

# **NEWS FROM THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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## **CONGRESSMAN HOWARD BERMAN AND CONGRESSWOMAN LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD SPONSOR LEGISLATION TO ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO COLLEGE FOR IMMIGRANT STUDENTS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Congressman Howard Berman (CA-28, D) and Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34, D) announced today the introduction of the "American Dream Act" which will provide a path to legal immigration status for college-bound children who have lived most of their lives in this country, but do not have legal immigration status. Their Republican colleague, Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart (FL-21, R) joined the Los Angeles representatives in this bipartisan effort.

Under the American Dream Act, qualified students would be eligible for temporary legal immigration status upon high school graduation that would lead to permanent legal residency if they go to college or serve in the military. The American Dream Act would also eliminate a federal provision that discourages states from providing in-state college tuition to immigrant students who have long resided in their states. Despite meeting state residency requirements, immigrant students in certain states are charged out-of-state or international tuition rates, which can be triple the cost of in-state tuition.

"This bill would remove barriers confronted by young undocumented students who, as children, were brought to this country illegally by their parents," said Berman. "Many of them are honors students and valedictorians who, through no fault of their own, exist in a legal limbo with no way to adjust their status."

"When they finish high school, these students must choose between working illegally or trying somehow to continue their education while under a legal cloud," Berman continued. "They have grown up here, and America is the only home they know. They consider themselves Americans. But their lives are filled with uncertainty, and their future is limited so long as they have no legal status."

"Each year, hard working and talented students graduate from U.S. high schools, but due to their immigration status and despite having lived in this country for many years, face enormous barriers to furthering their education," Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard said. "The American Dream Act recognizes the tremendous fortitude of these immigrant students who have overcome great obstacles in their lives to excel in school and dream of obtaining a better life through a college education."

Congresswoman Roybal-Allard said the bipartisan initiative would also strengthen our nation's workforce. "As a country, we can only gain from passage of the Dream Act. We hinder our

competitiveness in the global economy by keeping large numbers of U.S.-educated immigrant young people out of college, and ultimately the skilled workforce, solely because of decisions made years ago by adults who brought their families to this country illegally.”

A companion measure will be introduced in the Senate.

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