

[Rollcall Vote No. 313 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Collins	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Isakson	Shelby
Cornyn	Johnson	Strange
Cotton	Kennedy	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Toomey
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

NAYS—48

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Harris	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Sanders
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Udall
Donnelly	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Cochran McCain

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Don R. Willett, of Texas, to be a Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Mitch McConnell, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Michael B. Enzi, Johnny Isakson, Chuck Grassley, Mike Crapo, Ron Johnson, Roger F. Wicker, Marco Rubio, Mike Rounds, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito, Cory Gardner, James E. Risch, Jeff Flake.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Don R. Willett, of Texas, to be a Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator

from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 48, as follows:

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Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Cochran McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 48.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Don R. Willett, of Texas, to be a Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Senator from Oregon.

DACA

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I think that we are going to be joined here in a few moments by our colleague, the senior Senator from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, who, for years and years, has been leading the fight for the Dreamers—for the young people who are affected by DACA. He may be tied up for a bit, but as we begin—because we are going to be in a colloquy on some of these issues—I want to recognize his extraordinary contributions.

Nobody has been more focused and more relentless in terms of standing up for the rights of the Dreamers—the young people and the families who are caught up in DACA—than Senator DURBIN, the senior Senator from Illinois, and I want to make sure that his role is recognized at the outset.

I and Senator MERKLEY have spent a lot of time talking to these young people at home in our State, and we have

held special forums on it. I am just stunned at what wonderful young people these folks are. Inevitably, their grades are at the top of their classes. They seem to be working two jobs, and they are sending money to relatives. They are just doing everything that we associate with hard work and thrift and ingenuity and with what has made our country so unique and so special in the world.

I want to talk a little bit about what I have heard and also set the record straight with respect to DACA, because there is an awful lot of reckless talk about this legislation, and much of it just does not resemble the truth. Misinformation is being spread to discredit DACA recipients and their contributions to the country, and those innocent lives are being damaged. Right now, Dreamers face the very real and frightening threat that they may be ripped away from the only lives that they know and the only country that they have ever known, and I want to spell out why.

The Congress is now up against an artificial deadline that was created by this President in his scrambling to come up with a solution for the 11,000 DACA recipients in Oregon and the hundreds of thousands all over the country. If nothing is done in the Congress this year, we know that these young people are going to be fearful, and they are going to go into the holidays while wondering what is ahead for them and their families. I just feel so strongly that they deserve better. They shouldn't be hanging in suspended animation—wondering what is going to happen to them, living in fear. My hope is that there will be action taken this year to help these young people. I feel so strongly that the end-of-the-year wrapup legislation has to include legislation to finally allow these young people to realize their hopes and dreams in this country.

In his statement that announced the end of the DACA Program, the Attorney General said that our country must enforce our immigration laws, and he implied that the failure to enforce the laws somehow puts our country at risk of crime, violence, and terrorism. I can just say that, based on everything I have seen in Oregon, DACA recipients have not put our country at an increased risk of crime and terrorism, because, in fact, they are vital contributors to our Nation's success, including many who serve in our military.

It is just wonderful, and it is so good to see our colleague from Nevada here, who, along with Senator DURBIN, has championed the rights and interests of these young people. I know that she is going to speak shortly because she has seen the real-life consequences—the dangers—that are being inflicted on our young friends, our neighbors, and those who are so fearful about what will happen if Congress does not act before the end of the year.

This is not an abstraction for those like Mariana Medina, whose family

brought her to the United States when she was 3. She went on to graduate from Tigard High School, which is just outside my hometown of Portland. This past June, Mariana graduated from Portland State University with a bachelor's degree in political science. She speaks eloquently and powerfully about how she really wants to give back to the people of Oregon by helping the children and the families who are most in need of help. What a wonderful role model Mariana is.

The debate is just as real for Ricardo Lujan, who graduated from Southern Oregon University in the spring. Ricardo is now the legislative director for the Oregon Student Association. There, he has been a strong advocate for legislation to give Oregon Dreamers a chance to get their own higher education degrees.

Ricardo worked full time while going to school full time in order to pay for essentials. He said: I want to make sure that I am contributing to affording an apartment and a car. He said that without DACA, he would not have his bachelor of science degree today. He said that this law is a beacon of hope to young people like himself.

In Oregon, there are now an estimated 11,000 Dreamers. All of these young people have parents and brothers and sisters and friends and people who know them in the community because they always want to help and chip in. They have roots in these communities. They have well-laid plans to work hard in school, make something of their lives, and start families of their own here in our country.

It seems to me that with the groundswell of support for these Dreamers, before the end of this year, this Congress ought to be able to come up with a bipartisan, fair way to put an opportunity path forward for these young Americans. The effort from the White House, I have to say, and I regret it, to punish these young people and split families seems to run contrary to the values we hold dear as Americans.

Our government, by the way, made a promise to these young people when the government encouraged them to share their stories publicly, submit to background checks, and pay taxes. That was something the government urged these young people to do—come forward, pay taxes, submit to background checks. We want to make sure that we are in a position—and I was hopeful when I heard about that pledge—to take action based on the fact that these young people were willing to come forward and say: We want to be contributing members of our country. We want to make sure that when the government asks us to come forward, we do. And they did so.

I close with this, because I know my colleague wants to speak—perhaps on the same subject—it would be wrong to turn our backs on these exceptional young people. I know my colleague from Nevada is going to keep fighting

tooth and nail alongside so many of our colleagues.

Senator DURBIN was going to join me for a colloquy on some of these issues, and with the end of the year legislation barreling toward us, I think he was detained, but I want to thank him for his leadership. In fact, he has joined us now.

