

EXPRESSING HOPE FOR AN IMPROVED IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

(Mr. CURTIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CURTIS. Madam Speaker, I realize that few policy topics are more tenuous and challenging than immigration reform, but I believe, before us now, is a unique window of opportunity that will allow us to solve some of these complex problems.

We can make this a historic time for our country. As we come together to find solutions for more than 800,000 DREAMers, we need to take advantage of this moment to also address additional aspects of our broken immigration system. My hope is that Congress will pass a bill that provides certainty for DREAMers while also bringing meaningful improvements to our visa programs for seasonal workers and our highly skilled immigrants, along with providing resources for enhanced border security.

We know that not every special interest group will get everything they want, but I believe, if we work together, we can give the American people exactly what they expect: an improved immigration system that we desperately need.

RECOGNIZING SCHOOL COUNSELOR DANA ZAPANTA AND DESIGNATING THIS WEEK NATIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING WEEK

(Ms. SÁNCHEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SÁNCHEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the tireless work of school counselors across the country and in the 38th District of California, whom I am honored to represent. These public servants guide students through academic, social, and personal development.

Dana Zapanta, a counselor at Artesia High School in my district, is exactly the type of champion that students need. Dana, a 12-year counseling veteran, has been instrumental in the development of Artesia's Career Technical Education program. She also coordinates numerous events, including AP Student Night and college fairs. Thanks in part to her unwavering commitment to students, the graduation rate is nearly 99 percent.

Despite the important contributions counselors like Dana make every day, counseling positions are not always protected when local budgets are cut. The average student-to-counselor ratio in our Nation's public schools is almost double the ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association.

Students deserve to have the support of school counselors like Dana. That is why I am proud to introduce a resolution to designate this week as National School Counseling Week. I urge my

colleagues to join me in honoring these selfless professionals.

DEBT JUNKIE SPENDING BILL

(Mr. BROOKS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, Republicans won the House in 2010 in part because of the danger posed by America's 4-year string of trillion-dollar deficits.

House Republicans sliced America's deficit to \$438 billion in 2015, but then our finances took a dramatic turn for the worse. America's deficit surged to \$585 billion in 2016 and \$666 billion in 2017. Congress is expected to soon vote on a debt junkie spending bill that blows America's deficit sky-high by hundreds of billions of dollars in 2018 alone.

Madam Speaker, there is a narrow path between adequate national security funding and avoiding a national insolvency that decimates our military and risks American lives. That path is as narrow as Zion National Park's Angels Landing Trail. One misstep left or right and you fall hundreds of feet to your death.

The Senate spending bill is a debt junkie's dream, a nightmare, and a misstep that plunges America into disaster. It must not pass.

HONORING FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE BEACH BOYS, MIKE LOVE

(Mr. ISSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, I come to the House floor today to speak about a husband, a father, an avid environmentalist with over 55 years' experience in just one profession. Madam Speaker, I come here to speak about and to honor the life of Mike Love, a founding member of The Beach Boys, one of the most popular music groups of all time, a group that has entertained us on The Mall of the Capitol more than any other band in history, a patriotic group that speaks in lyrics that are timeless.

Love has spent an extraordinary 55 years and counting as the group's lead singer and one of its principal lyricists, with 13 gold albums, 55 Top 100 hits, and 4 singles alone. He, himself, wrote the lyrics to the great pop classics "Good Vibrations," "California Girls," "Surfin' USA," and "Kokomo," for the father.

The Beach Boys, from their California roots, have, in fact, been a global ambassador for California and for America. But more importantly, at a time in which words are sometimes vulgar or unintelligible, that is never the case with The Beach Boys. They sing of the greatness of our country, of our lands, and particularly of California.

So, with the unprecedented success and continuation of this band under

Mike Love's leadership, I ask that we honor him again as a father, a husband, an environmentalist, and, yes, a man who has given us the most beautiful, layered music of American modern history as it continues 55 years on.

ASKING FERC TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR DOWNEAST MAINE

(Mr. POLIQUIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIQUIN. Madam Speaker, Downeast Maine, along the Canadian border, is one of the most stunningly beautiful parts of the world, but, sadly, it is also one of the poorest.

During the past 30 years, Madam Speaker, most of our paper mills in Maine have closed because of high taxes, harmful regulations, unfair trade, and a declining demand for paper. However, Madam Speaker, the Woodland Pulp and tissue mill is doing quite well: 500 well-paying jobs with benefits, the largest private sector employer in Washington County, in Downeast Maine.

Today, Madam Speaker, the Federal Government has a chance to help. Since 1836, the Woodland mill has managed an upriver Forest City water storage dam to make sure the river and the lake levels in the area are properly maintained, and this makes sure that the fragile and world-class salmon and bass fisheries are protected.

But now, Madam Speaker, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is demanding that the Woodland mill spend \$6 million on a fish ladder and other requirements in order to renew its license. But the dam already has a fish ladder that works fine, and it does not generate any electricity for the mill, and it cannot afford the \$6 million price tag for these unnecessary requirements.

Now, the Maine Legislature, Madam Speaker, has already voted to allow Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife to assume control of the dam to make sure this wildlife habitat and the property owners are protected and that the mill can continue to prosper without these undue and unnecessary regulations.

Madam Speaker, I ask today, right now, that FERC do what is right and allow the transfer of the ownership of this dam from the mill to the State of Maine, which solves this critically important problem in one of the poorest areas of the country.

MORTGAGE CHOICE ACT OF 2017

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 725, I call up the bill (H.R. 1153) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to improve upon the definitions provided for points and fees in connection with a mortgage transaction, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1153

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Mortgage Choice Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF POINTS AND FEES.

(a) AMENDMENT TO SECTION 103 OF TILA.—Section 103(bb)(4) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1602(bb)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking “paragraph (1)(B)” and inserting “paragraph (1)(A) and section 129C”;

(2) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) by inserting “and insurance” after “taxes”;

(B) in clause (ii), by inserting “, except as retained by a creditor or its affiliate as a result of their participation in an affiliated business arrangement (as defined in section 2(7) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2602(7))” after “compensation”; and

(C) by striking clause (iii) and inserting the following:

“(iii) the charge is—

“(I) a bona fide third-party charge not retained by the mortgage originator, creditor, or an affiliate of the creditor or mortgage originator; or

“(II) a charge set forth in section 106(e)(1);” and

(3) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) by striking “accident,”; and

(B) by striking “or any payments” and inserting “and any payments”.

(b) AMENDMENT TO SECTION 129C OF TILA.—Section 129C of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1639c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(5)(C), by striking “103” and all that follows through “or mortgage originator” and inserting “103(bb)(4)”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2)(C)(i), by striking “103” and all that follows through “or mortgage originator)” and inserting “103(bb)(4)”.

SEC. 3. RULEMAKING.

Not later than the end of the 90-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall issue final regulations to carry out the amendments made by this Act, and such regulations shall be effective upon issuance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN). Pursuant to House Resolution 725, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on H.R. 1153, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

□ 0915

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act of 2017.

I would like to start out thanking my colleague, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) for his tireless leadership on this issue, having ushered this very same legislation through our committee in three different Congresses.

The purpose of H.R. 1153 is simple: to provide much-needed regulatory red tape relief to our community financial institutions so they can serve their customers; so they can provide them more mortgages. This is a straightforward piece of legislation. It is practical, it is necessary, and, Madam Speaker, it is bipartisan.

Now, you may hear today, Madam Speaker, from some of our Democratic colleagues that “we oppose the bill.” We heard that claim in the Rules Committee earlier this week. But I do find it interesting that no amendments were offered during committee markup, nor were any amendments offered at the Rules Committee. I remind all on the House floor, Madam Speaker, that the Financial Services Committee favorably reported this bill to the House with a strong bipartisan vote of 46-13, which means almost half of the Democrats on our committee supported this bill; and in the 113th Congress, Madam Speaker, this bill passed by voice vote—not a single objection.

Madam Speaker, this bill would help make homeownership more affordable for working Americans and would promote access to affordable mortgage credit for low- and moderate-income families and first-time home buyers. It does this while continuing to protect consumers.

The Mortgage Choice Act is needed because the CFPB wrote a flawed and problematic definition that grossly miscalculates points and fees. The result is that many mortgage loans, particularly those for low- and moderate-income borrowers, would not meet the standards of a qualified mortgage and thus not get made.

Currently, CFPB rules include affiliated title charges under a 3 percent cap when determining whether a mortgage is a qualified mortgage, but it doesn’t include unaffiliated. This does not make sense. The CFPB rules are detrimental, again, to low- and moderate-income borrowers and first-time home buyers since they are more likely to have smaller loan amounts and, therefore, more easily trigger the 3 percent cap.

That means under the current definition, many mortgage applicants will be denied homeownership opportunities simply because they do not fit into the government box; or the only mortgages in the alternative available to them might be at far higher interest rates, making them unaffordable for many. In other words, the CFPB’s defective definition has ended up protecting many consumers right out of their opportunity to buy a home.

H.R. 1153, from the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), would change the way points and fees are cal-

culated by excluding fees paid for affiliated title charges and escrow charges for insurance and taxes. That would, therefore, Madam Speaker, increase homeownership opportunities for borrowers by allowing more loans to meet the QM standard.

Let’s not just listen to me, Madam Speaker. Let’s listen to our community financial institutions that we expect to help our constituents. A credit union from Washington explained how this was affecting everyday Americans.

They wrote: “A member at our credit union wanted to buy down his rate on his mortgage with cash out of pocket at closing in order to lower the payments for his retirement. However, doing so would have made his total points and fees higher than allowed under ATR/QM, and there was no allowable way around the problem.”

From my native Texas, a community banker wrote in and said: “The greatest frustration our customers have is our bank’s inability to now make home loans. For years we made loans to people for the purchase of their homes. We would do about one every other week. So it was not a large volume. It was a good service. We always made these loans to keep in our loan portfolio. We never sold any home loans, but with the new requirements for home loans, it has driven us out of this kind of business. It has also taken us out of the construction lending on homes because we cannot risk the risk of a takeout commitment failing. The consumer is the loser.”

Indeed, that is true, Madam Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, Mr. HUIZENGA has worked on this bill for the past two Congresses again. In the 113th Congress, it passed by voice vote. It passed by an overwhelming majority of 286-140 in the 114th Congress. I trust the third time will be the charm.

I urge all of my colleagues to do what is right for our constituents and to pass H.R. 1153 to provide open access for Americans to purchase a home.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1153, the so-called Mortgage Choice Act of 2017.

Unfortunately, this bill is yet another attempt to undermine the strong consumer protections Democrats established under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, taking us back to the days of the subprime bubble.

While some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have forgotten those days, I haven’t. I remember how predatory lenders targeted unsuspecting home buyers by hiding fees and obscuring loan costs, tricking them into exploding mortgages and locking them into loans that they really couldn’t afford.

Millions of home buyers were steered into high-cost, subprime loans even

when they qualified for prime mortgages, and lenders didn't even bother to verify whether or not borrowers had the ability to repay their mortgages. They weren't required to do that, so they didn't. The end result was rampant fraud on a massive scale to millions of foreclosures and a tremendous loss of generational wealth, particularly for Black homeowners. Some of my constituents are still struggling and trying to recover from the financial devastation that occurred during this financial crisis.

The last thing Congress should do is to open the door to a return to these fraudulent and harmful policies, yet that is exactly what H.R. 1153 would do. This bill seems like a technical fix to allow affiliated title insurance and settlement services firms to be excluded from the qualified mortgage rule's 3 percent cap on upfront points and fees paid by borrowers. But make no mistake, there is nothing technical about this. In fact, this bill would allow title insurance companies to jack up prices on borrowers and allow lenders to receive what would otherwise be illegal kickbacks.

Under this bill, lenders, including repeat offender megabanks, like Wells Fargo, would have new opportunities to reap huge financial profits at their customers' expense by steering them into costly title insurance policies that have no cap on fees whatsoever.

Prior to the enactment of Dodd-Frank, lenders were able to earn tremendous profits through lucrative kickbacks paid by their affiliates. The Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act, or RESPA, prohibits giving a fee kickback or thing of value in exchange for a referral of business related to a real estate settlement service. But this kickback prohibition does not apply to affiliated companies of lenders, like a title insurance firm. To avail themselves of this kickback loophole, some lenders have bought or created businesses to enable them to profit directly from the relationship.

So Dodd-Frank established the responsible underwriting practice of requiring lenders to verify a borrower's ability to repay when they originate a loan. Dodd-Frank also enabled lenders to obtain some legal protections when making residential mortgages if those loans are considered a qualified mortgage or QM.

To be considered QM, a loan must have terms and conditions that are understandable to borrowers and not contain predatory features considered to be unfair or deceptive. QM loans, for example, can't be interest-only loans, longer than 30 years, or have balloon payments. Specific to the bill we are considering today, the amount of upfront points and fees on QM loans cannot exceed 3 percent of the total amount of the loan.

In short, QM loans are supposed to be low risk, prudently underwritten, and free from the type of features associated with those predatory mortgages

that trapped borrowers in loans they couldn't afford and that led to the financial crisis.

The points and fees cap included under the QM definition includes, among other things, real estate-related fees paid to affiliates of the lender for services, such as property appraisals, settlement services, and title insurance. Fees paid to affiliates of the lender pose greater risks to borrowers since lenders cannot steer borrowers directly to their affiliates without open competition, and higher prices charged by affiliates directly benefit the lenders.

Affiliate title insurance is especially problematic. The title insurance industry is notoriously opaque. Due to a lack of competition and readily available information on terms and pricing, consumers do not shop around for title insurance as they might for other products and services. Megabanks, like Wells Fargo, have used title insurance to take advantage of consumers through illegal kickbacks schemes.

