

OPEN LETTER TO UNITED STATES LAW STUDENTS ON DACA'S EFFECTIVE REPLACEMENT

February 16, 2018

Dear Fellow Law Students,

Yesterday, the Senate proved itself completely unwilling and incapable of passing a bill that protects childhood arrivals from deportation. Make no mistake, none of the proposals voted on yesterday would have created a DREAM Act. Each was a diluted trade-off. Our current President has held the collective future of childhood immigrants up for political ransom, trading and degrading their lives to fund a wall on the Southern border and bring the most anti-immigrant legislation we have seen in decades.

Even so, almost every Democrat offered to pay a portion of that ransom. Still, nothing would stick. As of today, no new legislation exists to fill the void that our President created when he unapologetically tore up the lives that our Dreamers have carefully built.

What pulls me through the frustration of government inaction is my enduring belief that our system of justice, for all its faults, aspires to be fair, aspires to liberate, aspires to honor promises, correct mistakes, and reconcile histories of oppression. It is up to us to improve that system, to move it forward and ensure that human conduct follows suit.

I call upon all law students to set your books aside and demonstrate a shared commitment to making America more inclusive, equitable, and just. When it comes to Dreamers, we must focus on the undeniable truth that at some point, a person is so interwoven into the fabric of our nation, that to forcefully remove them or even threaten to remove them, begins the first cut of a thousand more. If nothing happens to save these people, we have to ask ourselves if we are committed to liberty and justice at all.

We need to repair our jurisprudence, our government, and our code of laws to ensure that these injuries do not continue. It is time that our nation undertake a journey to reform its philosophy of immigration, a feat requiring much more than congressional action or court orders. Our culture must change. Let us play our part as law students and young professionals in aiding that transformation.

The students of Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law drafted a petition urging Congress to enact a fair and efficient pathway to citizenship for Dreamers. The majority of our school's law students have signed this petition, and we have sent it to every member of Congress. We now open this petition up to you.

As future stewards of the law, let us prove that we will not succumb to cynicism. Let us prove that we still look to the future with an unwavering belief that our country can and will do better. Let us prove that out of many, we are one.

Deliver justice to our immigrant communities.

In solidarity,

The Petitioners Organizing for DACA's Effective Replacement