With the indulgence of my friend from Nevada, I would like to recognize my colleague from Illinois because no one in this Senate has put in the time or shown the tenacity and the years-long commitment to make this fight for justice for the Dreamers and those who are trying to work their way through the DACA Program to a better future for themselves and their communities. So I am very grateful to the Senator from Illinois.

I had mentioned in his absence that we thought at one time we would have a full-scale colloquy, and I have pretty much used up my time in terms of making some of the points about issues we have raised. With the indulgence of our friend from Nevada, I want to again thank the Senator from Illinois. We are on the cusp of being able to finally get justice to these Dreamers and those in DACA, and I want this body and people who are following this issue to know that we would not be in this position without the help and the advocacy of the senior Senator from Illinois.

I appreciate my friend from Nevada allowing us to have time for the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oregon, and I certainly thank my colleague from Nevada for giving me an opportunity to speak for a few minutes. I also thank my friend from Oregon for being steadfast on this subject.

It has been 16 years since we passed the DREAM Act. We have been through a lot. We made it here on the floor of the Senate. We passed it on the floor of the Senate. There was an effort at comprehensive immigration reform which included the DREAM Act. It was a glorious day when it passed with a strong bipartisan vote and then a bitter disappointment in the months that followed when it languished on the floor of the House of Representatives and never was called for a hearing or a vote on the floor. So many of these thousands of young people who would be protected under the DREAM Act didn't know what the future would hold.

President Obama stepped in and created DACA through Executive order, and with DACA protection, some 800,000 young people were given a chance to be part of America—something they always dreamed of. They went to college, got jobs, and they did important things in their lives that they had put off and frankly reached the conclusion that they would never be able to do.

One of the things that many of them did, which surprised people, was to pur-

sue their goal of being part of the U.S. military. We have an All-Volunteer military. These young people, undocumented in America, who have no legal status in our Nation, were prepared literally to give their lives for our country, the only country they have ever known. Is there any question in your mind as to their devotion to this Nation? Not in mine.

When you hear their stories, you will understand why. I have a story I want to tell you tonight. It is a story about Alan Torres.

Alan Torres was brought here as a child from Mexico. He grew up in North Dallas, TX, where he was a great student and athlete. In high school, he was placed in a program for advanced math and science. He took advanced placement courses in a variety of subjects which I dutifully avoided in high school, subjects such as physics, chemistry, anatomy, and physiology. He was captain of the high school varsity cross country team, where he won the district championship. He was the company commander in his high school's Junior ROTC. Not only was Alan an academic overachiever, he was also an artist on top of everything. His work was displayed and sold at regional level competitions, and he earned many awards.

His most vivid memory of high school, however, was none of these things but of 9/11, the day of the terrorist attack on the United States. He was sitting in school, wearing his JROTC uniform in Texas, and he cried with his classmates when they heard what happened to America. He said he thought to himself, "I can't believe this happened to my nation." My Nation. You see, as a kid, Alan always believed this was his Nation. It wasn't until he was unable to do things many of his friends could do that he realized he was undocumented in America, with no legal status. He couldn't get a driver's license like his buddies did. He couldn't apply for financial aid to go to college.

Alan still pursued his dream despite these obstacles. By the time he graduated from high school, he was working three jobs to save up enough money to go to school. He attended a local community college because he didn't have any money. He needed low tuition. He received an associate's degree from Dallas Community College. Then he transferred to the University of Texas, Arlington. There, he got a bachelor's degree in information systems management. After all his hard work, he graduated from college debt-free. That is how hard he worked. He paid for his education out of his pocket because he couldn't count on any Federal loans or financial aid.

Today, Alan Torres—this young, undocumented man, protected by DACA—is a software engineer for IBM. He developed software that helps medical providers across the country to better manage the health of over 50 million patients.

He wrote me a letter saying:

[DACA] is what I would pray for all those nights when I would stay up late doing homework or lay awake full of anxiety for the future. It has allowed me to fulfill my potential and reach my goals without the fear of not knowing if I am going to wake up in a strange country tomorrow. . . . Dreamers are not perfect, but we work hard, love this country, and would love the opportunity to show it.

Alan is one of 31 Dreamers working for IBM. People like Alan are the reason that IBM and a lot of business leaders are calling us and saying: Are you crazy, Senator? You would deport Alan Torres? He earned his education in the country the hard way. He succeeded where others failed. He has the ambition and drive that we all pray for in our children and those we admire, and you want to tell this man to leave the United States of America?

These business leaders are pretty hard-nosed about this. For their part, they have an excellent employee, and they don't want to lose him.

More than 400 business leaders wrote a letter to Congress urging us to pass the bipartisan Dream Act or DACA or whatever you want to call it. The letter says:

Dreamers are vital to the future of our companies and our economy. With them, we grow and create jobs. They are part of why we will continue to have a global competitive advantage.

That is the business viewpoint on this whole issue of the Dream Act.

In a few weeks, we want to go home for Christmas. We want to celebrate with our families. We understand that it is a special time of year for so many in America, this Christmas and Hanukkah season. We know we give thanks at Thanksgiving, but we give it again on Christmas Day as we count our blessings. One of the blessings we count on is the blessing of opportunity.

We know that in this great Nation, people have an opportunity to make a better life for themselves, their kids, for their future, and for our Nation. Think about Alan Torres over this Christmas, and think about 800,000 just like him, uncertain about what the new year will bring, uncertain because we have failed to act in Congress.

It was the President and Attorney General on September 5 who challenged us to do something. The President said: I am going to do away with Obama's Executive order, and now, Congress, do something. But all I hear from many of my colleagues is, well, let's see tomorrow if we can work this into the schedule or maybe next month or maybe the month after. We can't do that. There has to be a sense of urgency on our part too.