The Consumer Bureau took an enforcement action in 2015 against Wells Fargo and JPMorgan Chase, ordering those megabanks to pay more than \$24 million in civil penalties and more than \$11 million to consumers harmed by their kickback schemes with Genuine Title, a now defunct title company.

At the time, Director Cordray said: "These banks allowed their loan officers to focus on their own illegal financial gain rather than on treating consumers fairly. Our action today to address these practices should serve as a warning for all those in the mortgage market."

Madam Speaker, these kickback schemes continue despite Congress' efforts to shut them down, and would likely increase if H.R. 1153 is enacted. Because H.R. 1153 would remove fees that are charged by a lender's affiliate title insurance company from the QM fee cap, the bill directly encourages lenders to, once again, steer borrowers to their affiliates so they can extract even more money from them.

Now, supporters of the bill argue that, because individual States provide adequate regulation over the title insurance industry, it is unnecessary, they say, to have additional safeguards related to affiliated title companies and the fees they charge. However, research from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners shows that State laws do not, by themselves, offer robust protection to consumers with title insurance. More than half of all States don't even collect data from title agents. Some States have "no particular standard" for determining whether title insurance rates are adequate, and even a couple, like Illinois and Arkansas, do not regulate title insurance rates at all.

Congress should be strengthening prohibitions on kickbacks, not weakening them. We should enable borrowers to get the best price, terms, and conditions on mortgage loans instead

of creating more ways for these megabanks, like Wells Fargo, to gouge American consumers.

When Congress considered this same measure last term, the Obama administration issued a veto threat, stating that the bill "risked eroding consumer protections and returning the mortgage market to the days of careless lending focused on short-term profits."

Madam Speaker, buying a home is likely the largest purchase most consumers will ever make. For this reason alone, Congress should absolutely reject proposals like H.R. 1153 that would permit residential mortgage lenders to take advantage of borrowers trying to achieve the American Dream.

Finally, a long list of groups, including civil rights groups, such as the NAACP and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, as well as consumer groups at the National, State, and local level, like Americans for Financial Reform, National Consumer Law Center, and the Center for Responsible Lending, all oppose this so-called Mortgage Choice Act.

So for all of these reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 1153.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds to say that, if the ranking member would read section 8(a) of RESPA, she would realize everything she said was false because it prevents any fee, kickback, or thing of value.

Second of all, what she describes as a harmful and fraudulent policy was supported by half of her Democrats, including her vice ranking member, Mr. KILDEE from Michigan.

Madam Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA), who is the sponsor of the legislation and the chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Securities, and Investments.

□ 0930

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1153.

As someone who worked in the housing industry, in fact, for the third generation, this is a very important issue to me and, more importantly, to all of our constituents across the country.

The qualified mortgage/ability-to-repay rule, as mandated by the Dodd-Frank Act, went into effect in January 2014. This QM rule is the primary means for mortgage lenders to satisfy its ability-to-repay requirements. Additionally, Dodd-Frank provides that a QM may not have points and fees in excess of 3 percent of the loan amount.

So far, so good.

As currently defined, however, points and fees include, among other charges: salaries paid to loan officers; loan level price adjustments, as the chairman was talking about, which are traditionally known as points; payments by lenders to correspondent banks, credit unions,

and mortgage brokers in wholesale transactions; and, as has been discussed, fees paid to affiliated, but not unaffiliated, title companies; and—this is the one that is most bizarre of all—amounts of insurance and taxes held in escrow. That counts towards that 3 percent.

As a result of this confusing and problematic definition, many affiliated loans, particularly those made to low- and moderate-income borrowers, would not qualify as QMs. Without that designation, it is unlikely the loan would be made. And if it were, it would only be available at higher rates, due to the heightened liability risks. Consumers would lose the ability to take advantage of the convenience and market efficiencies offered by one-stop shopping.

Hardworking Americans utilize one-stop shopping every day. They partake in it. For example, in west Michigan, we have the headquarters of Meijer. It is a great regional supermarket chain, and it is where families across the Midwest go to buy groceries, pick up clothes for the kids, and pick up auto parts. It is one-stop shopping that allows you to get just about everything you need for your home.

Well, purchasing a home is one of the most important decisions a family makes. Why shouldn't they have the same ability to take advantage of that same cost-effective convenience of one-stop shopping when buying a home?

I, along with Representative GREGORY MEEKS, reintroduced H.R. 1153, bipartisan legislation to modify and clarify the way points and fees are calculated and help families across America to one-stop shop.

This legislation is narrowly focused to promote access to affordable mortgage credit without overturning the important consumer protections and sound underwriting required under Dodd-Frank's ability-to-repay provisions. As the chairman pointed out, also, the RESPA provisions that are Federal law stay in place.

Very similar legislation overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives last Congress as well as in the 113th.

I think it is important to note that when we first introduced this bill in 2012, it looked substantially different. However, working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, we worked together to improve the legislation. The result has been a truly bipartisan effort at every step of the way in the legislative debate.

Specifically, H.R. 1153 would do a couple of things. It would provide equal treatment for affiliated versus unaffiliated title fees. It doesn't change the 44 States that have a regulated title insurance cost structure. It doesn't change any of those costs that a homeowner would have. It just allows them to actually go lower, rather than higher.

It also clarifies the treatment of insurance held in escrow. These two simple, commonsense changes will pro-

mote access to affordable mortgage credit for low- and moderate-income families and, indeed, all families, especially first-time home buyers, by ensuring that safe, properly underwritten mortgages pass the QM test.

Whether or not you supported Dodd-Frank, it is clear that the law is going to require some tweaks to ensure qualified borrowers aren't locked out of home ownership and the beneficial features of a qualified mortgage.

The QM represents the best mortgage on the market. It is the gold standard. And it should be the gold standard. We should want more responsible people getting QMs, not fewer.

Quite frankly, this is something we should all agree on. In fact, we did last year. Our bill doesn't touch any of the CFPB's strict underwriting criteria. It doesn't, in any way, suspend a lender's legal requirement to determine that a borrower has the ability to repay that loan.

The ranking member points out a real problem that happened in the industry and that, frankly, many of us in the industry warned of, but this does nothing that allows State regulated title insurance to be violated or any of those Federal steps regarding the qualified mortgage. It, in no way, sidesteps RESPA or QM requirements.

Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I am completely baffled by the ranking member's new opposition to this bill. This bill was very carefully negotiated in order to receive bipartisan support, which the ranking member voted for previously. In fact, she was so supportive that she, along with 11 other Democrats from the committee, sent a letter, dated August 1, 2014, to the Senate urging them to "quickly adopt the Mortgage Choice Act."

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the letter of August 1, 2014.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, August 1, 2014.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID, CHAIRMAN JOHNSON AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS: On June 9, the House passed the Mortgage Choice Act (H.R. 3211), on the suspension calendar without objection. Senators Manchin and Johanns introduced a companion bill, S. 1577 in October, but it has not yet been considered. We support the Mortgage Choice Act because of our concern about lower-income consumers' access to credit and their ability to select the mortgage and title insurance providers of their choice.

Passage of H.R. 3211 represents the fourth time that the House has approved virtually identical legislation without objection. In 2007 and 2009, a Democratic House majority passed essentially the same provision in the Miller-Watt-Frank anti-predatory lending legislation, and then a third time as part of the House's version of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act in 2010.

The Mortgage Choice Act simply excludes the cost of title insurance from the definition of points and fees under the Truth in Lending Act regardless of whether a title insurance agent is affiliated with a mortgage lender or not. It also clarifies that funds held in escrow for the payment of property insur-

ance do not count as "points and fees." The legislation is needed to ensure that smaller loans to creditworthy low and moderate-income consumers can select the mortgage lender and title insurance provider of their choice and obtain a "qualified mortgage," the gold standard for all mortgages.

The bill authorizes the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to implement rules governing the exclusion of reasonable title insurance charges from "points and fees." It preserves the Bureau's strong enforcement authority to require transparency and disclosure of affiliations and charges under the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA). In fact, the CFPB has been vigorous in its pursuit of RESPA violations, ranging from minor disclosure errors to kick-backs for referrals by an unaffiliated title company.

We urge you and the entire Senate to quickly adopt the Mortgage Choice Act to improve access to credit, enhance competition among title insurance providers, and reinforce the CFPB's authority to define what title insurance costs qualify as excludable "points and fees."

Sincerely,

David Scott; Maxine Waters; Emanuel Cleaver; Henry Cuellar; Daniel T. Kildee; Jim McDermott; Patrick Murphy; Gerald E. Connolly; Michael F. Doyle; Betty McCollum; Gregory W. Meeks; Gary C. Peters.

Mr. HUIZENGA. In the letter, she stated that the bill would "improve access to credit" and "enhance competition among title insurance providers." Well, I couldn't agree more with the ranking member.

She talks now of kickbacks. I am confused as to how an affiliated title structure, pricing structure, versus an unaffiliated title purchase is somehow a kickback.

I am confused at how an escrow, money that is ours that is put into a holding account to be used later to pay off debt, is a kickback.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Michigan an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I wish I had time to yield to the gentlewoman to hear that answer.

She is talking about megabanks. This is, frankly, just a red herring in this whole thing.

Congress has the opportunity to help more Americans realize a portion of the American Dream, not by some grandiose law or decree, but by simply reforming a burdensome regulation. Home ownership has been a pillar in American life for generations. Today, we can reaffirm that pillar and reassert that home ownership can and should be an attainable goal.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Representative MEEKS, and many others who have worked so tirelessly on this to fix this flawed provision, and I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1153.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the chairman.

He said that RESPA prohibits kickbacks. While RESPA prohibits paying kickbacks to third-party title agencies, the law does not prohibit payments to affiliated title firms. This incentivizes a title agency to be affiliated so it can gain the payment option without violating RESPA, including affiliated title insurance fees in the QM defines points and fees caps, provides important market pressure to control costs for consumers, and supports access to credits.

By the way, when we talk about RESPA, we are talking about the real estate settlement procedures that define all of this.

So let's be clear again that, while RESPA prohibits paying kickbacks to third-party title agents, the law does not prohibit payments to affiliated title firms.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit.

Mr. LEUTKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA). He has worked on this bill for some time, and I appreciate his commitment to the issue of access to mortgage credit. His background is such that he understands this issue, being in the real estate business and the retail development business. So this is something he is passionate about and really has an in-depth knowledge of.

I know Mr. HUIZENGA has seen in Michigan what I have seen in Missouri and around the Nation: the regulatory regime governing the mortgage market is growing overly complex and becoming, as a result, inaccessible for far too many borrowers.

In a Financial Institutions Subcommittee hearing held earlier this year, we had a situation where a credit union executive came in and had a huge file about 3-inches thick. I asked him: Can you tell me how many pages are in that file? He said: Congressman, we no longer measure by the page; we measure by the pound. That is how out of whack our system has become with regard to trying to make home mortgage loans.

These regulatory burdens associated with making home loans have forced many institutions completely out of the market altogether. I have a number of banks in my area that no longer make home loans because of these overly burdensome rules and regulations and costs that have to be passed onto the consumers.

The CFPB's qualified mortgage rule has had particular success in limiting access to mortgage credit for many consumers who may otherwise be deemed to be qualified borrowers. The Mortgage Choice Act seeks to change some of this by increasing competition in the mortgage and title insurance

markets. This bipartisan legislation does so by clarifying and recalibrating the points and fees limitations included in the Dodd-Frank qualified mortgage framework.

The current situation doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. If a consumer chooses an unaffiliated title insurance provider, the transaction doesn't count towards points and fees. But if that consumer chooses to work with an affiliated provider, it does.

Despite what you may hear, this arbitrary stipulation in the points and fees definition doesn't protect consumers. It punishes them by limiting and, in some cases, eliminating mortgage and housing options, pushing more and more loans farther and farther away from QM status. Like too many of the rules handed out by the CFPB, it is the consumer that loses.

Simply put, the goal of H.R. 1153 is to help low- and middle-income borrowers as well as prospective first-time buyers realize the American Dream: owning their own home.

I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his leadership on this issue. I urge strong support for the legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the chair of the Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act, provides needed clarity to the calculation of points and fees for qualified mortgages, or QM, especially for those companies affiliated with real estate brokers.

Established under the ability-to-repay/QM section of the Truth in Lending Act, H.R. 1153 would amend the definition of points and fees and allow more loans to qualify, thus increasing choices for all borrowers.

Chairman HUIZENGA's bipartisan legislation does not create a QM loophole like some would argue. Instead, H.R. 1153 rightly attempts to level the playing field, regardless of whether the lender is affiliated with a title agency or not.

In addition, H.R. 1153 does not allow high-cost loans to qualify as QMs. By allowing loans with the same points and fees to be treated equally under the law, Chairman HUIZENGA's bill corrects one of the many flaws of the post-Dodd-Frank era.

Thanks to the Mortgage Choice Act, it will now be easier for low- and moderate-income Americans to buy a home. I commend my colleague, Chairman HUIZENGA, for his bipartisan work on this issue, and I urge all Members to support this legislation.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for the life of me, I cannot understand why my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle would be

in support of anything that would cause a home buyer to have to pay more money in fees when they are taking out a mortgage.

On a \$400,000 mortgage, you are talking about you want to go beyond a \$12,000 cap, which is 3 percent? Why would you want to do that to a homeowner?

What we are saying is, under QM and what we worked so hard to establish, was to put a cap on all of these fees so that the homeowners, the home buyers, would not be paying more than 3 percent of that mortgage.

We think that is fair.

Now you want to open up the flood gates so that these title companies can increase the amount of that they are charging and go beyond the 3 percent.

