

February 13, 2018

Dear Members of Congress:

We, the undersigned immigration, refugee, faith, education, youth, health, labor and civil liberties organizations write to express our commitment to securing permanent protections for Dreamers and call on Congress to pass the Dream Act without further delay.

Securing permanent protections for all Dreamers, including but not limited to those eligible for protection under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, must be the guiding light for senators in the week ahead; the American people overwhelmingly support a path to citizenship, not a kick-the-can-down-the-road temporary solution. Importantly, protecting Dreamers cannot come at the cost of harming other immigrants or immigrant communities, nor can it entail militarizing the border, keeping families apart, or undermining life-saving humanitarian protections.

President Trump ended DACA on September 5th, 2017. Since then [more than 19,000](#) immigrant youth who put their full faith in the U.S. government have lost the ability to work, study, and live without fear of deportation; hundreds of thousands more will lose protections in the months ahead. Despite President Trump's [promise](#) to support a "bill of love," he has rejected multiple bipartisan efforts at compromise. And now, through the White House's '[Legislative Framework](#)' on immigration, he has instead doubled down on efforts to radically reshape the United States' immigration policies and, in doing so, the face of America to the world.

Let's be clear: The White House Framework would take the country backwards in an echo of restrictive policies not seen since the 1920s, while using the fate of Dreamers as bait. Congress must reject these nativist overtures. President Trump and Congressional Republicans created this moral crisis and it is up to them to work in good faith with Democrats to reach a narrow agreement that pairs a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers with smart and sensible border security measures.

Members of Congress must oppose efforts to hold Dreamers hostage in exchange for a nativist wish list. Anything that goes beyond the scope of the original agreement from last fall—namely, protecting Dreamers and making additional investments in reasonable border security—must be rejected.

Here are the issues which our organizations will not accept in any legislation:

Border Militarization: Trump's Wall and Deportation Force

Congress must oppose efforts to expand President Trump's mass deportation force and build his wall—a wasteful and unpopular policy that [will only harm border communities](#)—and must oppose ramping up enforcement actions against asylum seekers, unaccompanied children, and immigrant communities across the country.

The wall is crowding out sensible border security: In its budget request to Congress, according to the [New York Times](#), the Trump administration already has been pushing to “pay for [the] Wall” by “cut[ting] proven border security measures.” And even Trump’s own Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has [concluded](#) that “the southwest land border is more difficult to illegally cross today than ever before.”

What’s worse, DHS Deputy Secretary Elaine Duke [admitted](#) that her department will no longer “distinguish between border security and interior enforcement,” meaning that any money Congress appropriates to DHS for border security will be used as a Trojan Horse to increase interior enforcement and terrorize communities across the United States through increased detentions and deportation.

While the media has focused extensively on the wall, the Framework contains a litany of so-called “Border Security” provisions that drastically increase Trump’s deportation force and undermine protections for vulnerable families and children fleeing violence and persecution, including:

- The hiring of significant additional U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or Border Patrol agents and officers, which is both unnecessary, and [potentially dangerous](#), given the corruption, integrity, and excessive force issues that have [plagued](#) agencies like U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).
- Block access to refugee protection in the United States, penalize asylum seekers, send children and other vulnerable asylum seekers [back to danger](#), and severely damage the integrity of the U.S. immigration and asylum systems by violating U.S. treaty obligations and seeking authorization of rights-violating policies (and [egregiously terming](#) this the “closing of loopholes”).
- Expanding expedited removal to include visa overstayers, which will [deny due process](#) to significant numbers of immigrants.

We do not believe that any of these provisions—including building the wall—can be considered reasonable border security. Funding wall construction would lead to the federal government seizing large tracts of private property through eminent domain and waiving dozens of protective laws, guaranteeing massive environmental damage and disrespect of Native Americans’ rights.

By contrast, reasonable border security must, at a minimum, include data-driven, independently-verified approaches to what works best and least intrusively for securing the border. Any increase in border-security resources must be accompanied by consultation with border communities; the smart use of technology (rather than more personnel or physical barriers); and accountability measures to assure fiscal responsibility and the rule of law, including adequate oversight of CBP through body-worn cameras, rescue beacons for migrants,

and significant increases to watchdog resources at the Offices of Professional Responsibility and Inspector General.

Attacking Family Unity

Preserving the ability of families to reunite has always been a cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy. And yet, the White House is proposing to radically reshape immigration law by slashing entire categories of family-based migration. These policies would cut overall immigration at least [one-third](#), and as much as [44 percent](#), and would needlessly penalize American families.

