

April 18, 2019 (*updated list 5.2.19*)

RE: Strength and stability for Nebraska communities:
Dream & Promise Act in the House; Dream Act and Secure Act in the Senate

Dear Members of Nebraska's Congressional Delegation,

As statewide community leaders and institutions, we see every day the critical skills and contributions of Dreamer youth and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) residents in Nebraska communities. These valued friends and community members have lived in Nebraska for decades and contribute to local communities as teachers, health professionals, business owners, agricultural and manufacturing workers, volunteers, coworkers, taxpayers, and parents.

Unfortunately, without action by Congress, there is no way for these Nebraskans to apply for permanent residency and citizenship in the country they have long known as home. Furthermore, recently announced changes to these temporary programs (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and TPS) create deep instability for Nebraska families, employers, and whole communities.

For these reasons we urge Nebraska's federal delegation to support long-overdue stability for Nebraska families and communities by voting for the Dream & Promise Act of 2019 in the House and the Dream Act and Secure Act of 2019 in the Senate.

These bills will create healthy stability for Nebraska Dreamers and Temporary Protected Status residents, as well as their Nebraska communities, loved ones, children, spouses, and employers, by taking the practical step of creating a process for longtime community members to apply for permanent residency.

These small steps forward are long overdue. The Dream Act was first introduced in 2001. Young people who were finishing college then and awaiting a path forward are now entering their forties. A majority of Temporary Protected Status families have lived in the U.S. for more than two decades, building lives, families, and businesses in local communities.

Nebraska communities thrive when we have stable families, stable workplaces, and common-sense processes for longtime residents to apply for permanent residency and citizenship, in keeping with our values and the parts of our history when we have lived up to those values.

Currently, without such legislation in place, Nebraska communities, schools, and workplaces face constant uncertainty because a part of our Nebraska family has had to live life in two-year increments and now faces complete upheaval due to recent announcements that these programs will end. Our local communities also know the devastating impact of harmful and unnecessary deportations that tear apart families and tear at the social and economic fabric of whole communities.

In accordance with strong, statewide community support for practical policies that move us forward, we urge you to work quickly and proactively to advance these critical pieces of legislation.

Sincerely,

ACLU of Nebraska
Asian Community & Cultural Center (Lincoln)
Black Men United
Brown Immigration Law P.C., L.L.O.
Center for Rural Affairs
Centro Hispano (Columbus)
CLM United Methodist Church (Hastings)
College of Saint Mary
Completely KIDS (Omaha)
Crete GOTV
El Centro de las Américas (Lincoln)
Grand Island Latino Network
Health Center Association of Nebraska
Heartland Workers Center
Immigrant Legal Center
Latino American Commission of Nebraska
Latino Center of the Midlands
League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha
League of Women Voters of Lincoln and Lancaster County
League of Women Voters of Nebraska
Mayor of Crete, Roger W. Foster
Multicultural Coalition of Grand Island
NAACP – Lincoln Branch
National Council of Jewish Women Nebraska
Native Dreams (Alliance)
Nebraska Appleseed
Nebraska Catholic Conference
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
Nebraska Restaurant Association
Nebraska Retail Federation
Nebraska State AFL-CIO
Nebraska State Education Association
Nebraska Synod ELCA
Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition
Notre Dame Sisters Leadership Team
Omaha Area Sanctuary Network
Omaha Together One Community
OneWorld Community Health Centers, Inc.
Partnership 4 Kids (Omaha)
Peace with Justice Ministries, Great Plains Conf. of The United Methodist Church
Planned Parenthood - Nebraska
Refugee Empowerment Center
Schlegel Center for Service and Justice, Creighton University
Sisters of Mercy West Midwest Community

South of Downtown Community Development Organization (Lincoln)
Trinidad Center (Lexington)
Unity in Action (South Sioux City)
Voices for Children in Nebraska
Women's Fund of Omaha
YWCA Lincoln