How much higher do you want it to go? Do you want them to be able to go up to 4 percent or 5 percent with these homeowners who are paying downpayments and who are trying to get into homes? Why is it you want to expand beyond a 3 percent cap on the average hardworking home buyer in this country?

I don't get it. I don't understand it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), the vice chairman of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit.

□ 0945

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act. As a cosponsor of the bill and the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

As we all know, community financial institutions continue to close or merge at an alarming rate. We just saw an article the other day that about 1,700 branches across the country have closed, and to go through some of the towns in western Pennsylvania where you see the only branch closed is striking.

As we all know, community financial institutions continue to close or merge at an alarming rate. Bit by bit, families across America are losing access to vital financial products like home mortgages. Regulations like the qualified mortgage, or QM rule, make it even harder for Americans to get a mortgage and realize the dream of homeownership.

For small mortgages, points and fees can often exceed 3 percent, which leads these mortgages to be designated as higher priced non-QM loans. This discourages financial institutions from lending to Americans with moderate incomes and first-time home buyers; that is why, because loans aren't there.

Chairman HUIZENGA's bill wisely addresses this issue by excluding several items from the calculation of QM

points and fees. The bill excludes charges paid to an affiliate of the lender for title examination or title insurance services and insurance premiums held in escrow.

By excluding these items from the calculation, the bill will allow more loans to qualify as QM, opening up more credit to potential home buyers, and it will facilitate one-stop shopping. This is good for the community financial institutions that many Americans rely on for their financial service products. It will help our constituents back home access the funds they need to accomplish the dream of homeownership.

Chairman HUIZENGA's legislation provides smart, targeted relief from the unintended consequences of burdensome regulations. Again, banks aren't making loans. We want to encourage those first-time home buyers, the moderate-income home buyers to be able to have access to mortgages. That is why I support this bill, and I again urge my colleagues to vote for the Mortgage Choice Act.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I don't think I heard my colleague correctly when he said that this bill had something to do with encouraging first-time home buyers. It has nothing to do with encouraging first-time home buyers.

As a matter of fact, if we proceed with this bill that is before us today that they are supporting, it will discourage first-time home buyers and home buyers in general because what they are doing is they are increasing the possibility for more points and fees that have to be paid when we have a cap now at 3 percent, which any reasonable person would know makes good sense.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan, common-sense Mortgage Choice Act, sponsored by the Congressman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA). Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation, which will make mortgages more affordable for low- and moderate-income families.

In the wake of the financial crisis, Congress directed the CFPB, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, to create a definition for so-called qualified mortgages. Congress wanted to ensure that consumers were not sold predatory loans and that good faith investors were not buying mortgages designed to fail.

Unfortunately, the Bureau's rule-making drove originators from the industry and made loans more expensive in the process. This burden will fall mostly on low- and middle-income families, the very people the CFPB was created to help.

The rule promulgated by the CFPB czar limits consumer options, causes consumers to pay more, and does nothing to make mortgages any safer. It is this sort of illogical rulemaking that makes Michiganders more and more frustrated by what they see in Washington. We need to ensure that our government prosecutes fraud, predatory lending, and unethical practices, but it should not be in the business of undermining an industry that plays such a critical role in the dream of homeownership.

You know, when mortgages become more expensive, it is America's low- and middle-income families that suffer the most. Homeownership is the cornerstone of the American Dream. It builds communities, provides families with stability, and, hopefully, creates equity for retirement. The government should be helping this dream, not creating silly, illogical obstacles.

Over the past several years, I have worked with my colleagues to refocus the Bureau on its core mission of protecting consumers. I am glad that Acting Director Mulvaney has begun to do so, and I am encouraged that Congress is doing its part to rein in this rogue bureaucracy.

This bill does nothing to threaten the underlying safety of the QM rule and does not erode vital consumer protections. It simply helps ensure that consumers have choices to reduce their mortgage costs along the way.

Now, the ranking member opposes this bill, as she believes it will usher in a new era of fraudulent subprime, dangerous loans riddled with kickbacks and inflated title fees. I am not sure how money held in escrow would ever be a kickback, and her description of the title industry is completely incorrect. It is a highly regulated industry in most States, and the State that she mentioned, Illinois, is extremely competitive and extremely regulated.

I am not sure what bill the ranking member believes we are debating today, but the Mortgage Choice Act will not result in any of the problems she describes—all great scare tactics, great theater, a great political sound bite, but, unfortunately, all fiction, all inaccurate. Her flip-flop on this bill is at least, at the minimum, very puzzling; but, if everything she says is correct, I certainly feel bad for all the Democrats.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I feel bad, if everything she says is true, for all the Democrats who unanimously passed this bill in the 113th Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better than a partisan discussion about something that is nothing more than a technical correction of an unintended consequence.

Again, I thank my friend, Mr. HUIZENGA, for his leadership, and I en-

courage all of my colleagues to join in supporting this bipartisan solution.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My friends on the opposite side of the aisle just dislike qualified mortgage. They dislike QM. And a lot of the arguments that you have heard had nothing to do, really, with this bill, itself, but more with the fact that they have always wanted to dismantle the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, who has the responsibility of implementing QM.

So they will talk about everything from access to credit to you name it, but it has nothing to do with the fact that they are here with a bill that is trying to open up opportunities for affiliated title companies to be able to charge home buyers more money than would be allowed under QM.

The fact of the matter is we have a 3 percent cap on all points and fees in the legislation that we created to protect homeowners—3 percent. Why is it they want to open it up so that home buyers have to pay more than 3 percent on all of these points and fees?

As a matter of fact, I get questions all the time, particularly from first-time home buyers asking me: What are all these points and fees that I have to pay? Do you mean to tell me that on a \$400,000 loan, they are going to rip off \$12,000 on points and fees or more? And we have to explain that we have kept it to 3 percent.

But now they want to open up the floodgates, and they want to say that these affiliated companies can charge more on points and fees as it relates to title insurance. So I am opposed to it.

And for those who did not understand, who may have voted because of the way that is oftentimes presented by the opposite side of the aisle—and, as a matter of fact, it is obscured in the way that they present it in talking about trying to help homeowners, trying to protect homeowners, trying to open up opportunities. It has nothing to do with any of that.

This is because the title insurance people who have wielded their influence have come here to change the law so that they can raise those rates and charge more money and have kickbacks, et cetera, et cetera. This is what this is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON), a hardworking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support for H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act. This bill is another example of a rollback of the burdensome regulations of Dodd-Frank and, many would say, unintended consequences.

The 113th Congress, as Mr. HUIZENGA reported out—apparently, the Member opposed feels that her colleagues were

confused in the 113th Congress when they unanimously supported this very same procedure, this same change to Dodd-Frank. Apparently, all of President Obama's supporters were also confused into forgetting to make the big investments they have made as a reaction to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that was recently enacted. So confusion must be rampant, but let me clarify what this does.

It doesn't do the things that the Member opposed accuses it of doing. Frankly, the market prevails here, not price controls from Washington, D.C., nor a substitute that would say a non-affiliated company could offer the exact same product that the one-stop shop is barred from offering.

So rather than have a simple procedure where a borrower could work with one lending institution, they are forced to this array that resembles the healthcare industry, where, instead of getting one bill from one visit, you show up to do a mortgage and you get a bill from five or six different entities, and it makes it more confusing.

The market lets people shop and say, "Hey, maybe I could get this product from someone else," but, unfortunately, without this change, it blocks hardworking families from working with one relationship to close on their mortgage. It adds one more piece in the web of documentation required, and it adds one more thing to negotiate in the relationship that is necessary to close on a mortgage.

The QM rule should not stand for "quitting mortgages." It should stand for "qualified mortgages." The application of this has resulted in small and community banks quitting the mortgage market for certain types of loans, and this is hurting the families that the Member opposed says she seeks to help.

I urge all of my colleagues to unite and support this rational, limited modification that lets the market work the way the market can work for the hardworking families of America.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Try as they may, they cannot explain to anyone why it is they want to open up the opportunity for these affiliated companies to charge more on these title loans.

As a matter of fact, again, I am going to keep reminding everyone who is listening that, under Dodd-Frank, under the work of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, under the qualified mortgage rule, all of the work that was done after this country found itself in a position of where we were in a recession, almost a depression because of what we had allowed to happen in this country from some of the biggest banks and financial institutions in the world, we discovered that there were all kind of exotic loans, all kind of different kinds of loans that were put together to entice consumers and home buyers to take out these mortgages.

We heard about all of them: no-documentation loans where they didn't even know where the consumer, the homeowner was going to get their money from; they did not vet them, they did not know their employment history, and on and on and on.

So the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is absolutely carrying out the work of what Dodd-Frank was intended to do, and that is to reform all of this and to make sure that consumers are treated fairly, to make sure that consumers are not ripped off, to make sure that consumers don't have a whole list of these fees and points before they can even get their downpayments, incredibly, and have to pay over 3 percent and more in these points and fees as they are trying to access a mortgage.

□ 1000

This is all about keeping the cap on the 3 percent for all of those points and fees. If you do what this bill is intended to do, you are saying that you are opening up the opportunity for these points and fees to be increased because of these affiliated companies that want to take the cap off. I don't know how better to explain that.

My friends on the opposite side of the aisle would charge consumers more with this bill. We on this side of the aisle are opposed with that. We are saying that it is not fair to consumers. What you need to do is let Dodd-Frank reforms work so that we can protect our consumers and not have them gouged and increase the amount of money they have to pay in these points and fees.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased now to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN), a cosponsor of the legislation and a great friend of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in favor of H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act of 2017.

This bipartisan legislation is essential to help low- and middle-income families gain access to qualified mortgages. I commend Chairman HENSARLING and Congressman HUIZENGA for their work on shepherding this bill through the legislative process.

Policymaking is complex, and Congress and Federal regulators do not always get it right. We need to sometimes make changes to address new issues and unintended consequences that arise.

As we have seen for the past few years, the Dodd-Frank Act—and let me add that there are many of us in the real estate business and on bank boards who saw the effects of Dodd-Frank not allowing banks to go into the communities that need them the most—contains certain provisions that fit one or both of these categories and must be changed through legislative action.

One of these policies is the CFPB's qualified mortgage, or QM, rule. The

QM rule is intended to protect lenders from legal liability and provide compliance certainty for mortgage loans that are low risk and meet certain criteria. One of those criterion requires a mortgage loan's total points and fees not to be in excess of 3 percent of the loan's value.

Unfortunately, the points and fees rule often depends on who is making the loan and how title insurance is obtained, which is confusing for both consumers and businesses providing these services. Also, as has been mentioned, insurance premiums held in escrow are considered points and fees under the QM rule, which is ridiculous. That is like saying that a parent who puts money in for a 529 savings plan for his children's education is a car payment or a mortgage payment. It doesn't make sense, but it discourages consumers from using this important financial management tool.

H.R. 1153 would address these unintended consequences and provide clarity for borrowers and businesses. I am also confident that the CFPB, under the leadership of Mick Mulvaney, will ensure that this clarification is effectively implemented if this bill is enacted into law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense fix so that we can get the policy right and address the unintended consequences arising from the future rule.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democratic leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding, and I congratulate her on her extraordinary leadership as the ranking Democrat on the Financial Services Committee. She has been a champion for America's working families, protecting consumers, protecting the taxpayer, and doing so in a very balanced way, sensitive to the needs of all parties concerned. I am so proud of her leadership and her service.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the bad bill for hardworking Americans that is on the floor today. The cynically named Mortgage Choice Act provides anything but choice. Instead, it raises costs on consumers who have few alternatives. This is yet another attempt to stack the deck even further against working families.

Mr. Speaker, this debate is another waste of time. Every day, courageous, patriotic DREAMers lose their status, and, every day, the American dream slips further out of reach. As Members of Congress, we have a moral responsibility to act now to protect DREAMers, who are the pride of our Nation and are American in every way but on paper.

I use this occasion as opposing this bill to speak further about social justice in America. The American people want Congress to pass a Dream Act:

Eighty-four percent of Americans support a path to citizenship for

DREAMers or permanent status; 88 percent of Independents back the path of citizenship or permanent status; and 70 percent of Republicans back either citizenship or permanent status.

The three Bs—business; badges, our law enforcement community; and Bibles—are imploring Congress to pass a Dream Act.

Earlier this month, I stood with evangelical leaders to call on the Speaker to bring the Dream Act to a vote for the sake of family fairness and respect for the spark of divinity within every person.

There is nothing partisan or political about protecting DREAMers. If a Dream Act were brought to the floor, it would pass immediately with strong, bipartisan support. I commend my Republican colleagues for their courage in speaking out on this, yet our DREAMers hang in limbo with a cruel cloud of fear and uncertainty above them.

The Republican moral cowardice must end. Members of Congress are trustees of the people and of our Nation.

Why are we here if not to protect the patriotic young people who are determined to contribute and to strengthen America?

So I am going to go on as long as my leadership minute allows.

I would like to speak to the Bible in Luke 10:25–37, the parable of the Good Samaritan.

On one occasion, an expert of the law stood up to test Jesus.

“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

“What is written in the law,” Jesus replied, “How do you read it?”

The lawyer answered: “Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jesus responded: “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.”

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus: “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply, Jesus said: “A man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. When he was attacked by robbers, they stripped him of his clothes, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed on to the other side of the road. So, too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed on to the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was, and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine. And then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day, he took out two Denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. Look after him, and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have. Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

The expert of the law replied: “The man who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him: “Go and do likewise.”

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one that has been used over and over again to welcome strangers. Samaritans were not friends to the person that the Samaritan saved, but he was a man of justice.