These young people—many of them have tearful speculation about their own future. I just talked to one of my colleagues from Colorado who came back from a meeting with half-a-dozen Dreamers, and as they told their story, they all broke down in tears. Do you know why? They are just about to give up hope—not on our country but on

us—on the Senate, on the House, on politics, on Congress. I think we are better than that.

This Nation of immigrants has many people with many great stories. The Presiding Officer told a great story about his family and what it meant personally growing up. I have heard it and I am inspired by it, as I am and he is by many other stories we hear. This is what America is all about.

This issue really tests who we are and what we believe in and what our values will be. There are 100 ways to get to the finish line, but we need to do it by December 22. That is when we are supposed to break for Christmas. Let's make sure that as we break for Christmas, we give these young people, these Dreamers, these DACA people we have protected, a bright future for a happy new year, literally.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleagues to really put a face to what we are talking about here when we in Washington are making decisions that are impacting the real lives of the people back home in our States.

I have to thank my colleague from Illinois, who has not only led the charge on this fight but has never given up for those Dreamers and their families, has really fought to show who they are because they are not numbers. They are real people.

I go home to my State, and on a regular basis I meet with Dreamers and their families, and it is no different. We sit around and we talk and tell stories about their struggle and their fight just to have that American dream. They are crying. Many are afraid to even tell their stories.

The first time I had an opportunity to sit with Dreamers, they had never told their story before because they were too afraid to tell it. They were too afraid that if they told it and left their home that day and went to work or went to school, that when they came back, their parents would not be there. It was the first time they came forward. It is no different now.

This administration and what they are doing is continuing the fear in our communities. That is why now more than ever we have to pass the Dream Act. Since this administration ended DACA, more than 11,000 DACA recipients have lost their status. Each week, 851 Dreamers are losing their protection. If we fail to pass legislation to protect Dreamers, 800,000 kids will be forced to watch their lives fall apart. They will lose their driver's licenses, their health insurance, their scholarships, their student loans, their work permits. They will face the constant threat of being detained, separated from their families, and forced out of the only home they know.

This is not just a crisis for these kids and their families, it is a crisis for our country, and it is a crisis for businesses

across America. If Dreamers lose their jobs, employers will incur nearly \$3.4 billion in costs. The Center for American Progress estimates that our GDP will shrink by \$460.3 billion over the next decade. Over 800 business leaders from companies like Airbnb, Amazon, Facebook, Google, Lyft, and Microsoft have signed a letter to Congress, as you have heard, urging legislators to pass the Dream Act. The value Dreamers add to our economy is apparent to our country's most innovative businesses, it is apparent to religious groups and advocacy organizations all across the Nation. What is it Congress is missing? Why are some Members of this body unable to see all the contributions these kids make?

This is also a moral crisis. We cannot turn our back on Dreamers. We must embrace them. They are living examples of what America stands for as a nation, built through the sweat and hard work of generations of immigrants.

Immigrants are a fundamental part of our communities. They always have been. They have built our railroads, our cities, our highways. They have founded businesses, invented groundbreaking technologies, and discovered lifesaving cures. Blue jeans, hamburgers, ketchup, YouTube, Google, Apple, even America's best idea—our national parks—these are iconic American inventions, and yet they were all created in whole or in part by immigrants.

Immigrants have held public office. One of Nevada's first Senators was an immigrant. His name was James Graham Fair, and he was born to a family in Ireland. His father brought him to the United States when he was a child to escape the potato famine. He grew up on a farm in Illinois and moved to Nevada in the 1850s to get involved in silver mining. He made a fortune when a repository of silver ore in northern Nevada, known as the Comstock Lode, was discovered. The discovery of this silver made him wealthy beyond belief. Overnight, he became one of Nevada's silver kings. He invested his fortune in railroads and real estate and eventually accumulated over \$40 million, and that is more than a billion dollars today.

In 1881, he was elected to represent Nevada in the U.S. Senate. In 1882, this Irish immigrant, a man who became a king because of the Comstock Lode, turned his back on other immigrants, and he voted in favor of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The Chinese Exclusion Act was a watershed moment in the history of American immigration policy because it was the first time the Federal Government restricted immigration on the basis of race. I tell you this story because, to me, the Chinese Exclusion Act exemplifies a vicious truth—that immigrants and their descendants are often the ones fighting to keep the next generation of immigrants out. Sadly, this Congress—a group that includes many descendants

of immigrants—is in danger of making the same mistake.

When are we going to acknowledge what basic economics, history, and scientific research have always proven to be true; that immigrants make our economy stronger, that immigrants come to our country and start businesses, apply for patents, create jobs, and invent technologies that change our world.

The 800,000 Dreamers in this country don't want special treatment. They want the chance to live their lives and do all of those things without the fear of deportation looming over their heads. We have a President who is not just refusing to give them that chance but actively spreading lies and hate about who they are. I wish I could say this xenophobia—this hate—is something we have never seen before, but anti-immigrant sentiment is nothing new. These attempts to shut our doors are as old as our Nation itself.

We are a nation of immigrants. We are caught in a vicious cycle. We look to our ancestors for inspiration. We benefit from the contributions of immigrants, but every generation, we default to the arrogance of power and treat immigrants as scapegoats and shut them out.

A teacher from Sparks, NV, recently contacted my office to share the fear and uncertainty kids and families are feeling right now. David wrote:

I teach music at Diedrichsen Elementary School in Sparks, and my wife is the Assistant Principal at Desert Heights Elementary in Stead. . . . We are seeing an increase in stress, acting-out behaviors and absences in our students from immigrant families. Another friend of mine who teaches at a school with a large immigrant population has told me about days when large numbers of children are absent because of rumors of raids by ICE.

