



URGE CONGRESS TO PASS SMALLER IMMIGRATION MEASURES EVEN THOUGH COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM COLLAPSED

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by

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Although comprehensive immigration reform went down in flames earlier in the summer of 2007, there is hope that smaller measures could get passed in Congress. On September 20, 2007, Senator Durbin offered an amendment to the military authorization bill (H.R. 1585), which would introduce the DREAM Act (S.A. 2919). This measure would provide a path to permanent legal status for illegal immigrant students who came to the US before they were 16 years old, graduated from high school in good standing and agreed to serve in the military or attend college for at least two years.

The DREAM Act is not only supported by immigrant activists but also by school and college students across the country. It is a measure that would help undocumented students who are out of status for no fault of their own to legalize their status, get enrolled in colleges and universities and find employment. If the DREAM Act is passed, it will give an opportunity to thousands of students to advance their careers rather than being part of the undocumented underclass. It will also allow the military to recruit more young people.

Another comprehensive piece of legislation AgJOBS (S.340 and H.R.371), also has a chance of passage, except that this bill's main sponsor, Senator Larry Craig, is on his way out due to a scandal. AgJOBS will provide undocumented farm workers with a path to legalization and allow them to continue working on the nation's farms. Without a stable workforce of farm workers, America may

not have access to safe, homegrown food.

It is also hoped that piecemeal measures may get enacted for H-1B relief as well as to reduce the backlogs in the Employment-based and Family-based preferences.

On September 18, 2007, about 1000 legal immigrants on the pathway to permanent residency protested outside the Capital to demand faster track to permanent residency. It was the first time that legal immigrants protested through the efforts of a grass roots organization, www.immigrationvoice.org. These demonstrators attempted to highlight their issue independent of the larger issue of legalizing the status of over 12 million undocumented immigrants.

Readers are urged to reach out to their elected representatives to pass these smaller measures, even though comprehensive immigration reform collapsed earlier this year. We attach, below, a [sign-on letter](#) urging the passage of the DREAM Act and the AgJOBS Act. Use the language of this letter to send your own letter to your elected representative.

At this time, the DREAM Act needs a lot of support since anti-immigrant restrictionists are flooding the Congressional phone lines again. College-bound kids, who can only benefit the US, are presently the target of their ire against illegal immigrants. There is a small and very vocal minority that reflexively says "No" to any beneficial measure pertaining to immigrants. In addition to writing to your Senators, it may also be worth calling them.

The National Immigration Forum, www.immigrationforum.org, has issued the following instructions:

Who to Call:

- **Your two Senators** . You can find their numbers here: http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm
Or you can go to this page (www.aila.org) and type in your zip code:

<http://capwiz.com/aila2/callalert/index.tt?alertid=10317186&PROCESS=Call+Now>

PLEASE KEEP TRYING: Because there are so many calls coming in, it may take you a while to get through.

What to Say:

- "Please vote for the Durbin-Hagel-Lugar DREAM Act amendment to the Department of Defense Authorization bill so that immigrant students brought here as children can realize their potential."

What is the DREAM Act?

- The DREAM Act would provide a 6-year path to permanent residence and eventual citizenship for individuals brought to the US years ago as undocumented children if they graduate from high school and continue on to college or military service.

To send an e-mail:

- Click on or paste the link below into your browser to send an automatic e-mail:
http://www.democracyinaction.org/dia/organizationsORG/NILC/campaign.jsp?campaign_KEY=12129

What Else Can You Do?

- Circulate this alert to others, **the DREAM Act needs all the help it can get.**

This may be the best chance this year for the DREAM Act to become law. If the amendment passes, the DREAM Act would stand an excellent chance of becoming law this year. The amendment will need 60 votes to pass. **We cannot get there without your help!**

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