We all know how proud we are of America, as a land of opportunity and the land of the American Dream, which, for decades and centuries, really, has attracted people to our shores, to make the future better for their families. In doing so, they subscribe to the vows of our Founders. “A new order of the ages,” it says, on the great seal of the United States, a new order, “Novus Ordo Seclorum.” That meant that it was predicated on the idea that every generation would take responsibility to make the future better for the next.

It became known as the American Dream and people flocked to our shores, bringing their determination, their optimism, their hope, and their courage, to make the future better for their families. In doing so, as I said, they subscribed to the values of our Founders to make the future better. That is why our country would be a new order for the ages.

How proud we are to have the Statue of Liberty welcoming people to our shores. In the words of Emma Lazarus inscribed on the statue, it says:

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows worldwide welcome; her mild eyes
command. . . .

Words that are music to the ears of everyone who loves freedom.

“Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!”
cries she

With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

With those words, America has been a beacon to the world, and how proud it has made us. America is great, some say, because America is good; and this manifestation of our goodness is one that is historic.

In responding to the call of our Statue of Liberty—who must, by now, have tears in her eyes, having heard some of the debate on immigration—I want to read about some of the DREAMers, who came to our shores, maybe through land or by sea.

I want to talk about Luis Galvan. Luis came to the United States when he was 5 years old and grew up in poverty. Today, he is an agriculture ambassador at College of the Sequoias and is working to help students improve their grades. Following the repeal of DACA, Luis constantly worries about his ability to continue working in order to afford his education. He is one of four siblings also attending college, who are also DACA recipients.

Jacqueline Romo’s DACA expires this month. Jacqueline was raised in the city of Chicago. She is an undocu-

mented American aspiring to earn a bachelor’s degree in graphic design. Her education is her priority ever since she was in elementary school. Throughout high school, she had serious doubts about her future, due to her status, but it never stopped her from pursuing higher education. Jacqueline went on to community college, working a part-time job and earning a few scholarships that eventually added up to affordable tuition. Her mother, a single mother, would not be able to contribute to Jacqueline’s education after high school, so it was Jacqueline’s choice and responsibility to work her way financially through college. Thanks to scholarships like the Illinois Dream Fund, TheDream.US, and other community scholarships, Jacqueline was lucky to follow through higher education, something that most of her undocumented peers would not have the chance to do. Jacqueline’s dreams are the same dreams of other undocumented Americans to persevere in this great country.

Hector Rivera Suarez is a DACA recipient from Greensboro, North Carolina. He has been a DACA recipient for the past 6 years. This came to an end on January 21. He is currently on track to graduate in May, with a degree in philosophy and education. As a student body president and honor scholar at Guilford College, it is part of his curriculum to serve in the local community. He has served as an afterschool tutor at a local community center that services predominantly the Latino community, as well as assisting in classrooms at a newcomer school. His plan after graduation is to enroll in Teach For America, since it is his only opportunity to be a teacher while being a DACA recipient. Once DACA was rescinded in September, these plans had to be delayed. Without DACA, he will not have the opportunity to keep serving the community in greater ways.

□ 1015

Hector’s DACA expires 5 days before the Teach For America January deadline; this is why he needs there to be a resolution as soon as possible so he can move forward with his plans of mentoring the future leaders of America.

Mr. Speaker, I bring this up because, as you know, the discussions and negotiations on the caps bill, the budget bill, are making progress and, perhaps, soon to be coming to an end. And on that score, I would say so far as what I know of it, the budget caps agreement, which will be announced today, includes many Democratic priorities, actually bipartisan priorities.

But with the disaster recovery package and dollar-for-dollar increases in the defense and nondefense budget, Democrats have secured hundreds of billions of dollars to invest in communities across America. There will be billions in funding to fight opioids, to strengthen our veterans and the NIH, to build job-creating rural infrastructure and broadband, and to fund access

to child care and quality higher education. That is something that has been negotiated with our input between Leader MITCH MCCONNELL and Leader CHUCK SCHUMER.

But MITCH MCCONNELL also made a commitment to his Members that he would bring up a dream bill to the floor of the Senate in an appointed time. So why can't we have some kind of a commitment on this side of the aisle that enabled the discussion to take place on a values-based place?

Here, we asked the Speaker would he bring up the Hurd-Aguilar bill, which is bipartisan, would win if brought to the House, has a sufficient number of Republican cosponsors, thank them for their courage to be public, but others who have said they would vote for it, and we would like a commitment from the Speaker to bring it and any other bills that he believes should be considered on the floor as well.

We could do it under a "Queen of the Hill" where the bill with the most votes becomes the most prevailing bill to either support what the Senate has done or to reconcile what the Senate has done.

That is a simple request. That is a simple request that the House Democrats and, in a bipartisan way, others have joined in asking the Speaker to bring a bill to the floor to give us that commitment.

Why should we, in the House, be treated in such a humiliating way, when the Republican Senate leader has given that opportunity, in a bipartisan way, to his membership?

What is wrong? There is something wrong with this picture. That is why, this morning, when we took a measure of our caucus for support for the package—well, we have to see all the particulars of it yet, but there are good things in it—that it does nothing to even advance, even with a commitment, without having passed the legislation first, to advance bipartisan legislation to protect DREAMers in this House.

Without that commitment from Speaker RYAN, comparable to the commitment from Leader MCCONNELL, this package does not have my support, nor does it have the support of a large number of members of our caucus.

So then I go on to some other—I always am reminded in all of these debates about our commitment to faith. In God We Trust, it says there right over the Speaker's chair.

The Gospel of Matthew has been an inspiration to many of us on both sides of the aisle in terms of what our values are and how we make choices. And when, in the Gospel of Matthew, he writes: "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left. Then the King will

say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.'

Then Christ goes on to say:

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me.

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?'"

And the Lord says, when you see us—what did you see, a stranger and invite him in or need clothing and clothing you, he's asking the Lord. And when did you see sick and in prison, and did I visit you?

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

That is always important. Everybody knows that, the least of my brethren speech.

However, the King does go on: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'"

"He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'"

It is not only positive of what you did, you did for me; it is what you did not do. When I was a stranger, you did not help.

Then it will go into eternal punishment. The righteous will go into eternal life.

So anyway, more stories about our DREAMers and why they honor the vows of our Founders, why they deserve our support. We are just talking about this discrete group of people, how they command the support of the American people.

Itzel Verduzco Rojas is from Ponca City, Oklahoma. Itzel is working as a medical assistant for a pediatric dermatologist and in school full time trying to pursue a career in nursing. In addition to her job and school, Itzel volunteers with CASA, City Rescue Mission, and Rebuilding Together Oklahoma City to address issues of poverty and homelessness in her city.

With DACA, Itzel was able to apply for a driver's license and work legally. However, because her renewal application was caught up in postal delays, Itzel has not yet received her renewal, and her current DACA expired on Janu-

ary 20. Because of this, she will now have to take a semester off from school, and she is facing severe disruption in her life and the ability to support herself.

This is really important to note because the people—some of the people in the White House have been saying nobody is being deported. Well, we will see about that. But they are saying these people are protected.

They are not protected. And you heard the characterization that the President's Chief of Staff made about some of these people, about being lazy or whatever it was.

I think, in our discussions on the economy, in a separate context, we have seen how few Americans would be able to rise to the occasion immediately if they had a \$500 unsuspected bill that had come their way; whether the water heater broke or whatever it is, it would be challenging, it would be disruptive to their lives. It would be hard for them to have an expendable, immediately expendable, \$500. But that is what it takes to sign up to what the President—the sign up that was required by the President after his September announcement.

So it is not about being lazy. Or yes, it is probably about fear, too. Mr. Kelly, General Kelly, mentions that. But it is about not understanding the situation of fear and of contribution, the beautiful contribution that people make, that the DREAMers make to our country.

Itzel came to the U.S. legally at age 7. She came legally and attempted to adjust her status along with family. She aged out of eligibility when she turned 21. She was able to apply for DACA during her senior year of high school, which opened the doors for her.

In Albuquerque, New Mexico, Dalia Medina immigrated to the United States at age 11 from Mexico. She is a licensed mental health therapist providing much-needed service to at-risk youth and families in New Mexico.

Dalia is working toward an independent license to open her private practice to continue aiding families in her State. She recently obtained a master's degree in clinical social work and previously earned a bachelor's degree in criminology and psychology.

All of these people are making such a wonderful contribution to our society because they have courage, they have values, and they have purpose in their life. These stories were given to me by our colleagues as they have taken up the cause of many of these DREAMers. But it is not enough.

We have no right to talk about DREAMers and to tell their stories and take pride in their actions unless we are willing to take action to support them, and we have that opportunity today by asking the Speaker of the House to give us a vote.

What are you afraid of? Give us a vote. Let the House work its will. Senator MCCONNELL, MITCH MCCONNELL, is enabling the Senate to work its will.

Why should the House of Representatives be constrained, especially on such a values-based issue as who we are as a nation and recognizing our biblical responsibility to each other?

Nicole Robles from Houston, Texas, she was born in Mexico. Her family immigrated to the United States when she was 6 months old, and she faces deportation. In less than 100 days, her DACA will expire. I am anxious—Well, this is now much less than 100 days.

She says: “I’m anxious because I am graduating high school in a few months and I want to start college in August of next year. How will I do that without my DACA?”

She says: “There are so many barriers to higher education when you’re undocumented. With a Dream Act, undocumented students will have a sense”—the Dream Act gives them a documented sense—“of security and opportunity”—to go to school—“to get a job, to care for their families, to continue their studies in college or university.”

“I want that security and opportunity. We deserve that.” She deserves that.

“And we need Congress by the end of the year so that we, more people, don’t reach their expiration dates.”

Now, let me say that we have talked mostly about education, people working in education and social activities to help other people do their best. But many of our DREAMers have served in our military with great courage and great patriotism to the only country that they know.

Again, using my leader’s minute, I want to make sure that the RECORD is clear about what this debate is about. It is about honoring our own commitment to the Statue of Liberty, to the Founding Fathers, in terms of making this a land where one generation would take responsibility to make the future better for the next.

And that brings to mind another person from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Yuridia Loera. She said:

“Growing up, I was reminded of my immigration status every day by my mother. Twenty years later, I realized she did this to prepare our family for the imminent day that our family would face a deportation. And that day could be today because my DACA has expired.

“DACA is what allowed me to pass through immigration checkpoints safely. I am also a survivor of sexual assault—with DACA, I was able to approach the police to report the person who assaulted me. Trump’s cruel decision to terminate DACA has put border residents and survivors of assault in jeopardy. This is not how a country should treat immigrant youth and our families.”

I just want you to know why we are making this plea. This is a human plea to the Speaker, a prayerful human plea to the Speaker.

It is almost 40 hours. This morning, when I first met with my colleagues in

our meeting at 8, it was exactly 40 hours until midnight tomorrow.

Forty is a number fraught with meaning in our religious lives. Forty years, in the Old Testament, 40 years of Moses and the Jews and Aaron in the desert; 40 days that Christ was in the desert himself; 40 days is the length of time of Lent; and, therefore, 40 hours is a Catholic devotion that many of us grew up with.

We have that same 40 hours, from 8 this morning until tomorrow night at midnight, to be prayerful—to be prayerful—to show our purpose, and to show why we are asking the Speaker for this vote.

I have great admiration for the work that is done in a bipartisan way, on the budget, the bill; of course, it is not everything we want, but there are many good things in it, and I just can’t explain to the DREAMers or to my colleagues why we should be second-class Members of Congress in this House without a commitment from the Speaker that MITCH MCCONNELL gave to the Senators, that there would be a vote on the floor to let Congress work its will.

□ 1030

Are you afraid that the DREAMer bill will pass, the work of Mr. HURD and Mr. AGUILAR working with other Members to shape a bill that would recognize concerns that the President has and others have to put a bipartisan bill there that should attract the support of the President?

Instead, we are hearing words that are hard to process from the White House but, nonetheless, recognizing that we have to go down this path together. We all believe that, as the Bible tells us, there is a spark of divinity in every person and that we must respect that spark of divinity.

Tomorrow will be the prayer breakfast, and that is a solemn occasion in Washington, D.C., and we are always thinking in terms of Christ. When Christ became man, his assuming humanity brought his divinity to us so that we participate in his divinity, every one of us.

We have to remember that not only does it exist in every person that we encounter, but it exists in us. It exists in the President of the United States and his staff and all of the people who elected him. That is a beautiful thing about it all.

But that spark of divinity in each of us has to relate to other people and treat them with respect. How would we judge other countries if they said: “We have several hundred thousand people who came here as children, and now we are sending them back where they came from?” We would make a judgment about those countries that that was outside the circle of civilized human behavior. And yet—and yet—we have something to do about that right now.

I want to talk to you about Juan Carlos Navarro from Oregon. He said: “I

immigrated to the United States when I was 3 years old with my parents because I needed medical treatment for my cerebral palsy. I went through six surgeries and 12 years of physical therapy and walked for the first time when I was 15 years old.

“Growing up, I did well in school, but I felt stuck because I didn’t know how to go to college. With the help of my counselor, I was able to apply for private scholarships and attend a community college in Salem. I’m now at Western Oregon University, where I was inspired to start my own group for undocumented young people like me. I’m now getting my master’s there, and I’m part of the college Student Services Administration Program, with the dream of one day making higher education accessible to low-income and undocumented students.

“Without DACA, I no longer have access to health insurance through an employer. I suffer from depression and suicidal thoughts. This is why I have visited my Members of Congress to urge them to pass the Dream Act, because my life and my health is on the line.”

Patricia Ulloa was born in El Salvador. Patricia said: “I have a mixed status family—my parents have TPS, I have one U.S. citizen brother, and my two sisters and I have DACA. We need the Dream Act now because one of my sister’s DACA expires on March 6, 2018, and pretty soon the rest of my sisters and I could lose our protections too. Our parents are already losing their TPS protections because Trump terminated the program.