These are the consequences of using immigrants as scapegoats.

We are facing another watershed moment in our country's history. People will ask: Where were you when Dreamers' lives were hanging in the balance? Did you use your voice? Did you speak out?

It is time to stop this cycle. It is time to do the right thing and pass the Dream Act, not just because it will add billions of dollars to our economy but because threats to immigrants are a threat to our communities, our safety, our lives, and the future of this country.

The Dream Act is an investment in our future. Republicans in Congress are looking for a way to reduce the Federal deficit. Well, I have a solution for you. Passing the Dream Act would decrease the Federal deficit by \$2.2 billion over 10 years. It turns out that the refrain we always hear that immigrants are taking away jobs is a myth. The economy is not a zero-sum game. Research shows that immigrants drive growth. They generate new patents at twice the rate of native-born Americans. In 2014, they earned \$1.3 trillion and contributed \$105 billion in State and local

taxes and nearly \$224 billion in Federal taxes. Immigrants are 30 percent more likely to start a business in the United States than nonimmigrants, and 18 percent of small business owners in the United States are immigrants. In 2007, these small businesses employed an estimated 4.7 million people and generated more than \$776 billion in revenue, but this fight is not just about our economy.

At its core, this fight is about 800,000 uncertain futures. When you meet Dreamers like I have, you will see they are not numbers, and they are not graphs. They are hard-working young people who are putting themselves through school and supporting their families.

They are young people like Maria, a Dreamer who was brought to the United States when she was 4 years old. Now, 22, she is working as a teacher and director of the Infant Toddler Program at a Montessori school in Washoe County, NV. She already has an associate's degree, but she plans to enroll in the University of Nevada, Reno to pursue a bachelors in education, human development, and family studies.

Maria sent me a letter to tell me her story, and she wrote:

I, as a Dreamer, am being truly affected by not knowing what will happen with my future. Since we moved here, I have learned what the meaning of true work ethic is and how to be a positive asset to our nation. Being a DACA recipient means I can never have a criminal record, I pay taxes, I have a great job teaching our youth, and am still working hard to continue my education. . . . I am here thanks to the selflessness and courage my mother showed, and I believe any parent would do the same for their children without hesitation. My mother followed all the rules to quickly become a true hard working member of this nation.

In her letter, Maria told me all she wanted was a chance to follow the rules, show her potential, and continue working as a teacher.

Maria's story is both an immigrant's story and an American story. It is a story about what happens when we give Dreamers a chance. Maria's story is no different from Sergey Brin's, the co-founder of Google who came here from Russia. It is no different from Madeleine Albright's, the first female Secretary of State, an immigrant from Czechoslovakia. It is no different from that of John Muir's, a Scottish immigrant, or that of Joseph Pulitzer's, a Hungarian immigrant, or that of Albert Einstein's, a German refugee.

Dreamers' stories are no different from my own. My grandfather was born in Chihuahua, Mexico. He crossed the Rio Grande to come to this country. He served in our military, became a citizen, married my grandmother, and he raised a family. His son, my father, began his career as a parking attendant at the old Las Vegas Dunes Hotel. He worked his way up through the ranks to become the first Latino on the Clark County Commission and then president of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. My mom and

dad worked all of their lives so my sister and I could become the first in our family to earn a college degree.

My family taught me that when someone opens a door for you, you hold it open for the next person coming along after, and that is what I am in the Senate to do—to make sure every American gets that same opportunity my grandfather had, that my parents had, and that my sister and I had.

It is time to recognize that Dreamers are Americans, that their stories are no different from any of ours, that by taking away their protections, by allowing them to return to the shadows, we are allowing a vicious cycle to grind 800,000 dreams into the dust. It is time to learn from the mistakes of our predecessors. We must pass the Dream Act before the end of this year.

Thank you for listening.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator DURBIN for organizing this time and for his leadership and advocacy on behalf of Dreamers across the country.

Passing the Dream Act is about more than the law. It is about compassion and basic human decency. There is nothing compassionate or decent about revoking the status that 800,000 young people, including 600 in Hawaii, depend on to live, work, and study in the only country they have ever known.

Relying on a promise from the Federal Government, these young men and women came out of the shadows, handed over personal information, and underwent extensive background investigations to earn their DACA status, but the President's actions have put them all at risk. Like so many people, I have been moved by stories of how DACA has transformed the lives of Dreamers across the country.

Earlier today, I spoke with two young Dreamers who flagged me down in the hallway as I was going from one hearing to another, and they asked to speak with me. One had traveled from Arizona and is only a high school student. He was all dressed up, and he had a bowtie on. The other who flagged me down in another part of the building lives in California and is originally from South Korea. Both asked me to continue to fight to pass the Dream Act before the end of this year.

To see these young people politely approaching Members of Congress like me—I don't think a lot of them even had appointments, but they had to study the faces of the Members of Congress so, as they saw us in the hallway, they could come up to us. So the fact that they politely asked to speak with me, even as they literally are fighting for their lives, speaks volumes. We should open our hearts to them and support their cause.

Like so many of my colleagues, I have met with Dreamers from my home State of Hawaii to hear about how DACA has changed and enriched

their lives. In October, I met with three young women studying at the University of Hawaii thanks to DACA.

