

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 232  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 419  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 204  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

The undersigned 127 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) and allied organizations call on Congress to pass a clean Dream Act before the end of this year. Congress has no excuse not to pass the Dream Act of 2017. The bipartisan bill has the support of a majority of Americans,<sup>1</sup> including those who identify as Trump supporters.<sup>2</sup> Congress has a responsibility to address this issue and to be in solidarity with immigrants by passing the Dream Act without harmful provisions such as increased border or interior enforcement as well as any cuts to other immigration categories, such as refugees, diversity visa lottery recipients, and green card holders.

Dreamers are a part of the American family and help make our communities vibrant. Moreover, passing the Dream Act would add a total of \$22.7 billion to the United States' GDP every year; gains that could add up to as much as \$1 trillion over the next decade when including the productivity bump that would result from dreamers' increased educational attainment.<sup>3</sup>

Under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA), thousands of LGBTQ people have been able to pursue higher education, improve their economic security, and live securely with their families and in their communities.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, DACA has empowered a number of its recipients to come out as LGBTQ to authentically live their lives. If deported, many LGBTQ people will find themselves in a country where they have little to no legal rights and are more likely to experience anti-LGBTQ violence and possibly death. Nearly 80 countries criminalize same-sex relationships and many without explicit laws remain very dangerous for the LGBTQ community.<sup>5</sup> For example, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reported

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<sup>1</sup> "Morning Consult National Tracking Poll #170817." Morning Consult, Aug.–Sept. 2017. [https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170817\\_crosstabs\\_Politico\\_v1\\_TB.pdf](https://morningconsult.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170817_crosstabs_Politico_v1_TB.pdf) at 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 202.

<sup>3</sup> Ortega, Francesc. "The Economic Benefits of Passing the Dream Act." *Center for American Progress*. 18 Sept. 2017. [www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/09/18/439134/economic-benefits-passing-dream-act/](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2017/09/18/439134/economic-benefits-passing-dream-act/).

<sup>4</sup> Gruberg, Sharita. "What Ending DACA Means for LGBTQ Dreamers." Center for American Progress, 11 Oct. 2017. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2017/10/11/440450/ending-daca-means-lgbtq-dreamers/>

<sup>5</sup> Dehghan, Saeed Kamali. "Global LGBT Community Still Gripped by Homophobic State-Sponsored Violence." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 26 June 2015. [www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/26/lgbt-same-sex-marriage-homophobia-violence-world](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/26/lgbt-same-sex-marriage-homophobia-violence-world).

that nearly 600 people died from anti-LGBTQ violence in Latin America between January 2013 and March 2014.<sup>6</sup>

Adding increased enforcement provisions to the Dream Act is unacceptable because those measures will further endanger LGBTQ asylum seekers seeking protection. Additionally, they will increase the risk of profiling, detention, and deportation for LGBTQ immigrants in the U.S.<sup>7</sup>

Because the LGBTQ community faces discrimination in many aspects of life (i.e. being fired or not hired, or being refused housing), they face higher incarceration rates than those who are not LGBTQ. Given these forms of discrimination, many LGBTQ people have a higher rate of contact with law enforcement, and are therefore at higher risk of deportation because of 287(g) agreements and policies which encourage local jails to identify and hold immigrants for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.<sup>8</sup>

The President's decision to end DACA is an attack on immigrant young people and families living in our communities, as well as on our values of fairness, equality, and opportunity. The decision has left many individuals feeling helpless and powerless over their future, and fearing that they may be taken from their families and communities at any moment. For example, the Trevor Project has received multiple contacts from those experiencing suicidal ideation and crisis due to the immigration policies that would return LGBTQ youth to their potentially anti-LGBTQ countries of origin. These calls to national LGBTQ youth suicide prevention services continue to occur as the immigration policies remain uncertain. You have the power to restore to these individuals the hope and opportunity that should be hallmarks of our country.

We call on Congress to be on the right side of history by passing a clean Dream Act before going home for the holidays. The time is now.