“I want the government to recognize us as part of society and know that this is our home and we contribute to our communities even without papers. My family wants to be able to stay together and feel safe to drive, work, and travel.”

Here she says—I want to repeat this—“we contribute to our communities even without papers.”

As an Italian American who grew up at a time when I did not feel any prejudice or bias—or if I did, I thought it was the other person’s problem. We Italian Americans always think there are only two kinds of people: those who are Italian American and those who want to be.

But in my father’s generation and my grandfather’s generation and my great-grandmother’s generation, it was a different story, and there was a term. It was called “wop,” and people used that as a derogatory term to Italian Americans.

Do you know what wop means, Mr. Speaker? Wop means without papers. Without papers. That is what these people were called, without papers. And that is all that these kids are, without papers. In every other way, strong participants in our society, in our community, and in our country.

And so again, just give us a chance to have a vote, Mr. Speaker. Another day will come when we can talk about comprehensive immigration reform. We

can talk about this, that, and the other thing, but right now, the Hurd-Aguilar bill, whatever is being put together in the Senate, recognizes our responsibility to protect our borders, recognizes the value of immigration to our country: hopes, dreams, aspirations, making America more American every newcomer who comes. I truly believe that, the constant reinvigoration of America.

Saba Nefes from Texas was born in Mexico, and Saba writes: “We still don’t know a lot about cancer. We still don’t know about genetic diseases. My research at Texas Tech goes right into the heart of that. It uses pure mathematics to look at why all these genetic diseases exist and how they exist so someday we can come up with cures for them. We’re far from that point, but this is the challenge I work on.

“In addition to conducting research at Texas Tech, I’ve taught undergraduate students as a teaching assistant. This past semester, I got to teach anatomy, and one of my students was blind and had a service dog. It was a blessing, a great experience to teach her anatomy, something that she got to touch and feel to learn. It taught me a lot of patience. It taught me what it’s like to work alongside my American students and peers. I’m just as much a part of their lives as they are of mine.

“If DACA is repealed, I would be out of a job immediately, and I won’t be able to teach my students. I won’t be able to continue conducting the research that I am conducting right now. This research could help scientists understand diseases like cancer and lead down a path toward a cure. Without DACA, I can’t continue this critical work.”

Now, I want to just say this. I think there is a lack of understanding, and we should have made it clear on the other side of the aisle and with the White House about what the President’s action in September did.

The President, maybe in good spirit, thought that by giving us a March 5 deadline, he was giving a 6-month reprieve to DREAMers; but what, in fact, he was doing was making matters worse for them. It was most unfortunate. Most unfortunate because, again, while they may have maintained the status of DREAMer, they did not have the protections of the DACA executive order that President Obama put forth.

Perhaps it would have been better if President Trump had said: “I am giving Congress 6 months to pass a bill, but I am not changing the status quo that protects the DREAMers.”

Just on that point, President Obama, when he protected the DREAMers and their parents, what he did was significant, but it was not as significant as what President Reagan did in the 1980s. President Obama acted because Congress would not act. He took action.

President Reagan acted after Congress did act, the Immigration Act of 1986. President Reagan said, inter-

esting: But you did not go far enough. So he instituted, by executive order, Family Fairness. And then Family Fairness was continued under President George Herbert Walker Bush, two great Presidents for immigration in our country.

What they did with their executive orders, which stood the test of court cases, protected a higher percentage of people than what President Obama did—two Republican Presidents, two great champions on immigration. Even after Congress acted, they said: You didn’t go far enough.

President Obama had to act because Congress would not act.

Then we come forward with President Clinton following in that tradition. President George W. Bush, great President on immigration, he couldn’t convince his own party to pass comprehensive immigration reform. But his statements, his values-based policy on immigrants is something, to this day—and his current statements are so beautiful and inspirational about treating people with dignity and valuing their worth as we talk about immigration.

And then, of course, President Obama, doing what he did in terms of executive orders, protecting people in the tradition of Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush, with the common values of George W. Bush and President Clinton.

So now we have the first Republican President in modern times—the first President, really—who is anti-immigrant, and that is just such a change from his own party, and it makes it hard to see where we can have shared values.

Certainly one piece of that debate which would require a fuller stipulation of fact, hearings, et cetera, to see what the best path forward is is important for us to do. But for now, because of the action that the President took, it necessitates us taking action here, as the President anticipated by putting a March 5 deadline on it. We would like to do it sooner.

This is a vehicle leaving the station. And if the Republicans need our support for this legislation, which has many good features—and I commend the negotiators on it and was a part of that—unless we can get the same commitment that MITCH MCCONNELL gave the bipartisan group of legislators who asked for it in the Senate, we would like that same response to our bipartisan group.

I want to talk about Jaime Rangel: “To me, Georgia is my home. I am proud to be from the South, and I love to give back to my community.

“I tell everybody I’m a Latino that grew up eating tortillas and grits at the same time, and north Georgia is home. And for somebody to say, ‘Hey, you can’t get some instate tuition’ in a place that I consider my State was really—it was really heartbreaking. I felt out of place.

“Right now, I feel optimistic because I believe the greater part of the coun-

try understands that you can’t deport 750,000 individuals. These are individuals who give back to their community, who are involved in their churches, who have Ph.D.’s, who have been creating jobs and who just want to make this country a better place.

“When President Obama announced DACA, to me, it was a life-changing experience. I felt that I finally was given a decent chance to be somebody in this country, to contribute to my State, to contribute to my community, to get a job, and just give back and be somebody in the greatest country on Earth.”

That is the patriotism of our DREAMers.

“So when DACA was introduced, it opened the doors to many things, even doors I didn’t think were imaginable to open.

“My name is Jaime Rangel. I was born in Mexico, but I came to this country when I was only 3 months old.”

As the President said, he loves the DREAMers. He loves the DREAMers. He loves to call it DACA. Subscribe to that. He loves the DREAMers. And these people came to this country not of their own volition, through no fault of their own. I, myself, thank their parents for bringing them here because they are a blessing to America, but, from their standpoint, through no fault of their own.

Why can’t we be fair and give them a break?

Javier Noris in New York City came from Mexico: “I invest in the next generation of biomedical tech solutions.

“When I was working at a convenience store, I always had big aspirations, even though I wasn’t sure how they would come to fruition. But the moment DACA was passed, it really put everything in perspective, and I really made a conscious effort to focus on my career. So I ended up pursuing a career as a software engineer.

“I went to school at Cal State University, Northridge. I studied economics and biotechnology. After working as a software engineer in Silicon Valley, I ended up moving to Brooklyn, New York. I now work in venture capital, running a small venture fund that invests in early-stage life science and frontier technology startups.

“As a CEO of an investment fund, DACA being repealed does not only affect me. A DACA repeal could affect the startups with which I work and my ability to invest in them and their ability to continue to grow and employ hundreds of workers across the country.

“My name is Javier. I’m a DACA recipient and I’m from Mexico City. I came to the United States when I was 5 years old.”

He did not come alone. He did not. He was brought here by his parents.

So many of our DREAMers here are called DREAMers because they have big dreams. And they are entrepreneurs; they are teachers; they are

researchers in science; they are in our military. They are making such a fabulous contribution to the future of our country.

It is not just about them. This DACA repeal that we are making is about us: Who are we as a country? How do we honor the vows of our founders, the Statue of Liberty and her appeal to the world that has made America such a beacon of hope?

□ 1045

The list goes on and on about many, many DACA recipients, and I intend to read them all.

But in addition to that, I want to go back to the Bible because I could have brought the Bible here and just read the Bible and said: If we are people of faith, in God we trust, as we contend to be, we must act upon our faith, and act upon our values.

People always ask me: Where is hope? Where should we find hope?

Hope is sitting there where it always has been, right between faith and charity. People have hope because they believe. They believe in God. They have faith in our country and themselves and their families; and they have faith in the goodness, the charity of others that people, when given the chance, will do the right thing, and then, hopefully, that will be returned to them when they need hope and can have faith in the goodness of others.

I want to tell you about Maria Praeli. She is from Connecticut. She said: "I didn't let anything keep me from advancing academically. Unfortunately, when high school ended, I couldn't attend the university of my dreams. I was getting all these acceptance letters, but I couldn't go to any of these schools because I didn't have a Social Security number"—this is my point; you can't get a Social Security number—"and, therefore, I wasn't eligible for financial aid. I couldn't pursue the dreams that I had been hoping to. But I did not let my undocumented status hold me back from continuing to advance academically.

"I enrolled at Gateway Community College, where I worked very hard as a student government association president and graduated with 3.8 GPA to then be able to attend Quinnipiac University. I graduated magna cum laude and earned my bachelor's degree in May of 2016.

"It's surreal to wake up every day and be reminded that even though I have been living in America for the past 18 years, in a few months, all my honors and education might end up not mattering anymore because I won't be able to contribute to the country which I have called home for so long.

"My name is Maria. I was born in Ica, Peru, and moved to the United States when I was 5 years old."

There is documentation after documentation of how young these children were when they came to the United States all because their parents wanted to make the future better for them.

Andrea Seabra writes: "My dad was a fighter pilot in the Peruvian Air Force, so I grew up with a lot of military influence. When I was in high school, I joined New Jersey ROTC, which was the junior ROTC, and I was there for 3½ years.

"It gave me that taste of maybe what my dad might have lived when he was in the military. I lost him when I was only 6 years old, so I never really got to know that part of him. I always thought in the back of my head, when I graduate, I want to join the military. When I was in my junior year, I realized that I couldn't enroll in the military because I was undocumented.

"I was sitting with a recruiter at my school, an Air Force recruiter, and he asked me about it. He's like, 'What's your social?' So when I told him, 'Well, I don't have one—' meaning Social Security number—"he is like, 'What about your passport?' I'm like, 'Well, I have a Peruvian passport.' And he's like, 'No, you have to either be a U.S. resident or a U.S. citizen to be able to join.'

"That's the first time I ever experienced that big wall of being undocumented, like a big stop sign saying, no, you can't pursue this passion of yours.

"I didn't live a normal life until I got DACA. Thanks to DACA, I was able to pursue my career after graduating cum laude from Saint Leo University, in marketing. With DACA, I was able to build my professional network, help people, influence people, and do all these things for myself and my family and my community. If that's going to be taken away, everything that I've accomplished, that I've worked on, that I've helped people with will just fall apart. It will shake the foundation of who I am today as a person, as a professional, even as a friend, as a daughter, everything.

"My name is Andrea. I was born in Lima, Peru. I was brought here by my mom when I was 11 years old."

She had lost her dad when she was 6. But this idea of military service, many, when they got the DACA status protection, have served honorably in the military. We are very proud of them, as we are proud of all of our men and women in the military.

And I emphasize the story of hard work that these DREAMers have because they are very consistent with American workers. American people are so resourceful. They are so wonderful. They so care about their families and their communities. So this is not to say that DACA recipients are different. It is to say they are just like us.

We are very proud of the American people, the productivity of our workforce, the faith of our families, the civic mindedness and the generosity of spirit, and, really, of resources of the American people.

My telling these stories is not to separate the DACA recipients from them, but to show how similar they are and how assimilated they are into our community. It is mutually beneficial.

Jose Manuel Santoyo, from Texas, said: "My education was so that I could contribute to society.

"My last year at Southern Methodist University, I began working on an engaged learning fellowship. Because of that, I was selected to be the commencement speaker for my graduation and represent almost 600 other students who would be graduating that day. In my speech, I thanked the faculty and staff at my university. I had teachers who I've looked up to my whole life, who provided amazing educational opportunities regardless of the papers I had or didn't have.

"I want to be able to work and I want to work in public service. In order to do that, I would need to have DACA. I would need to have work authorization in this country. I feel like that's what my education was for. My education wasn't for me. My education was so I could contribute to society. My education was so that I could give back to the community that has given me so much, to the country that has given me so much.

"This year I hope that our Congress and our President work to fund a permanent solution to provide us DACA recipients a pathway to citizenship, to give us an opportunity to use our education, to use everything that we've learned in order to give back, in order to contribute, in order to provide for ourselves and our families and our communities."

What Manuel said is that he looked up to his teachers. He learned from others in our country. That also demonstrates the beautiful commitment of the American people to teach, to shed light to younger people, newcomers to our country, to make a valuable contribution.

So in saluting, as I say, the DREAMers, we are saluting the opportunity they were given by the American people to make their contribution. Hopefully, Congress will live up to the values of the American people who overwhelmingly support the DREAMers, and see this as a separate issue not just about the DREAMers, but about who we are as a country.

Cesar Vargas was born in Mexico. He holds a law degree and wants to become a military lawyer. Aside from advocating for legislation to allow DREAMers to serve in the military, he has been advocating for immigration reform through a political group he launched last year called Dream Action Coalition. The group is known for challenging lawmakers on their stance on immigration and highlighting the political power of voters. In his case, Latino voters.

Kelly—just Kelly—is from Dover, New Jersey. Kelly is a student working toward becoming a medical assistant. She will be done with courses in January. However, without a DACA work permit, she won't be able to complete an internship required to complete her training and get certified. Her driver's license also expires in February.

Understand this: you can't have a Social Security card, a passport, a driver's license. You cannot function as a person in our society without having your status protected by the Dream Act. So when people tell you it is all protected, it isn't. Listen to the stories.

So I was talking about Kelly. Kelly is a student working to becoming a medical assistant. She will be done in January. However, without DACA, she won't be able to complete her training or get her driver's license, as I mentioned. Kelly—just Kelly—has lived in New Jersey since she was 5 years old. She says DACA has “given me the chance to drive, have a work permit, buy a car, get car insurance—things that obviously benefit the country as well. It's helped me to not be stuck, not to have to depend on others. . . .”