Karen, Maleni, and Beatrice were, in many ways, like any other college student. They balance busy class schedules with part-time jobs and extracurricular activities. They have also lived in fear since the President and his Attorney General made the cruel and arbitrary decision to end DACA on September 5. Karen, Maleni, and Beatrice told me they hadn't received any notice about what would happen after the program ended on March 5, 2018, and depended on media updates that would literally determine their futures. They shared hopes and concerns most of us would take for granted.

When their newly issued driver's licenses expire, they may not be able to fly home to California to visit their families because they will no longer have valid IDs. After turning their information over to the Federal Government, they worry for their parents and families, many of whom are undocumented. When their work authorizations expire, they will have to drop out of college because they can't afford tuition.

Karen is pursuing her master's degree in conservation biology and environmental science and hopes to have a career in research. She said:

If I lose my DACA, that means I'd lose my work permit which means I lose my graduate assistantship which means I can't [graduate]. So thinking about those logistics is definitely scary. Because I wouldn't be able to complete my education unless I found another way to fund it.

[Dreamers] are working to improve our lives, and the lives of our families, and hopefully, through our professions, your life too. We're becoming doctors and lawyers and teachers and any field you can imagine there's probably at least one of us represented. So give us a chance.

Even with all they have been through, Karen, Maleni, and Beatrice told me they don't regret signing up for DACA because, although their futures are now in jeopardy, for a few years they were given a chance at their American dream.

Dreamers like Karen, Maleni, and Beatrice are not asking for much. They are just asking us, as Karen said, "for a chance." They are asking us to keep the promise we made to them, and it is in our power to do that.

Around 10,000 Dreamers have already lost their DACA status since Attorney General Sessions announced the program's end. Every day Congress doesn't act, 122 Dreamers lose their DACA status. We are taking away these young people's chances of staying in school, pursuing meaningful careers, and even visiting their families at Christmas.

While the President once called Dreamers "absolutely incredible kids" and made promise after promise to protect them, he has gone back on his word time and again. We can't rely on his empty promises.

I ask my colleagues to put yourselves in the shoes of these Dreamers. What if

your future in this country was uncertain after March 5? What if you were facing deportation to a country you don't even know so you have to start life all over again? What if your families lived in daily fear? If we can put ourselves in the shoes of Dreamers, what part of the Dreamers' uncertainty and living in fear can we not understand?

Is it because we are not them? Is it that we can only relate to someone's existence or experience only if we lived it ourselves? If that is the only way we can relate to people's problems—people who come to us for help—then we are in a very sorry state.

Most of us who serve in the Senate are only one or two generations removed from immigrant status or immigrant backgrounds. I, myself, am an immigrant. I was not born in this country. I came here with a single mother. I know what it is like to come to a new country where you don't speak the language and where you have to learn, where you have to adjust. All my mother asked for was a chance to attain the American dream.

It really bothers me that at the time when we were talking about passing comprehensive immigration reform, Member after Member came to the floor of the Senate and talked about their immigrant backgrounds. Yet too many of them were perfectly happy to shut the door on immigrants in this country—over 11 million undocumented persons—to shut the door in their faces; forgetting that most of us come from immigrant backgrounds; forgetting that this country, apart from the original people who were here, American Indians, we are all immigrants.

So let's put ourselves in the shoes of our Dreamers. Let's open our hearts to them. These are young people who just want to have a chance at the American dream that too many of us take for granted now. Let's not only be able to empathize with people whose experiences we have lived. Let's not be there, let's not go there.

I call on my colleagues to support the Dream Act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Hawaii and Senator DURBIN for his work and Senator CORTEZ MASTO, who is off to a really good start in her first year in the Senate. I thank them for their work on this issue that is personal to Senator CORTEZ MASTO and Senator HIRONO because they are not that far removed from coming to this country.

My family has been here longer, but this issue is personal to me because of the people I met whom I will mention in my relatively short remarks. I want to tell some stories about people I have met.

Immigrants in my State and across this country make vital contributions to our economy and local communities.

They are business owners and entrepreneurs. They are educators and students. They are workers and leaders in the community. They serve our Nation in the military.

For many immigrants brought here as children—and this is the key point—this is the only country they have ever known. They may speak Spanish at home or speak Arabic at home or they may speak Bengali at home or they may speak Urdu at home, but they don't know those countries they came from because they were small children when they came.

President Trump promised to go after violent criminals, not innocent children. Unfortunately, his efforts have been aimed not at violent criminals who should, in fact, be removed from our country, but he has gone after so many innocent families and innocent children.

My daughter Emily is a legal aid lawyer for immigration in Columbus. She has told me stories of families who have played by the rules, they worked hard, they are active in their church, they hold full-time jobs, and they are raising their kids. Their kids are doing well in school, and the mother and father get deported, not because they have ever committed a crime but because they came here a number of years ago to escape violence in the countries they came from.

Those are not the same situations exactly as these DACA kids, but we know who these DACA children are—these Dreamers. We shouldn't be targeting young people who are contributing to this country—the country they grew up in, and the only home they have ever known. They are working, going to school, paying taxes, and serving in our military.

Ariel was brought to the United States as a baby when he needed medical treatment for a rare condition. He has lived here ever since. He attends Cuyahoga Community College, a few hours from my home. He is working toward a degree in business administration. He wants to be an entrepreneur who will create jobs in his community and my community. Other Dreamers have jobs, and they are contributing already to our community.

I heard from Elvis, who grew up in Northwest Ohio. He graduated from Ohio State and works at Nationwide. He told us:

The contributions of DACA recipients are not only present in metropolitan areas but also in rural ones. This is evident to me, someone who grew up in rural Ohio, and whose family continues to live there, every day.

Nathali in Columbus works as a product development and design engineer at Honda. She has lived here since she was 9. Her DACA status expires this summer. If she isn't protected, she will probably have to give up her job. She is contributing to America's economy, to Ohio's auto industry, and she pays taxes.

