

Senators Reintroduce the DREAM Act

Released on Wed, May 11, 2011

Washington, D.C. - Today, Senators Richard Durbin, Harry Reid, and Robert Menendez re-introduced the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. Last fall, the DREAM Act passed the House of Representatives, and garnered the support of a majority in the Senate, but was ultimately defeated when the [Senate failed](#) [1] to invoke cloture and proceed to debate. The sponsors of the DREAM Act hope to build on last year's momentum and continue to highlight the importance of fully utilizing the talent and potential of thousands of young people who are Americans in every way but their birth certificates.

First introduced in 2001, the DREAM Act would address the plight of young immigrants who have been raised in the U.S. and managed to succeed despite the challenges of being brought here without proper documentation. The proposal would offer a path to legal status to those who have graduated from high school, stayed out of trouble, and plan to attend college or serve in the U.S. military for at least two years.

Each year, approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school, many at the top of their classes, but cannot go on to college, join the military, work, or otherwise pursue their dreams. They belong to the 1.5 generation: immigrants brought to the United States at a young age who were largely raised in this country and therefore share much in common with second-generation Americans. These students are culturally American and fluent in English, growing up here and often having little attachment to their country of birth.

The moral, intellectual and practical rationale for the DREAM Act is overwhelming. The [White House](#) [2] supports it. The Departments of [Homeland Security](#) [3](DHS) and [Justice](#) [4], entrusted with enforcing and implementing our immigration laws, support it. The [Department of Education](#) [5] and America's [academic](#) [6] and [faith](#) [7] community support it, as well as [state legislators](#) [8], [community groups](#) [9], and the [American public](#) [10]. The DREAM Act is even part of the Department of Defense's [2010-2012 Strategic Plan](#) [11] to assist the military in its recruiting efforts.

Despite broad support for the legislative proposal, the divisive political environment around immigration poses an enormous challenge for the DREAM Act. If Congress fails to act, the Administration can and should take more [decisive steps](#) [12] to ensure that the values driving their legislative agenda are reflected in their implementation and interpretation of current law. DHS should ensure that its officers use their prosecutorial discretion to defer the removal of any eligible student caught up in the broken immigration system.

For research and resources on the DREAM Act visit IPC's resource page:

- [IPC DREAM Act Resource Page](#) [13]
- [IPC Executive Action Resource Page](#) [12]

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Published on Immigration Policy Center (<http://immigrationpolicy.org>)

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Links:

- [1] <http://immigrationimpact.com/2010/12/18/senate-fails-to-bring-dream-act-to-final-vote/>
- [2] <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/DREAM-Act-WhiteHouse-FactSheet.pdf>
- [3] <http://immigrationimpact.com/2010/12/17/senior-department-of-homeland-security-officials-support-the-dream-act/>
- [4] <http://blogs.usdoj.gov/blog/archives/1119>
- [5] http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2010/09/arne_duncan_urges_passage_of_d.html
- [6] <http://immigrationpolicy.org/../../../../../default/files/docs/Scholar%20Sign-on%20DREAM.pdf>
- [7] <http://www.christiancentury.org/article/2010-12/religious-leaders-join-white-house-dream-act-push>
- [8] <http://news.journal.us/article-5345.As-US-Senate-Prepares-to-Vote-State-Lawmakers-Urge-Passage-of-Dream-Act.html>
- [9] <http://www.communitychange.org/press-room/press-releases/immigrant-grassroots-groups-in-historic-push-for>
- [10] <http://www.firstfocus.net/library/polling-and-opinion-research/public-support-for-the-dream-act>
- [11] <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704858304575498072319915164.html>
- [12] <http://immigrationpolicy.org/../../../../../just-facts/executive-action-resource-page>
- [13] <http://immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/dream-act-2010>
- [14] <mailto:wsefsaf@immcouncil.org>
- [15] http://immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/DREAM_Act_Reintroduction_051111.pdf