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February 5, 2018

The Honorable John Cornyn  
Assistant Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 517  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cornyn:

As the U.S. Senate continues to debate the future of the more than 3.6 million “DREAMers” in the country, we strongly urge you to support allowing the Dream Act (S. 1615) to be brought up for a floor vote before the February 8<sup>th</sup> deadline to pass the next Continuing Resolution (CR) or final FY 2018 budget. As your constituents in Texas, we believe it’s imperative that you and Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) keep the promise that the issue would soon be considered by the full Senate.

The bipartisan Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, first introduced during the 108th Congress, has been reintroduced in each subsequent Congress. This measure would regularize the status of deserving young people brought to the U.S. as children, through no choice of their own and often with no connection to any country other than the U.S., who have graduated from U.S. high schools and met the same rigorous academic requirements as their college-bound peers. It would hardly be humane to deport them to a country as foreign to them as to us. And it would be unwise to deprive ourselves of these men and women whose faith in the American Dream has fueled their achievement. We all benefit from the many talents of these young people, who should be allowed to make their fullest contribution as tax-payers, educators, professionals, and leaders in areas of critical importance to the nation’s economy and security.

Beyond the humanitarian concerns, there are real economic consequences for the continued inaction of Congress on the Dream Act and the plight of the more than 800,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients. As the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce recently wrote of DREAMers, “As a community, 97% are employed, in school or serving in the military. As taxpayers, they contribute \$2 billion each year in state and local taxes. Moreover, these individuals are disqualified from federal welfare, benefits or assistance of any kind. DACA recipients have undergone background checks and have been found to pose no threat to this country they call home.”

The economic benefit of DREAMers is especially important in Texas, with 141,000 DACA recipients — the second-highest number in the country. The Center for American Progress estimates that the Texas economy would lose \$6.1 billion annually if 100,000 workers were deported. Additionally, the termination of DACA would drastically decrease consumer purchasing power. The Center for American Progress also calculates that almost 55 percent of DREAMers own vehicles, and more than 10 percent have purchased homes. If they are removed from the workforce, they will no longer be paying taxes, using their bank accounts, or paying back loans for mortgages, cars and higher education. It makes good sense to protect the investments we have made in them and they have made in the U.S.

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Many of the 472 Hispanic-Serving Institutions across the country, including 83 in Texas, are located in communities with significant populations of undocumented Hispanic youth and are ideally situated to provide them with postsecondary opportunities. To be eligible for DREAM Act benefits, students must already have shown themselves of good moral character and solid academic performance. Indeed, to reach the level of college admission with all the disadvantages of undocumented status is an indication of a remarkable drive to succeed and commitment to contribute to their adopted U.S. homeland. Our schools and communities are richer and stronger for their presence among us.

We urge you to stand with Congressional leaders that support these young people, Americans in every sense of the word except documentation. It is finally time to enact sensible legislation like the Dream Act and allow these Americans to continue to contribute, without fear of deportation, to our communities.

Sincerely,



Antonio R. Flores  
President and CEO

Additional organizations signing on to this letter:

El Paso Community College  
Legacy Preparatory Charter Academy  
Northwest Vista College  
Our Lady of the Lake University  
Rice University  
San Antonio College  
Schreiner University  
South Texas College  
St. Edward's University  
Sul Ross State University  
Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education  
Texas State Teachers Association  
Texas State University  
Texas Tech University  
Texas Woman's University  
The University of Texas at San Antonio  
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley  
University of Houston Victoria  
University of Texas at Arlington  
Victoria College