I heard from Vania in Delta, OH, a suburban farm community west of Toledo. She oversees the entire human resources department in her company, one of the largest bell pepper growers in the country. She said:

I was raised in this community, graduated high school and college here, and am currently giving back to it in my role. I have established myself as a contributing member of this community and for this reason, among many others, I deserve a chance to continue my work.

All she says is: I want to continue my work. I want to continue raising a family. I want to continue contributing to this country. I want to continue to work in my community. I want to continue to be a good citizen. She is not asking for a handout. She wants what most Americans want, to be able to keep doing her work.

There is no question our immigration system is broken, but we don't fix it by kicking out these contributing members of our communities who grew up here—underscore that. They may not have been born here, but they grew up here. They know our country. They live in Toledo and Dayton and Xenia, and they live in Mansfield. Those are their lives, as it was my life growing up in Mansfield.

We don't fix our immigration system by kicking out these contributing members who grew up here and made their home here—who are American in every sense except the paperwork. It is time for us to come together to put partisan considerations aside and pass a commonsense solution that protects these kids, protects these Dreamers, and upholds our American values.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I want to thank all my colleagues who have spoken today. I really want to thank Senator DURBIN, who has been a friend and a mentor of mine since I came to the Senate almost exactly 4 years ago. I thank him for his leadership right now—really leading us on both sides of the aisle, as a central focal point for the Dreamers—and for his words. I thank him for his leadership today and throughout this effort, making sure we don't leave for the holidays, leaving thousands of children in our country who know no other country—young adults—in a purgatory where they are anxiously waiting to see if this body will act.

This is a time where we have seen incredible activism. I cannot tell you how many times I have been stopped by Dreamers who drove for over 24 hours—drove across this country to come to the Capitol to make their case known. They love this country. They serve this country. They only know this country. They were here before they could even speak. They and their fellow American allies have been struggling and toiling and fighting for recognition. It reminds me of generations of Americans in the past who were fighting and toiling and

struggling for recognition as citizens when citizenship was denied them.

I know stories from my own family, African Americans, who, literally, like many of these Dreamers—900 of these Dreamers—have served in the military. I know these stories from my family—people who served in war, served in World War II, served in Korea, like my father, and came back to a country that did not recognize their citizenship rights.

Women, Jews, Irish—so much of the story of America is Americans struggling and toiling and fighting, often coming to the Capital of the United States of America, fighting for recognition of their citizenship rights. They are patriots.

The young people I have encountered in my home State and the young people I have encountered here in the Capitol are patriots. Patriotism is love of country. I am one of these folks who believe that love of country is better seen than heard. I am telling you right now, the Dreamers I have encountered, their service, their sacrifice, their contributions to this country should resonate.

We know the data. Billions of dollars of our economy is being fueled by Dreamers who are here serving in every imaginable capacity—there for their neighbors, there for their community, there for other children, there for America.

I sat across from Dreamers in New Jersey who now, because of the inaction here in Washington, because of the uncertainty, these folks—for whom we have collectively contributed to their education, contributed to their success, and are enjoying the fruits of their success—are now suddenly withdrawing from schools. They are feeling nervous that they are going to be ripped away from family members—younger siblings who are already recognized citizens—as they fight for their citizenship rights. I have seen the pain. I have seen the anxiety. I have shared the tears as they continue this fight, hoping this body will act.

There are folks like Liz. She is a Dreamer from Ridgefield, NJ. She literally created a startup business that employs over 800 people. She is a job creator, an entrepreneur, an innovator whom people rely on for their jobs, and we are going to turn around and say to Liz: You have to leave the United States of America, the only country you know.

What about people like Jesus Contreras? He was the paramedic from Houston who worked for 6 straight days, pulling all-nighter after all-nighter after Hurricane Harvey hit. Here is a guy who, when we faced a crisis and people's lives were on the line, stepped up. That is patriotism. That is love of country. You can't love your country unless you love your country men and women. The way you show you love your country men and women isn't just through the songs you sing and the pledges you make, it is the ac-

tions you take. In a crisis, he was there reaching out to American hands with his hand that is worthy.

Dreamers have been a gift to this Nation. They are hard-working patriots deserving of our respect. They come from a long tradition of people who have served this country, fought for this country, struggled for this country, who battled for respect from this country. They look up and say: I, too, am an American. Don't judge me by a piece of paper that says so. Look at my deeds. Look at my actions. Look at my life.

This, our wealth; this, our natural resource; the genius created in the image of God; we are going to cast these folks out of our Nation, and for what?

I believe that the opposite of justice is not injustice; it is inaction. It is indifference. It is apathy. This body has not acted. It has not shown a level of compassion to patriots. It has rewarded the service of these Dreamers and the sacrifice of these Dreamers with nothing but silence and inaction.

As other days before it, today I am glad that I stand with colleagues who will not be silent. This tradition in our country of solid citizens, of patriots who fought, who loved, who contributed to this country, this tradition that runs deep in my family, that runs deep in the families of so many here—when they were told they were not citizens, did not have equal rights—from suffragettes to civil rights activists—this body finally got it right and finally responded.

This is the dream of America. These young people are called Dreamers. This is the dream of America.

There was a man who talked about being denied his citizenship rights and who wrote a powerful poem that is as appropriate today as it was when he wrote it. His name is Langston Hughes. As these Dreamers struggle to be recognized for what they are—citizens of this country—as they put forth a dream that is no more precious or no more worthy than the dreams of my family, of your family, may the words of Langston Hughes speak to our spirits and our souls and motivate us. Langston said:

There is a dream in the land
With its back against the wall
By muddled names and strange
Sometimes the dream is called.

