NO funding for interior enforcement.** An increase in interior enforcement means an increase in targeted raid operations and the criminalization and deportation of our communities. It means further entanglement of local law enforcement with federal immigration enforcement, increased violations of due process, and further increase of the targeting and profiling of our communities. It means an increase in family separation and an increase in fear in immigrant communities.
- **NO funding for more detention centers.** Increased funding for detention beds only benefits for-profit prison corporations while increasing inhumane treatment of immigrants and refugees being held while they await their court dates. Overcrowded centers with lack of access to proper medical care and overall violations of detention standards have resulted in 7 of the 18 deaths reported between 2012 and 2015.⁶ The death rate nearly doubled just a few months after the Trump administration took office.⁷
- **NO mandatory E-Verify.** E-Verify, the federal government’s Web-based employment eligibility verification program, is expensive and burdensome for business and results in locking people (both unauthorized and authorized workers) out of the legal workforce.⁸

Immigrant youth should not be used as bargaining chips for harmful immigration enforcement measures, and they cannot afford to wait one more day. *We must pass a clean Dream Act now!*

¹ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/dream-vs-reality-analysis-potential-dream-act-beneficiaries>.

² <https://www.nilc.org/issues/immigration-reform-and-executive-actions/dreamact/dream-acts-and-daca-compared/>.

³ <http://fronterasdesk.org/sites/default/files/field/docs/2016/07/Bernstein-%20The%20Trump%20Wall.pdf>.

⁴ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/17_0914_estimates-of-border-security.pdf.

⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/15/us/aclu-accuses-border-patrol-of-underreporting-civil-rights-complaints.html>.

⁶ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/07/07/us-deaths-immigration-detention>.

⁷ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/immigrant-deaths-in-private-prisons-explode-under-trump>.

⁸ <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/mandatory-e-verify-without-legalization>.