Kelly's DACA renewal application was rejected because she forgot to fill in a date of expiration. When she received notice of the error, she fixed it and sent the application back immediately, but, by then, the arbitrary October deadline had passed.

This is another reason why we need to clear this up.

Crystal—just Crystal—is a single, working mom of 5 U.S. citizen children. She was born in the Bahamas and arrived in the U.S. at 6 years old. Crystal had her fifth child only 3 weeks ago, and while recovering, she had been on unpaid leave from a retail job, where she has worked for nearly 6 years. Now that her work authorization has expired, she will not be able to return to work, and her ability to provide for her kids will be impeded.

What?

Carlos from the Bronx. Carlos lives in the Bronx and is the only undocumented member of his family. The whole family pulls together to care for Carlos' younger sister who has severe cerebral palsy and cannot walk. Carlos' employer, a fabrication company, desperately wants to keep Carlos as an employee. His DACA and work authorization expired February 18, 2017. It expired already.

So the list goes on and on.

Carlos sent his DACA renewal application on September 18, 2017, 2 weeks after the President's announcement. But it was not received until December 11—he sent it on September 18. It was received on October 11. In the rejection letter, he was notified that he failed to fill in his DACA expiration date on one of the forms. The relevant information was included in the cover letter and in other parts of the packet. Carlos arrived in the U.S. when he was 2 years old. New York is the only place he can call home. The expiration date was in the package, but in one of the forms it was not added. So he lost his protections.

I have to mention Kelly, who is a constituent of RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN. Crystal, who was here from the Bahamas, is a constituent of TED DEUTCH. Carlos is from the Bronx and is a constituent of JOE CROWLEY.

Saul is from San Francisco and is a constituent of JACKIE SPEIER. Saul aspires to be a teacher, Mr. Speaker. DACA has allowed him to work in the field he is passionate about: education.

He was able to get a driver's license. Saul submitted a DACA renewal application September 30, well in time, via USPS express delivery. He received notification of an error, which he fixed and resubmitted. However, his application was rejected as untimely.

Agustin is from Brooklyn. Agustin's DACA will expire in January—already—within days of his 21st birthday. DACA allowed Agustin to go to college to study criminal justice. He works and goes to school. When his DACA expires—which it has—he won't have the means to pay his bills and the cost of school.

What are we doing?

It is like without papers, WOP. And now people who are striving to have their papers are outlawed on a technicality. Really? Aren't we supposed to be enabling people to make their contribution instead of hurting them with the process?

It is, again, important to note, and for our viewers to note that what people are asking for is nothing special. It is asking them to honor what was there. When DACA recipients were told to sign up, they submitted considerable information about their lives. They effectively outed their parents with the commitment that there would be protection for them.

We have heard many good bipartisan proposals to protect the DREAMers, to give consideration to parents so that they would not be deported because they brought a child into the country. Some of these parents have citizen children now who are also making a contribution to our society.

So it is because people understand that that September 5 announcement by the President was very disruptive. Let's hope that it was not intentional. I don't think that it was. I have no reason to think that it was. But it did cause problems that perhaps were unforeseen. The system did not even allow for a correction in a form in a timely fashion because of dependence on when it was received to be judged a protection for those students.

So, in fact, over 110 DREAMers a day lose their protection. It is over—approaching 20,000 already who are losing their protections. And it will be more by the time of March 5, which is the deadline. And if we are going to reach a March 5 deadline, or any deadline, we have to get on a timetable to do so.

One timetable we have is the opportunity today to have a commitment from the Speaker not to be afraid of DREAMers. Thank God for them. They contribute. We are a nation of DREAMers. That is why they fit so comfortably in our society and contribute to it so beautifully.

□ 1100

I will tell you about Mayron, RICK LARSEN's constituent from Washington

State. Mayron, originally from Honduras, has lived in the U.S. since he was 11 years old and knows no other country as home. He has overcome lots of obstacles to be who he is today, a successful entrepreneur who owns three businesses. He submitted his DACA renewal application before the deadline. It arrived on October 2, 2017. He accidentally submitted the processing fee for \$465 instead of \$495. That is what it takes. \$495 is a lot of money. His entire case was sent back for that reason.

With his rejection, he received a green document stating: You are invited to resubmit your application package after you have corrected the reasons for rejection. Place this letter on top of your application package.

Mayron affixed the processing fee and resubmitted his application with the green document on top of his application package. On October 31, he received the entire package in the mail with a rejection notice dated October 24 that stated that USCIS is no longer accepting DACA applications.

Mayron has been a DACA applicant for the last 3 years and is heartbroken by the DHS' actions in rejecting the renewal of his DACA.

GREGORY MEEKS' constituent, Brittany, writes that she was born in Trinidad and Tobago and arrived in the U.S. at 3 years old and grew up in New York. She has no close family in Trinidad and Tobago, and all of her immediate and most of her extended family who are citizens and residents live near her in New York.

Brittany is a full-time caretaker for a family in Brooklyn with two 14-month-old sons, one of whom has special needs and requires physical therapy. Although the child's special needs were not known when she was hired, Brittany has risen to the occasion with grace, calm, and competence according to the family. We are devastated by the thought she may not be able to continue to work in this country, and, no, we won't find another caregiver who is as reliable, nurturing, and unshakeable as Brittany.

Brittany submitted her renewal application September 21, but it was sent back to her on October 5 because she forgot to sign her name in one place. She sent it back immediately but was rejected as untimely.

Hugo in Houston, Texas. Hugo is a 34-year-old father who lives in Houston, Texas. He came to the United States from Mexico when he was 6 years old and has lived in Houston ever since. He completed K-12 in Houston and now works at a photo framing shop near downtown. After Trump was elected, Hugo worried about reapplying, so he waited. Hugo found out from one text message from a friend on September 6 that he needed to reapply before October 5 or risk losing his DACA. He decided to quickly put together his application as his DACA was set to expire September 9, 2017.

Hurricane Harvey had just hit the Houston area. While Hugo's home was

not destroyed, the entire city of Houston was shut down, including many businesses. Hugo's work was one of them. He didn't have the time or money to pay an attorney. He had to borrow half the money for the application fee because he couldn't get \$495 together in such a short period of time.

Hugo was unable to get his DACA renewal application mailed until October 4, which is still before the deadline. USCIS received Hugo's application on October 6. On November 1, Hugo received a letter from USCIS denying his renewal. Now, you know if they got his application on October 6, they knew it was mailed before October 5, or in time on October 5, but they turned him down.

The point I want to make here is these are technicalities that people have been turned down on. Could we all live up to the standard that has been set to sign in every place with the date and the this and the that even though the information is contained in the package, even though hurricanes intervened in the mail service or the opportunity to put the package together, no mitigation, no consideration for that? That is really unfortunate because the American people are the losers in all of that.

Fernanda writes that she arrived in the U.S. at age 2 wearing a pink parka and matching pants, clutching on to her mom. She carried a single bag and abandoned her family in search of a better life beside her father in the U.S. Her dad was already in Alabama, and they were wanting to be by his side.

In the year before his decision to leave Mexico, he had been assaulted five times and already had his wedding band stolen twice. Since arriving to the States, they have been able to start four businesses and create jobs. They purchased two cars and put Fernanda through college. They also have helped their U.S.-born son reach his goals of being a professional soccer player and is on the Olympic Development Program team for the southeast region.

SHEILA JACKSON LEE is with us in the Chamber. Sheila's story is that one of these young people living with uncertainty is Cesar Espinoza, a DREAMer from Houston who came to America from Mexico at the age of 6. Cesar adapted quickly to his Texas home and became a standout student excelling in programs for the gifted and talented throughout his primary and secondary education.

Faced daily with the constant threat of deportation, Cesar and his family were forced to have an emergency plan in place in the event one of his family members were detained by the immigration services. Espinoza graduated from DeBailey High School near the top of his class and was accepted at some of America's most prestigious universities, including Yale. But his undocumented status prevented him from obtaining financial assistance, nearly shattering his college ambitions. He could have given up on his

pursuit of a degree, but instead he chose to make a difference.

I know there are other young people who are just like me, said Cesar. They need someone to fight for them and try to make a way. That is when he founded FIEL, an immigrants' rights organization based in Houston.

Congresswoman BARBARA LEE writes about her constituent, Emily. Emily is a resident of Alameda, California. She came to the U.S. when she was 9 years old with her family from South Korea in the year 2000. She currently works in community health work in a federally qualified health center in Oakland, California, serving the underserved API community. Emily graduated from UC Berkeley in 2014 and has been working as a community health worker ever since. She is also taking a class after work to prepare to apply to graduate school.

Emily says DACA has changed her life and the lives of her family members. She was able to finally contribute to her family's living expenses upon graduation and will continue to pursue her dreams.

Emily is grateful for the protection she received under DACA. But she is also deeply concerned about her mother and friends who don't have the same opportunity to come out of the shadows.

Emily said, "When my rights as a 'deserving American' are justified by the idea that it was 'no fault of my own,' it automatically criminalizes my mother, whose love, sacrifice, and resilience made it possible for me and my siblings to be where we are today. I am forever thankful for her courage and the sacrifice she made to give us a better life."

Emily's story is a reminder that we must protect DREAMers, but we must never give up the fight for comprehensive immigration reform. It is past time for Congress to pass the clean Dream Act.

Jose Castillo wrote:

"My name is Jose Castillo, and I am 22 years old. When I was 4 years old"—can you imagine how precious—"my parents took my little sister and me and packed up everything they owned. We got on a plane and headed to the United States to escape a country in its early stages of turmoil. My parents gave up everything they had to provide us with a sliver of a chance, one they knew we wouldn't have in Venezuela.

"They made it a point to raise us well while shielding us from racism and their fears of deportation.

"Eventually, we came to understand just how many doors were closed to us. Disheartened and frightened for our future, we prayed for something, anything. DACA was that something. DACA has given me hope and a real chance, but, more importantly, it has given me a voice. I can proudly tell my story to anyone who is willing to listen, a story about a family who is determined and persistent in their pursuit of an American life.

"DACA's removal would rip that away from us. Ending DACA will hurt more than 800,000 people, people not just with dreams and aspirations, but people that want to be seen, understood, and welcomed. They are your friends and your neighbors, your schoolteachers. . . ."

Now, this is so important: "They are your friends and your neighbors, your schoolteachers and your doctors, and they need you to come to their side and help. Call Congress, have an open conversation, relay facts and fight for my family and the hundreds of thousands like us."

This goes on and on. It just seems like it is such an easy solution. There are plenty of challenges that we have that are complex, comprehensive immigration reform, issues that relate to how we prepare our country for jobs for the 21st century, how we prepare our workers and our education system and the rest. But in all of that, we have to be strong as a country. To be strong as a country, we have to be true to our values. To be true to our values is to respect the aspirations of people who are our future. Our young people are our future, and these DREAMers are part of that. They have enriched our community, and they have been enriched by our community, by the goodness of the American people, and by the greatness of our country.

So our plea to the Speaker is not one just for the DREAMers. Our plea to the Speaker is for us, for ourselves, again, to honor the vows of our Founders, our patriarch, George Washington, and others who followed him to make our country great, but also to make it a beacon of hope to the rest of the world.

Claudia came to the United States when she was 5. She said: ". . . my family brought me to a country I would call home. I had to learn a new language, new culture, a new way of life. I was brought here by hard-working, loving parents who only wanted what was best for my future, running away from poverty and leaving family behind in the hope of a better life.

"DACA allowed me to have a chance at a better tomorrow. I am now a medical assistant and a third-year student at the University of Utah. Taking away DACA would remove the privileges that I hold dearly. I am not an 'illegal alien,' nor am I a criminal or a rapist. I am a human; I am 1 of the 800,000 DREAMers who thrive for a better future. America is my home. I didn't choose to be undocumented, but I do decide to keep fighting for what is right and keep moving forward, undocumented and unafraid. I am a DREAMer, and I am here to stay."

Did I tell you about Juan Escalante? "With much foresight to the oncoming political evidence, my parents fled Venezuela in 2000, with my two brothers and me in tow, for the United States. In 2006, we learned that an immigration attorney had mishandled our immigration case, which meant that,

after 6 years of legal fees and paying taxes, we were no longer on the path towards U.S. citizenship.

“By the time President Obama announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program in 2012, I had graduated from Florida State University with a political science degree. I fought and lost two legislative fights in support of the Dream Act, helped enact a law in Florida that would provide in-state tuition for undocumented students across the State, and helped organize thousands of DREAMers from all across the country.

“Since 2013, DACA has protected my brothers and me from deportation. With DACA, I was able to return to FSU for a master’s degree in public administration and get a job in immigration advocacy, as the digital campaigns manager for America’s Voice. I am a Tallahassee resident.”

Mayra came to the United States at age 6. She said: “I have now lived in the United States for 21 years. Currently, I work full time as a special education paraprofessional. I am also a college student. I’m working on my third college degree.”

How many of us can make that claim?

“In May of 2018, I will be graduating summa cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education and special education. A challenge I have had to overcome is accepting situations that are out of my control and knowing that having strength and fortitude will lead me to prevail in the end.

“I first went to college to become a nurse. In 2011, my junior year of college, I graduated with honors with an associate’s degree in nursing. Unfortunately, I was unable to get licensed due to my immigration status. It was upsetting and embarrassing. I was embarrassed because I would see former peers working as actual nurses, and I wasn’t. And not because I was incapable, but merely because I was never even given the opportunity to take the NCLEX and get licensed.

“In 2012, I finished my senior year in college and graduated cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in general studies. Over the years, the State I reside in has changed State legislation to allow DACA recipients to receive driver’s licenses, professional licenses, and certifications.”