There are those who claim
This dream for theirs alone—
A sin for which we know
They must atone.

Unless shared in common
Like sunlight and like air,
The dream will die for lack
Of substance anywhere.

The dream knows no frontier or tongue,
The dream, no class or race.
The dream cannot be kept secure
In any one locked place.

This dream today embattled,
With its back against the wall—
To save the dream for one
It must be saved for all.

Mr. President, I tell you this with all of my heart: I have met these young

Americans. I have seen their service. I know their sacrifice. They have worn our uniforms, from our military uniforms to the uniforms of first responders. They have taught our children. They have benefited from our public schools—from our kindergartens, to our eighth grades, to our high schools, to our colleges, and to our universities. We have invested in them, and that investment is paying dividends. They are the American dream. They represent the best of who we are and who we aspire to be.

They collectively, with the other young people of this Nation, are our greatest hope for the future. If we cast them out, if we send them into the wildernesses of lands that are strange to them, to places where some of them don't even speak the tongue, it will be a sad day, a tragic day for them but even more so for us.

What does it say about a nation that turns its children away for no other reason than they came here when they were 2 or 3 and weren't born here? We are better than this. We are greater than this. Our Nation's ideals are loftier than this.

So in the same spirit that this body was slow to move to grant full citizenship rights to enslaved people, in the same way that this body was slow to move to finally grant citizenship rights to every woman in our country, and in the same spirit that this body was slow to move to grant full citizenship rights and voting rights and civil rights to African Americans, I hope we may summon in this generation, in a cause that is noble, the courage to do the right thing and not be stuck in inaction.

It is time for us to act as a body. It is time for us to recognize the full citizenship rights of those who have proven themselves already through the greatest actions one can do—service to another, service to our country, service to the ideals that we have.

Mr. President, thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to join my colleagues on the floor today, and I want to thank our great and distinguished leader on this issue, Senator DURBIN, who has devoted so many years and so much energy and has been a model for me personally of what an advocate should be in the Senate and most especially on this issue, which has been preeminently important to me since my arrival here almost 7 years ago.

For a time, I was on the floor almost every week, periodically, with a photo of another Dreamer, and the reason was to make this issue real in the hearts of the American people, to bring their voices and faces to this body.

Today, I am joined in spirit by Alejandra Villamares. She is one of 8,000 Dreamers in Connecticut. I am proud of each and every one of them. She is one of 700,000 Dreamers in the United States of America, and I hope

that my colleagues are proud of them in their States, as well, because they are absolutely incredible people. Nobody's perfect, but in many ways, they embody the spirit and values of America. They work hard. They go to school. They are future engineers, scientists, nurses, and doctors. They are of immense value to our economy because they work and contribute, and they will better themselves through education, through their values. And they know what it means to be an American citizen. Even though they are not, they know the value of citizenship.

Alejandra came to this country when she was 1 year old. She was brought here by her parents, across the border from Mexico. Her family lived in a cramped, small house with her two uncles. They had very little money. She and her sister were bullied by students in elementary school because, of course, they had to learn English. They spoke with an accent. She told me: "My mother told me not to give up." That is what she wrote me a couple of days after the President of the United States announced that he would end the DACA Program. She wrote me 5 days after the Trump administration rescinded DACA, and her story has stuck with me, haunted me over these months, just as when I have met with Dreamers—as I did just this past Monday in Hartford, CT—to reassure them that I was going to fight every day that we have remaining in this session, their stories have haunted and moved and inspired me.

Alejandra was bullied, but even as she was bullied for speaking a different language—her native language—and learning English, even as her father was deported, even as her family was left without him and with even less support, they persevered.

She wrote to me: "I made it my mission to prove that I was worthy of being considered an American." How many of us, growing up, made it our mission to prove ourselves worthy of being an American? I daresay few of us considered that mission. Most of us take for granted that we are Americans, that we are citizens of the greatest country in the history of the world.

Slowly but surely she learned English, and it became her primary language. In 2012, she got a break: The Obama administration enacted DACA. She could come out of the shadows. She could have a place, some security. That step unlocked for her—literally unlocked for her—the American dream.

For all of us who take for granted what it means to be an American, who have never made it a mission to become an American, we often take for granted the American dream. Well, we belong here. No one is going to send us away. No one is going to deport us to a land we have no knowledge of, to a place away from our friends and our families. But DACA meant something else as well, more than just emotional; it meant that she could go to college,

and she did. She went to Wesley, where she is now a student. For once, she had the immense luxury of not being afraid. She could go to college and study—as she is now studying—film and international relations. She felt empowered to speak up and participate in her community.

She worked at Delaware Goes to College Academy and the Summer Learning Collaborative. They both promote education for disadvantaged youth. She was now not only learning and studying at one of the great universities in our country but giving back to others, enabling others to climb that same ladder, young people with disadvantages like hers to make the most of themselves and to achieve that American dream.

When Attorney General Sessions, with the President's approval, rescinded DACA in September, Alejandra wrote to me:

I wanted this to be my country so badly. One thing that I knew from the bottom of my heart was that I wanted to stay here, and that I was an American.

Anyone who looks at Alejandra, knows her story, and hears her words has to be heartbroken that a young woman seeking so deeply to be an American, to live the American dream and American values, to give back to this country that she loves, and never to take for granted what so many of us do—we have to be heartbroken to hear those words and her story.

I have heard my colleagues say: Well, why now? Why not wait until after the new year? Why not wait until March? Why not wait? Waiting until March would mean an extension of her anxiety, apprehension, and fear. It would also mean the extension of a humanitarian crisis.