Sincerely,

1N10, Inc  
AB540 Ally Training Project  
ACLU  
Advocates for Youth  
AF3IRM Los Angeles Chapter  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Alaskans Together For Equality  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
Anti-Defamation League  
API Equality-LA

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<sup>6</sup> "An Overview of Violence Against LGBTI Persons: A Registry Documenting Acts of Violence Between January 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014." ANNEX - Press Release 153/14, Dec. 2017. Pp. 1-8. [www.oas.org/en/iachr/lgtbi/docs/Annex-Registry-Violence-LGBTI.pdf](http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/lgtbi/docs/Annex-Registry-Violence-LGBTI.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Gruberg, Sharita. "How Police Entanglement with Immigration Enforcement Puts LGBTQ Lives at Risk." *Center for American Progress*, 12 Apr. 2017. [www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2017/04/12/430325/police-entanglement-immigration-enforcement-puts-lgbtq-lives-risk/](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/reports/2017/04/12/430325/police-entanglement-immigration-enforcement-puts-lgbtq-lives-risk/).

<sup>8</sup> Id.

API Rainbow Parents of PFLAG NYC  
APLA Health  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice-LA  
Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council  
Asian Pride Project  
Bailey House, Inc.  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
BIENESTAR  
Blue Ridge Pride Center, Inc.  
Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center  
California Health Professional Student Alliance  
California Physicians Alliance  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Black Equity  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
Compass Ventura County  
Council for Global Equality  
Courage Campaign  
Equal Rights Washington  
Equality Alabama  
Equality Arizona  
Equality California  
Equality North Carolina  
Fair Wisconsin  
Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement  
Family Equality Council  
Florida Legal Services, Inc.  
Food Empowerment Project  
FreeState Justice  
Gay Asian Pacific Islander Men of New York (GAPIMNY)  
Gay City: Seattle's LGBTQ Center  
Gender Rights Maryland  
Georgia Equality  
GLAAD  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality  
Global Justice Institute  
Greater Boston Legal Services  
Grindr for Equality  
Hispanic Health Network  
Howard Brown Health  
Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center  
Human Rights Campaign

Indiana Youth Group  
Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective (IEIYC)  
Korean American Rainbow Parents  
Korean Resource Center  
Lambda Legal  
Latino Commission on AIDS  
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley  
LGBT Center of Raleigh  
LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland  
LGBT Technology Partnership & Institute  
Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Mazzoni Center  
Metropolitan Community Churches  
Milwaukee LGBT Community Center  
MomsRising  
Movement Advancement Project  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Health Law Program  
National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National LGBT Bar Association  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
NEAT - the National Equality Action Team  
Newark LGBTQ Community Center  
NMAC  
Our Family Coalition  
Out Alliance  
Out On The Lakeshore  
Outlinc - Lincoln Nebraska  
OUTMemphis: The LGBTQ Center for the Mid-South  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Positive Women's Network - USA  
Prevention Access Campaign  
Pride Action Tank  
Pride at Work  
Q Center  
Rainbow Pride Alliance  
Sacramento LGBT Community Center  
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)  
SF Peninsula People Power  
Social Action Committee, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City  
South Bay People Power  
Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health  
SparkAction  
SunServe  
Tacoma Rainbow Center  
Tennessee Transgender Political Coalition  
Thai Community Development Center  
The DC Center for the LGBT Community  
The GLBT Community Center of Colorado  
The Legal Aid Society  
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center  
The LGBT Center of Greater Reading  
The LGBTQ Center of Long Beach  
The Montrose Center  
The Pride Center at Equality Park  
The San Diego LGBT Community Center  
The Trevor Project  
The Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County  
Triangle Community Center  
United We Dream  
Unity Fellowship of Christ Church  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
Virginia Organizing  
Whitman-Walker Health  
William Way LGBT Community Center  
Wyoming Equality  
Youth OUTright WNC, Inc.  
Youth Pride, Inc.

Cc: Equality Caucus Co-chairs and Executive Director