That is a beautiful thing, but we want that for the whole country. There are just certain things, the contributions of DREAMers to our society, the work they do every day with the American people of which they consider themselves to be a part, the benefits they have received from working and knowing people in our country, themselves benefiting from the greatness of the American people, the reciprocity they have given back and honoring the American Dream, working hard with a work ethic, an ethic of faith, family, and community, and a work ethic, usually typical of an immigration community as many of us who are families

from the immigration community, which are all of us unless we happen to be very blessed to be born a Native American in our country. How beautiful some of the Native American families in our country have been to our newcomers to our country.

Our country should all be that welcoming, and I think our country is. That is why the numbers are in the eighties and nineties, in terms of support for DREAMers, and even in the seventies among Republicans for a path to citizenship.

Carlos Emilio Diaz writes: “I am 19 years old, and I was born in Guerrero, Mexico. I moved to Houston when I was a year old”—a year old—“and was raised there my entire life. I am currently a student at UT Austin. My biggest dream is to provide my parents with everything they need without them having to work. They have sacrificed so much and continue to do so. I feel that’s the least I could do. DACA gives me that opportunity, and without it, my dream has become uncertain.”

One of the things that I think many families in transition, that is to say, the upward mobility of education in our country and the length of time that families have been here, is the story of their respect for their parents, to see opportunities that they have, that DREAMers in this case have, but just take any people in our country. That one generation has tremendous opportunity because of the sacrifice of their parents and grandparents.

□ 1115

One of the attitudes that I have heard from people is, while they are enjoying and are grateful for everything that they have and the opportunity they have to give back to society, they have a certain sadness that their parents didn’t have that same opportunity for education, to reach their personal aspirations. Their aspiration was to make the future better for their children. They certainly were successful at that. But, still, among some young people, you hear: “I wish my parents could have had this opportunity.”

How many people have ever said: “If only my mother would have had this opportunity”? That is in every generation, practically, because opportunities for women have changed so much.

But, in any case, I have a neighbor in East Palo Alto in the heart of Silicon Valley, Rocio, who writes:

“I grew up in East Palo Alto in the heart of Silicon Valley before and after the dot-com bubble. Despite living in a tough neighborhood of violence”—you maybe don’t know that, but East Palo Alto is, in the heart of all this wealth, success, and entrepreneurship, a place that needs more of our attention.

“Despite living in a tough neighborhood of violence, I watched “Star Trek Voyager,” “Friends,” read Dr. Seuss, and memorized musicals from “Funny Girl” to “The Wizard of Oz.” On the weekends, I helped my dad clean office buildings. He hid me in the trash cart

to sneak me into work. I picked up the trash and refilled the trash can with bags at every room. Today, I am in one of those conference rooms whiteboarding with engineers and product managers to solve the toughest problems in Big Data.”

Imagine being sneaked in in a trash barrel, helping to clean those offices, and now being the leader in the room, whiteboarding with engineers and product managers, solving the toughest problems in Big Data.

“Anyone who thinks East Palo Alto is a precious community doesn’t live there anymore. During the worst days of gang violence, I had to become street smart and know that, as an immigrant and only child in a house of 17 people, I wasn’t in a position to fight back. My strategy was always to keep a low profile and be on the lookout for trouble.

“The community of EPA put me in touch with amazing people through Eastside. Eastside is a private”—when I say “EPA,” in this case, it is East Palo Alto.

“The community of East Palo Alto put me in touch with amazing people through Eastside. Eastside is a private school in EPA that helps underrepresented and first-generation students get into college. A couple sponsored me from 6th through 12th grade.

“Every day, I met volunteers and teachers from the surrounding towns and Stanford University. Through a reading program, I met Christina, or Chris, as I like to call her, who, for the past 15 years has been a mentor and a friend. She helped me become a better reader and eventually edit a manuscript for a book. The education and support that I received at Eastside allowed me to be successful and stay safe.

“It sounds crazy, but I couldn’t get a cell phone. If something happened to me while my parents worked the night shift as janitors, I couldn’t call 911. I didn’t have a credit history, which requires a Social Security number. That’s when I started becoming aware of my status as an undocumented student. A Stanford med school student, Julie, helped me out. Although the phone was under her name, I paid her in cash for part of my bill every month.”

So, again, you see, without it—no status, no credit, no Social Security number, no driver’s license—it is debilitating and doubly worrisome because so many of these people are making such a valuable contribution to our society, learning from the American people, and giving back.

Maneri: “I’m 18 years old and from Los Angeles. I just graduated high school and will be attending UCLA to study political science in the fall. Being an undocumented student has been tough. Coming to this country at 6 years old completely changed my life. Learning English and doing well in school was a battle since everyone in my family only spoke Spanish and had

no more than an elementary school education.

“However, being a DREAMer has also shaped who I am, what I stand for, and has inspired me to dream big. After graduation, I hope to go to law school and become an immigration lawyer to help others in my situation and give back to my community. I dream that one day your immigration status doesn’t define your path in life or hold you back from reaching your goals but, instead, encourages and embraces diversity.”

Again, so many stories of so many DREAMers. I just want to see if we have some more from our colleagues in terms of the ones that they have submitted. We have received all of these from our colleagues. Some of them identified as being from them or not, but all of them, again, proud, proud of these young people who not only are DREAMers, but inspire the rest of us to dream.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your courtesy. I am not finished yet. I thank you for your courtesy in the interim and just want to say I am taking this time because I think we have an opportunity now that is almost matchless. We are at a moment when we can all come together to do something really good for the country, take an action that has bipartisan support.

We have no right, as I said earlier, any of us, to associate ourselves with the aspirations of the DREAMers unless we are able to and willing and courageous enough to take action on their behalf. So, while some of us have been, more or less, receptive to receiving DREAMers, learning from them, being inspired by them, some have not been as exposed to these DREAMers and their stories as others. I think, if you had been—and I am not saying you reject it; I am just saying maybe it is geography or whatever—you would be as insistent as many of us are that we live up to who we are as a country, and this people’s House listens to the voices of the American people who overwhelmingly support our DREAMers.

Again, I don’t know when we would have another opportunity that matches today for us to just get a simple commitment from the Speaker of the House that he will give us a vote. There is no guarantee. We will have the debate. People will weigh in. They will make their voices heard. Congress, again, will work its will. But do not diminish this House of Representatives, this people’s House, to a place where we don’t have the right to express our views on a subject so important to our country that has such general support in the public and, yet, the Speaker of the House is saying we don’t matter here, we, Members of the House, don’t count in this consideration because maybe we just don’t have the courage to do what we need to do.

I believe we do. I believe many people on the Republican side of the aisle have demonstrated even greater courage than some of us on this side. It is easy

for me. But it is also hard for me because we really, again, are in a position to do something, and we feel helpless—that is what the hard part is—helpless if our Speaker will not, Speaker of the whole House, give this dignity to this House of Representatives to be able to take the vote on a subject of broad debate in the country, but we can’t debate a bill on the floor of the House.

The Senate has received that dignity, has received that commitment from MITCH MCCONNELL, from Leader MCCONNELL on the Republican side, but, nonetheless, the Senate side, responding to bipartisan support, bringing a bill to the floor with, again, no guarantee, the debate, we will see what path that legislation takes.

But why a gag rule in the House of Representatives? Why a gag rule? And that is why I am voicing some of the concerns today, largely through the voices and the stories of our DREAMers. We want to be sure that the public record of the Congress of the United States forevermore will reflect the stories of their great contribution to America in the hopes that those stories will move the Speaker of the House to give us a vote, to elevate this House of Representatives to its rightful place instead of diminishing us by saying the Senate may talk about these subjects that the American people care so much about, not so fast in the House of Representatives.

So that is why I am using my leadership minute to make sure that the RECORD will show the magnificent contributions of the DREAMers in our country, the courage it took for their parents to bring them here.

And again, Members are sending in their stories from Dallas, Texas, from Arizona State. Let me read this one:

Pitter-patter. Pitter-patter. Stretching out my hand to greet her. She reiterated my name, Mr. Luis Roberto Usera, class salutatorian.

Isn’t that great? Making the salutary address.

Clear as the day, breaking wind upon my face, silencing my voice as I spoke out in a crowd of thousands. This is our day, ladies and gentlemen, the class of 2012. The last 18 years of our lives, everything we have accomplished, everything we have been through has led us to today.

Reading these words aloud encouraged that I had made a difference, that my work ethic finally paid off. This is meant to be an honor. Here I was, 4.8 grade point average, 4.8 grade point average, all honors classes. Ran student government and some of the most successful blood drives my school ever has seen and no way to do anything with it. I looked, watching people’s reaction, their faces toward mine, waiting for me to continue. And so I did.

An echo was heard around the amphitheater rapidly dispersing my voice to everyone in the back, to myself. I spoke into the enchanted crowd, amused at my priestlike voice.

And here, 4 years later, we have to face that same feeling, the bittersweet combination of nostalgia and excitement that comes when you turn off one road in your life and onto another. The speech would have been great if I had believed a word I was saying. The speech might have rung true to someone

else, but the advice that was inadvertently coming out of my mouth meant nothing to myself.

I could no longer follow my own advice. Governing laws did not allow undocumented immigrants to go to college right out of high school. My too thin of a boy who ignorantly thought he would go to college transformed to that of a cashier tending lines in the local supermarket. In retrospect, those feelings were before DACA was announced.

I still remember the many chills that went through my body when President Obama announced the initiative. Then, still worried that it might be too good to be true, I stuck with it and applied, making a huge difference in my life. I could continue my education, work legally, and live peacefully in a world surrounded by fear.

Through DACA, I could achieve the by then impossible college education. DACA allowed me to come out of the shadows and show the true potential I have without fear. DACA demonstrated to me that people cared, that people wanted to help and understand the situation.

I recently received TheDream.US scholarship that bestowed upon me the gift of education, for which I will be ever grateful. I am currently an undergraduate student studying biochemistry at Arizona State University.

A great school, by the way.

I arrived in the United States when I was 5. I grew up American. I grew up speaking English. I grew up to call the United States home. This is my home. This is my country. I am here to stay. Luis Roberto Usera Brisano.

Sofia de la Varga, an EMT student:

I was 5 years old when my mother told me where we were going to on vacation. At the time, I was excited for this vacation because our dog had passed away and was buried right outside my bedroom window. I wasn’t too happy about that when it came to getting a night’s rest. I went ahead and I gathered my teddy bear and book bag, which pretty much summed up all my belongings as a child.

When I was 15, I realized our vacation was more than a permanent move from a dangerous country. My mother gave up her entire family for us. She left her brothers and her mother to risk her life for us.

Today, I feel worthless. Since I came to America, I have felt nothing but useless and not belonging. I grew up here. I work, study, breathe, and want to live forever here. Yet never in my life have I been given a chance to become a citizen, because I was not born here.

For the longest, I have been sick and tired of living in a place that I am not wanted. For so long, this place I call home refuses to call me theirs. When people ask me where I am from, I say “America.” America. My soul and heart are from here. If I were to move back, I know for a fact I would not like it. I wouldn’t have a car, internet, friends, security. And getting killed is a possibility every day. However, if the choice were mine and no one in my family existed, I would leave in a heartbeat because at least I would belong.

I wanted to leave many times. My mom, the most wonderful soul on the planet, convinced me otherwise. She fled because, since the day I was born, they said they were trying to rob, kidnap, and even kill her.

When I first heard President Obama’s speech on DACA years ago, I saw the light at the end of the tunnel. DACA granted me everything to live a normal life and, for once, belong. It was temporary, but I felt real. I graduated high school at the top percent in my class. I was first in my family, and I was blessed to start college and earned a scholarship that paid for my first 2 years.

This December I will be finishing up my EMT school. In the future, I hope to complete 2 more years of paramedic and attain an associate in emergency services.

I have a brother that drowned when I was younger. In my home country, you can forget that police and an ambulance will arrive or even bother to come if you call. My only hope is to save as many lives as I can or die risking my life for another person.

□ 1130

I know DACA can be taken away. I won't be able to drive to my college or work to pay off my college tuition. My scholarship will be terminated, I will be deported and eventually left with nothing to live for. I pray for an opportunity to stop feeling like that. There isn't room for me here.

You see, it is amazing the effect on public policy and people's lives. That is why I want the RECORD to show, again, that everyone, forevermore in the history of the United States of America, will know that these DREAMers are part of that history and that their stories will be there to make judgments about us as to how we have responded to their greatness.

Nayelli Valdemar says: "I am an AP scholar. I am a distinguished high school graduate. I am a cum laude student. I am a leader. I am a recipient of scholarships in merit and circumstance. I am also an illegal immigrant."

"Well, allow me to rephrase. I am an illegal immigrant until the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an executive action where President Obama gave me the opportunity to live as a resident here in the United States. DACA has opened many doors for DREAMers such as myself. Honestly, it has made the path to success miles more tangible. Inspiring me to be the best I can, even when the odds plotted against me, DACA was, and is, there to give a helping hand. Regarding my academic record, neither am I writing to boast about my accomplishment nor to ask for pity in the right situation, I am here to thank anyone and everyone who made DACA not only possible, but DREAMers' dreams come true. I'm writing to give thanks for the faith the creators of DACA gave me when the compassion of the world seemed to turn a blind eye my way. With this letter, I only hope to help the new Presidential administration understand why DACA is a vital part of every DREAMer's life.

"As a poverty-stricken female immigrant, I have moved mountains to get to where I am today, but this never would have been possible without the assistance of DACA. Playing an important role in my life, DACA is a pinnacle to the rights I cherish every day. Because of DACA, I have been able to get a job to assist my family. It was not easy working 30-plus-hour shifts, only to be welcomed by house chores and schoolwork, especially since I graduated from a magnet school, the Science Academy of South Texas, a school notorious for its workload. . . .