While the cuts are falsely billed as “protecting the nuclear family,” these changes would bar U.S. citizens from reuniting with their parents or their siblings, and would bar U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents from reuniting with their adult children. To take just one of the more extreme proposals, stripping U.S. citizens of their ability to reunite with their parents would immediately reduce future immigration by [15 percent](#).

The steepness of cuts to family immigration in the White House framework and demanded by Sen. Tom Cotton’s (R-AR) [RAISE Act](#), among other anti-immigrant legislation, would take the country [back to the era of the 1920s](#), when the United States explicitly excluded immigrants on the basis of race and national origin. In fact, as economist Michael Clemens has found, the Framework would [disproportionately exclude](#) Black and Hispanic immigrants, as well as Muslim and Catholic immigrants.

Not only will the White House plan keep thousands of American families separated from loved ones, but it will isolate our nation from the global economy, from international entrepreneurs and businesspeople, and most importantly from an immigrant labor force that will be critical to the future growth of our economy. Congress must not make any cuts to family-based immigration.

Eliminating the Diversity Visa

The White House Framework would also end the Diversity Visa program, which grants 50,000 visas each year to immigrants from countries that otherwise send few immigrants to the United States. The White House claims that the program is rife with fraud, and that “the qualifying criteria are very low,” both of which are fallacies. As David Bier of the Cato Institute found, [“family and diversity immigrants are far better educated than U.S.-born Americans.”](#) The Migration Policy Institute found that half of all Diversity Visa holders [already have a college degree](#) and one-quarter of diversity immigrants work in [managerial and professional occupations](#).

Of course, every single Diversity Visa program beneficiary goes through [extensive security checks](#) before arriving (the same checks that any family- or employment-based immigrant goes through.) And [contrary to the president’s misrepresentations](#), no one is given a green card

automatically and the United States—not any other country—selects which persons will be awarded immigrant visas through the program.

The largest number of Diversity Visas are given to [African immigrants](#) each year, and cutting this program would disproportionately affect these immigrants. In 2016, for example, [nearly one-in-five](#) African immigrants gaining a green card came through the Diversity Visa program. The task at hand is to protect Dreamers, and Congress must not do so by slashing the Diversity Visa program.

The American people expect Congress to lead in the face of this crisis. [Polls consistently show](#) that the vast majority of Americans support a path to citizenship for Dreamers. We will be watching how members of both parties vote, and expect them to focus on protecting Dreamers, not remaking the immigration system.

Signed,

National Organizations

18MillionRising.org
350.org
A Better Balance
ACLU
Action Together Network (ATN)
Advocates for Youth
Alianza Americas
Alliance for Excellent Education
America's Voice
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Arab American Institute
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA)
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Black Women's Health Imperative
Campaign for Youth Justice
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities

Center for American Progress
Center for Community Change
Center for Employment Training
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Responsible Lending
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Christian Community Development Association
Church World Service
CLASP
Coalition on Human Needs
Community Catalyst
Conference of Superiors of Men (Catholic)
Congregation of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Daily Kos
Democrats for Education Reform
Demos
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earthjustice
Emgage Action
Faith in Public Life
Family Equality Council
Farmworker Justice
Feminist Majority
Franciscan Action Network
Friends of the Earth - U.S.
Generation Progress
Global Community in Action
GLSEN
GreenLatinos
Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network
Hip Hop Caucus
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights First
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Indivisible
Japanese American Citizens League
JPIC Office of the Wheaton Franciscans
Justice Strategies
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Lambda Legal
Latin America Working Group

Latino Victory Fund
Latinos for a Secure Retirement
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
League of United Latin American Citizens
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
MALDEF
Mi Familia Vota
MomsRising
Movement Advancement Project
MPower Change
Muslim Public Affairs Council
NAACP
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Action Network
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Health Law Program
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH)
National Justice for Our Neighbors
National Juvenile Justice Network
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Association
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
NextGen America
NIAC Action
NMAC

OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
Organizing for Action
OutServe-SLDN
People For the American Way
Peoples Action Institute
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Poligon Education Fund
Positive Women's Network - USA
Power Shift Network
Pride at Work
School Social Work Association of America
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
Sierra Club
Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross Leadership
Sojourners
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southern Border Communities Coalition
Southern Poverty Law Center
SparkAction
Stand for Children
Teach Plus
The America Team for Displaced Eritreans
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The National Network for Arab American Communities
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
UFW Foundation
UltraViolet Action
UndocuBlack Network
United Farm Workers (UFW)
United We Dream
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Voices for Progress
Voto Latino
We Belong Together
Witness to Mass Incarceration
Women's Refugee Commission
Women's March
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights
YWCA USA

