

Dear Representative:

Our communities will not rest until Congress enacts a comprehensive immigration reform bill that deals with all of the problems of our broken immigration system, and provides a path to earned legalization for every undocumented worker. In the meantime, with the failure to advance a broader bill in the Senate and polarization in the House over appropriations amendments, we feel it is crucial that Congress show it can do more than simply debate harsh enforcement measures. There are two bills now before Congress that, if passed, will demonstrate that our lawmakers have not abandoned the need to fix our broken immigration system. We, the undersigned labor, faith-based, civil rights, and immigrant advocacy organizations, call on Congress to pass these immigration bills at the earliest possible opportunity, and certainly before the session ends.

The DREAM Act (S. 774 and H.R. 1275) allows high-achieving young people who were brought to this country as children to earn permanent legal status over many years, if they continue their education in college or the military, show good character, and meet other requirements. This bipartisan bill would help the country by permitting talented individuals who have grown up here to fully contribute to the U.S. according to their abilities.

AgJOBS (S. 340 and H.R. 371) is supported by both agricultural producers and farm workers. It addresses employers' need for a stable, legal workforce while providing undocumented farm workers with a path to legalization, if they meet many requirements and continue working on our nation's farms. This bipartisan bill would help the U.S. by keeping our farms in operation and providing American households with access to safe, homegrown food.

We also oppose punitive "enforcement" measures that scapegoat immigrants but do nothing to enhance our nation's security, including those that have already been added to various appropriations bills in either chamber. We call on House and Senate leaders to remove these harmful provisions during conference committee negotiations, and prevent others from being attached to future bills.

Passing the DREAM Act and AgJOBS is within our grasp, and will be an important stepping stone to the broader reforms we need. Failure to pass these bills will only reinforce the public's perception that members of Congress cannot work across party lines to solve tough problems, and will further embolden immigration opponents. We must pass these two long-standing, bipartisan bills this year, even as we continue to work toward broader reforms that can fully restore order and fairness to our immigration system.

Sincerely,