



IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

DREAM Act Introduction Shows Political Muscle for Immigration Reform *Legalizing Young Immigrants Would Boost the U.S. Economy*

March 27, 2009

Washington, DC - Yesterday, Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) introduced the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act; while Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA), Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), and Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL) introduced a House version of the bill called the "American Dream Act." Both pieces of bipartisan legislation would permit a limited number of undocumented students to become permanent residents if they came here as children, are long-term U.S. residents, have good moral character, and attend college or enlist in the military for at least two years. The following is a statement by Angela Kelley, Director of the Immigration Policy Center (IPC) in Washington, DC.

"With yesterday's bipartisan introduction of the DREAM Act, the House and Senate delivered yet another signal that the political tide for immigration reform is getting stronger. The bill seeks to remedy the predicament of a specific group of undocumented children who are blocked from realizing their full potential. By providing a path to U.S. citizenship, the DREAM Act would allow these children to pursue a higher education and contribute fully to our economy.

As the IPC noted in a 2007 study, [*Wasted Talent and Broken Dreams*](#), legal status brings fiscal, economic, and labor-market benefits to individual immigrants, their families, and U.S. society in general by permitting qualified children to pursue post-secondary education. The combination of legal status and a college education would allow DREAM Act students to earn significantly higher incomes than those with only a high-school diploma, contribute more in taxes, and have more money to spend and invest. Currently, this wasted talent imposes economic and emotional costs on undocumented students and on U.S. society as a whole.

The DREAM Act is a smart step that maximizes the talent and potential of children who were brought here by their parents, were educated in our schools, and are ready to contribute to America's future. Still, the bill is only part of the answer. Congress must tackle the tough problem and resolve the status of the 12 million undocumented immigrants living in this country. Only a comprehensive approach will help get our economy back on its feet, restore the rule of law, and uphold our values as a land of fairness and opportunity."

More Information from the Immigration Policy Center:

[*Wasted Talent and Broken Dreams: The Lost Potential of Undocumented Students*](#) (Report)
["Congress Flexes Muscle for Broader Immigration Reform with DREAM Act"](#) (Blog Post)

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