State and Local Organizations

ACCESS, *Michigan*
ACLU of California
Action NC
Alianza, *Sacramento, California*
Alianza Comunitaria, *San Diego, California*
Alliance for African Assistance, *California*
Alliance San Diego
American Civic Association, *New York*
Asian Law Alliance, *California*
Asylee Women Enterprise, *Maryland*
Atlas: DIY, *New York City, New York*
Berkshire Immigrant Center, *Massachusetts*
Bienestar Human Services, *California*
California Food Policy Advocates
Canal Alliance, *California*
Carina A Black, Ph.D., *Nevada*
CASA
Center for Civil Justice, *Michigan*
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative (CVIIC), *California*
CENTRO DEL INMIGRANTE, INC., *Riverside, California*
Children's Advocacy Institute, *California*
Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice – Ventura County, *California*
Cleveland Jobs with Justice
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), *California*
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Columbia Legal Services, *Washington*
Courage Campaign, *California*
CRLA Foundation (CRLAF), *California*
CVNMEF Juntos: Our Air, Our Water, *Albuquerque, New Mexico*
Dolores Street Community Services, *California*
Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, *Wisconsin*
Employee Rights Center, *San Diego, California*
Empire State Indivisible, *New York City, New York*
Equality Alabama
Equality California
Equality California
Equality North Carolina
Faith In Action Bay Area, *California*
Faith in the Valley, *California*
Friends of Broward Detainees, *Florida*
Fuerza del Valle, *Texas*
Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance (GLAA), *Washington, D.C.*

Gay Asian Pacific Islander Men of New York (GAPIMNY), *New York*
Great Plains Association of College Admissions Counselors
Green Party of Taos County, *Taos, New Mexico*
Hispanic Legal Clinic/Law Offices of Raymond E Schrank II SC, *Wisconsin*
Holy Cross Church, *Kernersville, North Carolina*
Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC)
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project, *Maine*
Indiana Association of College Admission Counselors
Indivisible Carbondale, *Illinois*
Indivisible CLE, *Ohio*
Indivisible Oak Park Area, *Illinois*
Indivisible Puyallup, *Washington*
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice, *California*
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective, *California*
International American Relief Society IARS, *Lincoln, Nebraska*
International Institute of Buffalo
International Institute of Los Angeles
International Institute of New England
InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia, *Cleveland, Ohio*
Kentucky Equal Justice Center
KIWA (Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance), *California*
La Unión del Pueblo Entero (LUPE), *Texas*
Law Office of Lenore A. Ceithaml, *California*
Law Offices of Farhad Sethna, Farhad Sethna, Attorney, *Ohio*
Legal Aid at Work, *California*
LIFT (Local Immigrant Family Treasury), *Washington*
Long Island Wins, *New York*
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maine Equal Justice Partners
Migrant Center for Human Rights, *Texas*
MinKwon Center for Community Action, *New York City, New York*
New England Association of College Admissions Counselors
New Jersey Association for College Admission Counseling
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center
North County Immigration Task Force, *California*
North Side Action & Resistance – Indivisible, *Illinois*
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, *Washington*
Ohio Progressive Asian Women's Leadership
Ohio Refuse Fascism
OneAmerica, *Washington*
Pilgrim United Church of Christ, *Carlsbad, CA*
Potomac and Chesapeake Association of College Counselors
Promise Arizona

Public Justice Center, *Maryland*
Public Law Center, *Santa Ana, California*
Raleigh Immigrant Community
Rocky Mountain Association for College Admissions Counseling
Sacramento ACT
Sacramento Immigration Coalition
San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
SEIU 2015, *California*
SEIU 32BJ
SEIU Local 1
SEIU MO and KS State Council
SFV Indivisible, *California*
Southern Association for College Admission Counseling
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
Texas Association for College Admissions Counseling
The LGBT Center OC, *California*
The Monkey Wrench Brigade, *Santa Monica, California*
Trinity Episcopal Church, *California*
United Child Care, Inc., *Los Angeles, California*
United Taxi Workers of San Diego
Village Community Resource Center, *California*
Walla Walla Immigrant Rights Coalition, *Washington*
Wallingford Indivisible, *Seattle, Washington*
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Western Association for College Admission Counseling
William E. Morris Institute for Justice, *Arizona*
Wisconsin Association for College Admissions Counseling
Worker Justice Center of New York