

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell,

We urge you to convene a vote to consider passage of H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019, upon the Senate's return in May. Given the importance of this issue and the broad bipartisan support of the bill, the Senate should act quickly to send this legislation to the President's desk. Although the Congress is focused every day in leading America's recovery efforts in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we must concurrently move forward to fulfill this important promise to the approximately 2.6 million individuals who are Americans in every single way except on paper.

On June 4, 2019, the House passed the American Dream and Promise Act, which put Dreamers and long-term beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) on a pathway to citizenship. As you may know, the average DACA recipient came to the United States at the age of six, while the average TPS holder has been in the country for 22 years.¹ Each year, they pay billions of dollars in federal, state, and local taxes and power the U.S. economy through their earnings, contributions, and entrepreneurship.² In fact, deporting Dreamers could reduce economic growth by \$280 billion.³ As the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has said, "Ending DACA would be a nightmare for Dreamers. A nightmare for businesses. A nightmare for America's economy."⁴ Furthermore, these individuals are vital in sustaining our health care system and economy, as our country responds to COVID-19. In fact, over 330,000 DACA recipients⁵ and TPS holders⁶ are helping to support the nation in this time of crisis by serving in occupations and industry groups that render them "essential critical infrastructure workers" according to DHS guidance.

¹ FWD.us, *ICYMI: More than 500 Bipartisan State and Local Elected Officials Urge Congress to Pass Permanent Protections for TPS Holders, Dreamers*, May 8, 2020 <https://www.fwd.us/news/icymi-more-than-500-bipartisan-state-and-local-elected-officials-urge-congress-to-pass-permanent-protections-for-tps-holders-dreamers/> (last accessed April 22, 2020).

² Democrats of The Committee on Small Business, Nydia M. Velázquez, Ranking Member, *Economic Impact of DACA Spotlight on Small Business*, February 2018 <https://smallbusiness.house.gov/sites/democrats.smallbusiness.house.gov/files/documents/economic%20impact%20of%20daca%20report.pdf> (last accessed April 22, 2020).

³ Id.

⁴ Id.

⁵ Nicole Prchal Svajlenka, *A Demographic Profile of DACA Recipients on the Frontlines of the Coronavirus Response*, April 6, 2020 <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/06/482708/demographic-profile-daca-recipients-frontlines-coronavirus-response/> (last accessed April 22, 2020).

⁶ Nicole Prchal Svajlenka and Tom Jawetz, *A Demographic Profile of TPS Holders Providing Essential Services During the Coronavirus Crisis*, April 14, 2020 <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2020/04/14/483167/demographic-profile-tps-holders-providing-essential-services-coronavirus-crisis/> (last accessed April 22, 2020).

Collectively, DACA recipients and TPS holders, have nearly 500,000 U.S. citizen children and hundreds of thousands more U.S. citizen parents, spouses, and siblings.⁷ If deported, many individuals would return to countries they never knew and for others forced back to countries suffering from extreme poverty and violence. The administration’s own advisors, from ambassadors to headquarters diplomatic personnel have warned the administration that allowing TPS to end would undermine important national and regional security interests.⁸ Senators should have the opportunity to permanently keep these families together and legally end the uncertainty they are enduring and ensure their rightful place in this country. It is past time that the Senate join the U.S. House of Representatives in standing in solidarity with Dreamers and TPS holders and pass this common-sense legislation.

We renew our urgent call for you to bring H.R. 6 for a vote in the Senate upon your return in May. The future of over a million people who have proven their dedication to this nation, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, and who have shown remarkable resilience in their ability to become productive U.S. citizens hangs in the balance due to inaction. We can change that and deliver a win for our country.

Sincerely,

Joaquin Castro
Chair
Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Co-author of H.R. 6, the American Dream and
Promise Act of 2019

Nydia M. Velázquez
Co-author of H.R. 6, the American Dream and
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Zoe Lofgren
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Jan Schakowsky
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Grace F. Napolitano
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Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress

Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

⁷ UnidosUs, *Beyond the Border: Family Separation in the Trump Era* March 2019 http://publications.unidosus.org/bitstream/handle/123456789/1915/unidosus_beyondtheborder_22519.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y (last accessed April 22, 2020).

⁸ Minority Staff of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, *Playing Politics with Humanitarian Protections: How Political Aims Trumped U.S. National Security and the Safety of TPS Recipients*, November 7, 2019 <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/TPS%20Report%20FINAL.pdf> (last accessed April 22, 2020).

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Mark Pocan
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