



# THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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October 10, 2017

## An Open Letter to the Congress on Dreamers from America's Mayors

Dear Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate:

We write on behalf of the nation's mayors to urge you to quickly pass bipartisan legislation that would enable Dreamers – people who have lived in America since they were children and built their lives here – to earn lawful permanent residence and eventually American citizenship if they meet certain criteria. We pledge to work with you in this effort and to do whatever we can to assist you in seeing it enacted into law.

This June at the 85th Annual Meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors, we adopted strong policy supporting permanent legal status for Dreamers and extension of the DACA program. We did this because it is the right thing to do – for Dreamers, for our communities and for our country.

DACA has benefitted nearly 800,000 undocumented youth since it began in 2012. With work authorization and without the fear of deportation, these young people, who have done nothing illegal, have been able to participate in and contribute to our country, our cities and the nation's economy:

- Eighty-seven percent of DACA recipients are employed by American businesses, and six percent have started their own businesses, leading to higher wages and better economic outcomes.
- DACA recipients contribute 15.3 percent of their wages to taxes, which fund Social Security and Medicare, and DACA recipients are investing in assets like houses, and starting new businesses, bringing significant tax revenue to cities and states.
- It is expected that DACA recipients will contribute \$9.9 billion in tax contributions over the next four years, and at least \$433.4 billion to our gross domestic product (GDP) over the next decade.

There is broad public support for Dreamers:

- Seventy-six percent of Americans support citizenship or permanent status for Dreamers.
- Seventy-one percent of Americans feel undocumented immigrants working in the U.S. should be offered a chance to apply for legal status.
- Seventy-five percent of Americans who voted for the President support Dreamers.

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Because of the Trump Administration's decision to terminate DACA in six months, this legislation must be passed as quickly as possible so that the benefits to Dreamers, to our cities, and to our nation can continue. It would remove Dreamers' fears of deportation and allow them to contribute even more to the country they love, which for many is the only country they have known. They would be able to reach their full potential in many ways, including serving in the military. The U.S. Conference of Mayors pledges to work with you to make this happen.

Sincerely,

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