

The DREAM Act of 2007 (S. 774/H.R. 1275)

These undocumented students are in a state of limbo. They cannot obtain a higher education; they cannot work; they cannot pay taxes; they cannot maximize their potential; they cannot give back to the communities in which they were raised; and they live in constant fear of detection by state, local, and federal authorities.

- Most were brought to the U.S. at a young age and have lived here the majority of their lives. The U.S. is the only home they know and remember.
- Most are fluent in English and have few or no ties to their country of birth.
- The intended beneficiaries include valedictorians, honor students, class presidents, star athletes, talented artists, aspiring teachers, doctors, scientists, poets, and U.S. soldiers.
- It is “un-American” to punish children for actions that occurred years ago and over which they had no knowledge or control. Passage of the Dream Act of 2007 would allow these young people to move their lives forward and become productive, fully integrated, and contributing members of our society.

Current law provides no way for these children to achieve legal status.

- Few legal channels exist under current immigration law to rectify the situation in which these students find themselves.
- In the unlikely event that an avenue opened up through a family member, it could take years before a visa number would become available, and then students would have to leave the U.S. and wait outside for another ten years before they could re-enter as U.S. residents.
- This is a “lose-lose” situation: these kids cannot maximize their potential and our country cannot tap their prodigious talents.

The Dream Act of 2007 does not provide any “in-state” tuition breaks for undocumented students.

- The Dream Act of 2007 simply would restore the authority of States to determine residency for in-state tuition purposes.
- This traditional State authority over residency determinations allows States to allocate their limited resources in the manner they deem most effective.
- Many States have concluded that an educational investment in these kids pays significant dividends. This investment helps reduce high school dropout rates, creates substantial savings in criminal justice costs, limits reliance on public benefits, and increases the taxes paid by those benefiting from this initiative.
- These children have been an untapped resource for far too long, and the DREAM Act seeks to remedy that.

This bill brings a balanced approach to reforming our immigration system.

- This measure would require children to have lived in the U.S. for a number of years and to have no criminal record.
- This measure would require eligible children to dedicate themselves to learning English and succeeding in our educational system.
- This measure proposes a one-time only fix that would not encourage illegal immigration.
- Private bills recognize that a problem exists that needs to be fixed, but such bills address the problem only for individual children. We need a comprehensive reform that solves the problem for all children confronted with this dilemma.
- The DREAM Act works for children and works for America.