

DREAM Act. It was a bill that addressed the following situation: A child or an infant, brought to the United States by an undocumented family, who grew up here, literally has no home, no country. They are undocumented in America and brought here as babies, infants, toddlers, children, teenagers. Now they are graduating high school, and they don't know where to turn. The law in America is graphic, and it is grim. It says that if someone is found in that position, they are required to leave America for 10 years and must petition to return. We have 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds who know no other country, who get up in the classroom every morning and pledge allegiance to the flag, just as the Members of the Senate do, and who believe in their heart of hearts that this is home. Yet they are undocumented.

So we introduced the DREAM Act, and we couldn't pass it. We passed it once in the Senate, and they passed it in the House. But we never could quite reach that super majority that we needed to pass it at the right moment. So President Obama stepped up and created DACA, or the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, which, under Executive order, allowed those who would be eligible for the DREAM Act to apply, pay a fee of almost \$500, go through a criminal background check, and, if they were approved, receive temporary authority to stay in the United States without fear of deportation and to work in this country. As of today, over 750,000 have done that.

During the campaign, President-Elect Trump said that he would abolish this program. Fortunately, after the election, he had a more moderate position, which I would like to quote from *Time* magazine. He said:

We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud. They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what is going to happen.

That is a very thoughtful, sensitive, and promising statement. I appreciate it. I hope the President-elect will keep DACA in place until we have something that can work to succeed it.

I want to salute my colleague on the other side of the aisle, Republican LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina. He and I have joined in introducing the BRIDGE Act, which would give President-Elect Trump an opportunity to allow these young people to stay subject to the same approval, the same criminal background check, the same filing fee, and the same tax liability to stay on a temporary basis until we do our work in the Senate and the House on the issue of immigration. The BRIDGE Act is also cosponsored by Senators LISA MURKOWSKI and JEFF FLAKE, Republicans from Alaska and Arizona, as well as by my colleague Senator SCHUMER, the leader on the

Democratic side, and Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN. Other Democrats want to join as well. We hope to have a very strong bipartisan bill.

In my view, DACA is a lawful exercise of the President. In the view of many Republicans, it is not. The BRIDGE Act is the answer to both points of view. This is a fair, reasonable way to protect these young people until Congress comes up with better, more comprehensive answers when it comes to immigration reform.

Over the years, I have come to the floor, telling the story of the DREAMERS. It is one thing for a Senator to give a speech and put it in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, but it really doesn't come home until you see and meet the young people I am talking about.

Let me introduce one today. This is Fernando Espino. He was brought to the United States from Mexico at the age of 18 months. He grew up in the city of Milwaukee, WI, and became an excellent student. At his Catholic high school, he received many academic awards. He was a member of the National Honor Society and the Jesuit Honor Society, and he received first honors all 4 years of high school.

Fernando was involved in many volunteer activities—the Latin club, math club, track and field team, and he was an instructor for a class preparing his classmates to take college entrance exams. He volunteered with the Youth Leadership Ministry. He also volunteered with his school's Key Club and Big Brother mentoring program and as a middle school soccer and basketball coach.

At his high school graduation, Fernando Espino of Milwaukee, WI—a DREAMER brought here from Mexico at the age of 18 months—received the Jesuit Secondary Education Association Award, the highest award given by a Jesuit high school, which is presented to one graduate who, in their words, is “intellectually competent, open to growth, religious, loving, and committed to justice.”

This amazing student was then accepted at Harvard University. He continued to give back to the community there. He volunteered as a tutor for kids in elementary schools and as a peer adviser to freshmen students at Harvard. He became a competitive ballroom dancer and worked on the Harvard Business School newspaper.

Thanks to DACA, the program I mentioned earlier, Fernando was able to support himself. You see, these DREAMERS don't qualify for a penny of Federal assistance for education. They have to pay for it. They have to come up with the money.

With DACA, he could work. He worked as a bartender. In May 2015 he graduated from Harvard magna cum laude, the highest honors, with a degree in economics and sociology. He worked for an investment management firm in Los Angeles and then as a market research consultant in Chicago. He

is now preparing to pursue an MBA in business school. He wants to be a leader in a major corporation and start his own company. In a letter he sent to me, he wrote:

Optimistic hope, is ultimately, what I believe makes this country so great. Living as an undocumented immigrant, it is easy to lose that motivating influence. DACA was a refreshing and reinvigorating influx of that very same hope. DACA now allows me to look forward not with doubt but with confidence that the future is bright!

If DACA is eliminated, Fernando Espino may lose his hope. The day after DACA, Fernando Espino will no longer have official legal status. He will not be able to get his master's in business administration, and at any moment he could be deported back to Mexico, where he hasn't lived since he was 18 months old.

Fernando and so many other DREAMERS can help America be a greater nation. That talent and determination he brought to his young life is a talent and determination America needs in its future. I hope President-Elect Trump will understand this and continue the DACA Program, but if he decides to end it, then his administration can work with Congress and make sure the BRIDGE Act is there as a protection.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR SCHUMER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I close by saluting my colleague, the new Democratic leader, Senator SCHUMER. He and I were roommates for a long, long time before we got our separate apartments—grew up and got our own places. I have come to know him, his family, and his political career. I am looking forward to working with his leadership team in the U.S. Senate. I think his statement today speaks for all the Members of the Senate Democratic caucus.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

(The remarks of Mr. MORAN pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 5 are printed in today's RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

THE ELECTION AND THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, this is the first day in which a new Senate is assembled in which we ponder traditions of this body. Indeed, it has been described, as my colleague from Texas mentioned, as the world's greatest deliberative body. But over the time I have been familiar with the Senate, it has lost the ability to claim that title, the “greatest deliberative body.” It is a completely different institution from the one I first saw in 1976 when I came as an intern for Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon, because at that point we