



November 3, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is deeply concerned about the pending loss of documented status for nearly 800,000 Dreamers. We urge Congress to pass the Dream Act of 2017 (S. 1615/H.R. 3440) without delay.

Time is running out to ensure permanent status for 790,000 immigrants who came to the United States as children. If Congress fails to act before December 15, these young people face the loss of livelihoods, futures, and family unity. For many Dreamers, this nightmare is already becoming reality. Our partners and allies report that arbitrary renewal dates and an uncertain future have already cost many their jobs, work authorization, and opportunities for higher education.

We urge you not to accept any expansion of the detention system or border militarization in exchange for the passage of the Dream Act. These would strengthen the very injustices that make this legislation necessary and that continue to raise the stakes of any failure to enact it.

While some defend anti-immigrant riders to the Dream Act as political compromise, Congress must understand that the costs of increased border militarization and deportation are often absolute. A member of UUSC's Austin, Texas-based partner, Grassroots Leadership, Juan Coronilla-Guerrero, was murdered last month in Mexico, shortly after his deportation from the United States. His family had warned the deporting officers that his life would be in danger. There can be no just compromise when people's lives are at stake.

As a human rights organization with more than 40,000 members and supporters nationwide, UUSC is inspired by the Unitarian Universalist principle that all people have inherent worth and dignity. For this reason, we do not accept legislative solutions that treat human lives and futures as bargaining chips. The expulsion, criminalization, and endangerment of members of our communities is a basic affront to our values.

We urge you to pass S. 1615/H.R. 3440 while there is still time. As Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. once wrote, quoting Omar Khayyam, "*There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on.*" Congress must not allow this window of opportunity to close.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Thomas Andrews
President and CEO
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SERVICE COMMITTEE

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