Make no mistake, for 8,000 young people in Connecticut and 700,000 in the United States of America, threatening deportation to them is an unprecedented message to the world and to ourselves. It says something about who we are. To leave them hanging is not only unfair, it is unworthy of us as Americans.

More practically speaking, tens of thousands of DACA recipients are estimated to have already lost their protection from removal. Kicking the can down the road would mean continued anguish for those 700,000 young people, and it would mean breaking a promise. They came forward. They provided their addresses, their cell phone numbers, their tax information on the promise that it would not be used against them.

It would mean instability in the job market, and it would hurt our economy. That is why employers are coming forward and urging us to act now. Companies have been forced to consider whether they should fire DACA recipients and train new employees in anticipation of the March deadline. It would churn and create turmoil if we fail to act. In fact, it already is creating chaos and confusion because

looming on the horizon ominously, inextricably, is the threat of mass deportation.

It would be a humanitarian nightmare, and it is a bureaucratic nightmare, as well, to wait. If the Dream Act is passed, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services has work to do. They need to develop new regulations, process applications. This involves conducting security checks, biometric screening, notifying the applicants, and doing the paperwork. Experts say that this process could take up to 7 months in total. So we are already late. We are already late in beginning and accomplishing this task.

If we delay our action, thousands of Dreamers will lose their protections before the law is fully implemented. Young, contributing members of our society—like Alejandra—who have done nothing wrong will be dragged back into the shadows, to lose their drivers licenses, to lose their jobs, to lose their sense of security, to fear every day the sound of police sirens, as so many do right now.

The administration has literally thrown a timebomb to this body, and it is ticking. We have the power to diffuse it. We have the power to do the right thing. We have the power and we have the obligation to truly give those 700,000 Dreamers the ability to make the most of themselves and make the most of this country.

Often, when I think of the Dreamers, I think of my father, who came to this country in 1935. He was 17 years old. He knew virtually no one. He spoke almost no English. He had not much more than the shirt on his back, and he was a Dreamer, although he came here legally. He became a U.S. citizen. Nobody loved this country more than my dad.

I sometimes think how sad and ashamed he would be about the way we have denied Dreamers the opportunity and security that he felt coming here, escaping persecution in Germany. This country has never been perfect, but we are the greatest country in the history of the world because we are a nation of immigrants.

If you are ever discouraged or down about your lives or about the country, you may want to try going to the immigration naturalization ceremonies in your State. They happen in Connecticut every week in courthouses. I go as often as I can on Fridays, when they usually occur, in Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport, because it is so uplifting. It is so very inspiring to see people who are moved and grateful beyond words—moved to tears—in becoming citizens of the United States.

The judges usually give me an opportunity to say a few words, and I thank them for wanting to become citizens. I tell them “You passed a test that most Americans couldn’t pass,” and they laugh, as perhaps some who are listening now would laugh because they know it is true.

They wanted to become American citizens, so they studied and they pre-

pared. Many of them came long distances, escaping persecution—just as my dad did—and left behind families, loved ones, jobs, careers. They wanted to be citizens. They will never take it for granted, nor will Alejandra if she is given that opportunity. She wants it too. She is a Dreamer, not only in name but in spirit. I hope all of us keep her in mind and in heart when we think about what we are going to do in the next couple of weeks.

As for me, I am determined that we should not leave here for our holiday without acting on this measure. I know we can do it if both sides of the aisle are reasonable, responsible, and responsive. The vast majority of the American people are with Alejandra. They know her as a neighbor; they know her as a friend. Even though they may never have met her, they know people like her who are in their communities, and they know the immense contribution that she and others like her can make.

I know so many of them who share that simple goal to become a U.S. citizen, and it begins with permanent status, a path—a path to earn citizenship. Whatever it may be called, it begins with a sense of security and belonging.

I hope this body will pass the Dream Act and give Alejandra and so many like her that opportunity to accomplish the American dream.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 356.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Mary Kirtley Waters, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Legislative Affairs).

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Waters nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE JOHNSON

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a longtime member of the Senate family who is concluding his tenure with us as this session comes to a close. His last day of service in the U.S. Senate will be December 22.

Steve Johnson, a resident of Annandale, VA, and a native of Freehold, NJ, is retiring as the manager of the Senate Dining Room after 22 years of service.

Steve has managed the Senate Dining Room with hospitality, professionalism, and graciousness. He is extremely knowledgeable about the history of the Senate Dining Room and has introduced many of our guests to the stained-glass George Washington Memorial Window, which is often the focal point for visitors.

The window was purchased by the Federal Government for the Capitol in 1910 from the artist, Maria Herndl, for \$1,000. The window’s Revolutionary War scene shows President George Washington on his white horse conversing with Marquis de LaFayette and Baron von Steuben, the drillmaster of the American Army. I only know the story behind the painting because Steve told me.

Steve sure knows his history, but his primary focus has always been on his team and the Members of this body. Under Steve’s leadership, the Senate Dining Room has been an ideal venue for conducting the important business of the U.S. Senate. Throughout his career, he has been responsible for overseeing and implementing the requests of Members of the U.S. Senate and has done so with efficiency, poise, and thoughtfulness.

Steve has always been resourceful and, at times, creative. Once, a former Senator who, at the time, happened to be the Vice President of the United States, ordered a lunch that had not been on the Senate Dining Room menu for several years, but thanks to Steve’s ingenuity, Vice President Joe Biden enjoyed his chopped salad immensely.

On another occasion, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist stopped by the Senate Dining Room after a long day on Capitol Hill and ordered chocolate chip cookies and milk.