

****For Immediate Release****

The Forum's Statement on DACA and Call on Congress to Protect Dreamers

The Latino Policy Forum calls on Congress to provide permanent protections to Dreamers, who were brought to the United States as children, with a clean DREAM Act that creates a pathway to citizenship that does not split up families or squander billions of taxpayer dollars on ineffective border security measures. Legislation providing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers must be passed this Thursday, Feb. 8. An estimated 22,000 people will lose their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) protections by March 5th, the date DACA was originally expected to terminate. The number of people losing their DACA protections will spike to 915 per day after March 5th, according to the [Migration Policy Institute](#).

We ask you to call your Congressional leader to thank him or her for supporting a DREAM Act that is clean and does not tear apart families or squander taxpayer dollars for ineffective border security measures. ([Click here to find your Representative and contact him or her now](#)).

The months since the Trump administration announced it would terminate the DACA program have proved to be an emotional rollercoaster for many in our country. The announcement created an urgency to provide permanent protections for people who were brought to the United States as children, a solution that polls have confirmed most of the country supports, even after the government [shut down](#).

DACA recipients are our teachers, health-care practitioners, engineers, they are in the hospitality industry, our board rooms and many serve in our [military](#). Dreamers are Americans; they are worthy of every effort to keep them in the only country they have ever known.

We in Illinois have been fortunate to elect the most ardent and just immigration reform champion in Congress. Senator Dick Durbin's unwavering support of the DREAM Act is evidenced by his initiation and long history of sponsoring Dream Act Legislation and his votes in the Senate. Senator Durbin's effort to provide permanent protections to Dreamers and keep the debate dignified is worthy of a thank you. Thankfully Senator Tammy Duckworth also is resolute in her commitment to passing the DREAM Act. Please let the senators know that you're behind them and thankful for standing strong in support of Dreamers by Tweeting to them [@SenatorDurbin](#) and [@SenDuckworth](#) or calling their offices at 312-353-4952 and (312) 886-3506, respectively.

DACA's future is uncertain, even after a recent California Federal Court injunction required the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to restore the DACA

program to how it was operated before September 5. This development only increases the urgency for passing the DREAM Act because the case is being considered for [appeal](#) by the U.S. Supreme Court, and there is no way of knowing how long the program will remain. Dreamers remain in limbo while the case is reviewed.

The immigration reform framework proposed by the White House in late January holds Dreamers hostage in exchange for sweeping reductions in legal immigration and billions of wasted dollars in border protection measures.

The family and diversity visa categories the White House wants to eliminate would reduce legal immigration by about [one third](#). As a result, there would be fewer avenues for legal immigration in a system that already has few visa options. It also ignores the importance of family unity in American values. What the White House calls “chain migration” is really family unification, enabling parents to stay with their adult children and keeping to long held values that have defined our nation’s immigration policy.

Since September 5, the day the White House rescinded DACA, 122 DACA recipients a day have lost their protection from deportation. Several Republican Congressional leaders have agreed with the majority of U.S. citizens who believe that Dreamers are in fact [Americans in every sense](#) except on paper. Popular support for Dreamers has been established in several polls, while support for a border wall has [crumbled](#) under the logistics and eye-popping costs of such a project. However, while the opposition to Dreamers is small, it has been vocal and effective in shifting debate.

The narrative has changed since it became clear that a government shutdown was imminent. Suddenly, the “incredible kids” the president referred to have become political pawns and demeaned by a small, ethnocentric group as “illegal immigrants.”

Keeping Dreamers in the only home they have ever known is now a questionable political priority. This shift away from support of Dreamers is even more striking given the origins of the DREAM Act, which was originally co-sponsored by Senator Durbin in 2001, along with Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) who has now abandoned the Act for one that provides a [narrower](#) portion of the Dreamer population a delayed pathway to citizenship.

We call on Congress to do the right thing by refocusing its efforts on fixing the DACA crisis on Thursday.