"My hopes lie in that the generosity of this Nation continues to allow all

DREAMers a fighting chance for our future, our hopes, and our aspirations to become more than just DREAMers.

"Please, please, let it be known that all DREAMers appreciate the assistance this Nation has given us through DACA. Futures have been opened for DREAMers who were once on uncertain roads, thanks to the help of DACA. I hope this Nation does not give up on us. I hope this Nation continues to believe in its DREAMers. I hope this Nation continues to see why DACA is necessary. After all, this Nation is all that most DREAMers have. Our lives are under the weight of this country's mercy. Although, as much as we work, as much as we learn, as much as we pray, all we can truly do is hope and dream for a hopeful tomorrow, a brighter road ahead, a chance to dream again. Nayelli Valdemar."

Nayelli, in this statement, talks about praying. That is why I am so glad I mentioned at the beginning the three Bs: the Bibles, the badges, and the business community. They are so supportive of giving relief to the DREAMers.

Let's talk about the Bibles. I talked about the Gospel of Matthew, the parable of the Good Samaritan, the dignity and worth of every person's spark of divinity, that God, Christ coming down, bringing his divinity to humanity enabled us, our humanity, to participate in his divinity, and that is that spark that we all have, every single one of us. So we have to respect it in others but be responsible for it in ourselves, and that is the challenge that we have.

"Hope," sitting there between "faith" and "charity," the goodness of others—we all have hope that when we have needs, we believe, we have faith that others will be there for us, and that is what America is about.

America is great because America is good. I say it over and over again. This fabulous, greatest country in the history of the world, think about it, our Founders, how courageous they were. They decided to declare war on the greatest naval power, then, in the world, the British Navy, the British military. They declared, in the Declaration of Independence, their grievances against the king, but they also stated their aspirations about people being created equal.

No country had been founded on that principle before, and our inalienable rights under God, just remarkable, bestowed on them by Our Creator. This is a remarkable people. And then they fought the war, they won the war, they established our founding documents.

My daughter wrote a movie on it—well, she didn't write because it was written by our Founders, but she produced a movie on words that made America—our Declaration, our Constitution, our Bill of Rights. And thank God they had the brilliance to make our Constitution amendable. And it being amendable, it became this incredible document with the Bill of

Rights, and then others that we take an oath to protect and defend.

At the same time as they did that, they created the great seal of the United States of America. I referenced it earlier. It is on the dollar bill.

You see that triangle with the eye?

It used to scare me when I was little. What is that? A pyramid with an eye?

But under it, it says: "Novus Ordo Seclorum."

Catholics know that "seclorum, seclorum, seclorum" means "forever and ever and ever." But in this, it is "new order for the ages."

They had so much confidence in what they had established and what they were doing that was so new and fresh to the world. They became a beacon to the world. But in doing this new order for the ages, they had confidence and optimism that this would last forever because it was predicated on the idea that every generation would take responsibility and make the future better for the next.

I said it earlier: The American Dream. People flocked to our shores bringing their aspirations, hopes, determination, and courage to make the future better for their families. And in adopting them, their traits were like American traits, characteristics of optimism, hope, courage, and making the future better. And all these newcomers to our shores, they made America more American with their commitment to a better future for their families, and that continues to this day.

And these young people now are called DREAMers. Their parents had a dream for them to bring them to our country, but they completely adapted to our way of always being dreamers about a better future in our country. They learned from the American people. They taught the American people. It is a beautiful relationship.

And now we have an opportunity to show our greatness as a country, to honor the values of our Founders, the courage they had to find a path, a solution, a result, so that we can put this aside and address other issues that relate to immigration, which are a bigger picture, more complicated, take more time, require more public debate.

Why can't we just do this?

This is discrete. Congresswoman MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, the chair of the Hispanic Caucus, said this so beautifully when we testified before the Rules Committee on immigration, on the Dream Act. She said: Think of this bill like CHIP. CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program, is about the children. It is not a bill that talks about universal healthcare, the whole healthcare system of our country. It is about the children. We have the immigration issue similar to being a big comprehensive issue, but then we have this little piece that is for the children.

I think it was the perfect analogy. CHIP is healthcare for the children. It doesn't address the whole healthcare system, changes that people may want to make or improve or change. It is

about the children. It is an easy path for us to go down, recognizing that it is not a substitute for what we need to do to address immigration reform in our country, but a first step, not a step instead of.

And it is a confidence-building step that we can find common ground in, in a bipartisan way, and we must, if it is going to be sustainable, just as the bill was in 1986 that President Reagan improved upon with his family fairness initiatives.

So that is why let's just think of it as about the children. We should always be thinking about the children. They are the future. They own the future. They are it. And when children come to Washington, D.C., and they visit and see how we honor our Founders, George Washington, Lincoln—later to save the Union, Lincoln—but earlier, Thomas Jefferson, et cetera, and walk these Halls and see tributes to people who went before, we say: In most cases, this is about respecting contributions these people made to our country, especially our big monuments on The Mall, and most recently, Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., there.

We honor them, we learn from them, we value them. But what we do here is values-based on how they taught us. But it is about the future, and this is about how we can go into the future making distinctions, discerning. Discerning, having the ability to say there is some things we can get done, let's do them; other things take more time. Let's build confidence, build bridges in what we do, again, always trying to do it with bipartisanship, with transparency so people know what the debate is and what is in the bill, and that brings unity to our country. I think that is very possible.

I am very proud to read these statements into the RECORD, and I will continue to do so. But during the night, when I was thinking and praying so hard about our DREAMers, I thought maybe we should just pray all day on the floor of Congress. Maybe I should bring my rosary blessed by the Pope, blessed by His Holiness Pope Francis, or the one before that, Benedict.

I had the honor and privilege of receiving rosaries blessed by several Popes in my lifetime, but I always remember Pope Benedict. When he came, he spoke so beautifully. He spoke so beautifully. His first encyclical is called, "God is love." In it, he quotes St. Augustine, who, 17 centuries ago, said: "Any government that is not formed to promote justice is just a bunch of thieves."

That is what St. Augustine said 17 centuries ago. He, Benedict, His Holiness, goes on to say: Sometimes it is hard to define what justice is, but in doing so, we must beware of the dazzling blindness of power and special interest.

That is what he said. But this doesn't have any of that. This has social justice, it has camaraderie, it has good spirit. It is based on faith, hope, and

charity. Pope Francis, when he came, spoke so beautifully, as he always does, about respecting immigrants. He is living in a much more complicated world of immigrants coming into Europe, but, again, respecting the dignity and worth of every person.

And he came here in this Chamber and spoke about a few subjects. As you recall, one of them was poverty and how we respect the dignity and worth of people that Christ mentioned so many times in the Bible. As we know, poor people are mentioned in the Bible hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times because of how important our responsibility is to them.

But he also talked about immigration. He talked about immigration in a very important way. And as I get his statement, I will instead read from Gloria Rinconi, a medical assistant from Dallas, Texas.

She said: "I am a girl who you graduated next to, the girl who you talked to daily, the girl who has finally decided to step away from the shadows and into the light for you to see her."

"See me as for who I am, not for someone who told you I would be."

"I immigrated to the United States when I was a year old with my parents. My parents had taken the decision to immigrate to USA due to being in a country that offered no future for their family. Even though both my parents ran a successful business and my mom had a college education, the violence and underemployment was no future for us. The first place we called home was a small apartment in Dallas, Texas, who we shared with another family. We lived in Texas for a year and moved to Statesville, North Carolina. We then moved to the outskirts of the little town in some rundown trailer homes."

"We had nothing. My parents slept on the floor while I made a makeshift bed out of a piece of cardboard and a blanket. After months of saving up money, my dad finally had enough to rent an apartment near downtown Statesville. After 9 years, we moved again to Texas. Growing up, my parents never hid the fact that I was undocumented from me. They always told me, 'Just because you were not born here, does not mean you are any less. You are loved by many, regardless of what you might hear on TV.'"

"Those words became my rock when I was in high school. When I was a freshman, my mom was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. For months she struggled trying to find treatment at an affordable rate. Doctors would turn her down simply because of her illegal status, even though she offered to negotiate a payment plan. She was dying, and no one seemed to care. Her only sin was to be an undocumented woman with stage 4 cancer. She eventually found treatment, but I had seen firsthand how dehumanizing people can be towards the undocumented. During this time, DACA was put into place and it officially opened the door for me. . . ."

□ 1145

"DACA gave me wings, the wings I hoped for all my life when I was in school. I participated in national pageants placing as a national achievement finalist. I graduated high school with a medical assistant certification and became a recipient of TheDream.US scholarship, which helped me pursue my higher education. DACA has also given me a chance to give back to other DREAMers by being an intern at My Undocumented Life blog."

"U.S. DACA recipients are not here to harm the U.S. The U.S. is our home and will always be our home. We are part of the fabric that makes the American flag. For that, I am willing to come out of the shadows so you can see me."

Again, this American Dream of making the future better is recurring in all of these stories, and in all of these stories there has been success. Again, though, it is not just about the DREAMers. It is about who we are.

Luis Roberto. I talked about Luis already. I gave his speech. We had his speech from his graduating class.

Luz Divina writes: "I came to the U.S. from . . . Mexico when I was 2 months old. I didn't know I was undocumented until sophomore year of high school when I realized I couldn't get a driver's permit, apply for jobs, or go to college programs like all my friends were doing. I felt depressed and oppressed for years until I finally applied for DACA when Obama implemented his executive order. I finally had a chance at the real world. I started a collective in high school named 'The Luzdivina Collective' that helped DREAMers in my high school and victims of social injustice in my community. I am currently trying to get into education—either ethnic studies or art, maybe both. The announcement of DACA ending has put me back into a state of depression, but I'm trying my hardest to overcome this with the help of my friends and family. My dream is to be an educator, activist, and writer, to inspire DREAMers like myself who are currently or have been in a state of depression due to their legal status."

We have to remember how strong the DREAMers are but how fragile some of their existence is when they have no certainty as to what the next steps will be for them. Again, this is all about family, about parents who had the courage to bring their children at an early age to America. This happened 100 years ago.

Do you think all of the people who came here all came documented? Maybe we should all look up our ancestry and just find out what the facts are about that. We assume so, but do we really know?

And there are many people—as I said earlier, Italians were called wops, without papers. That was a derogatory term. It is disgusting for me to say it, being an Italian American and so proud of my heritage. As I said earlier, we

grew up thinking that the world was divided among two people in America: those who were Italian American and those who wanted to be Italian American. Certainly, it feels that way in Little Italy in Baltimore, where I grew up, and in San Francisco, whom I have the honor to represent.

But, in any event, we all take pride in our heritage, and that is the best—best—qualification for recognizing the pride that other people take in their heritage. I say this to the Italian Americans all the time: Because I am so proud to be an Italian American, I understand full well why people from Mexico or Puerto Rico or Africa or wherever they are from take pride in who they are, their dignity, the authenticity of their heritage, and who they are.

And in America, that beauty, the beauty is in the mix. It certainly is in my district. But in some communities, the contributions of immigrants are not as recent as in others. But in every community, it has made a difference, constantly reinvigorating America.

And so when His Holiness Pope Francis came to speak here in the Congress, as a Catholic Italian American—that is the essence of my being—it was really a thrilling day. It was for all of us, regardless of our background or our faith. I was particularly thrilled to hear what he said about immigration.

But you recall, he talked about Martin Luther King and the march from Selma to Montgomery. He talked about people living in poverty, and he talked about a number of subjects, but I will just speak to what he said about immigration. The Pope solemnly said: “In recent centuries, millions of people came to this land to pursue their dream of building a future in freedom. We, the people of this continent”—because, as you know, His Holiness is the first Pope from the Western Hemisphere.

“We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners because most of us were once foreigners. I say this to you as the son of immigrants”—Italian, by the way.

“I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants. Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those people and their nations, from the heart of American democracy, I wish to reaffirm my highest esteem and appreciation. Those first contacts were often turbulent and violent, but it is difficult to judge the past by the criteria of the present. Nonetheless, when the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and errors of the past. We must resolve now to live as nobly and as justly as possible, as we educate new generations not to turn their back on our ‘neighbors’ and everything around us. Building a nation calls us to recognize that we must constantly relate to others, rejecting a mindset of hostility in order to adopt one of reciprocal

subsidiarity, in a constant effort to do our best. I am confident we can do this.”

How beautiful. And then he goes on to talk about immigration in the rest of the world. And then he says:

“We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to disregard whatever proves troublesome. Let us remember the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

I will submit his whole statement for the RECORD because it goes on in such a beautiful, beautiful way. It also talks about climate in there, Laudato Si, which is his first encyclical about God’s creation, this planet, and our responsibilities to be good stewards of it.

I am talking about His Holiness. Getting to the Bible is part of it. We talked about the Bible earlier. I thought maybe we could say a Rosary on the floor of the House, not just five decades, the full Rosary, all of the mysteries of the Rosary, that is 15 decades of the Rosary. But, nonetheless, I think these people telling their stories are very prayerful, and so I will use the time to put their stories on the RECORD.

But let me just say how proud I am of the statements made by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, their courage in fighting for immigrants across our country, from our cardinals, our bishops, et cetera, from their esteemed platforms, whether it is the DREAMers or TPS or comprehensive immigration reform. But right now, today, we are talking about the DREAMers.

The evangelicals in our country, Reverend Sam Rodriguez’ statements, have been so spectacular about, again, the spark of divinity that exists in every person that must be respected, strong supporters of President Trump also believing that it is possible for all of us to have enough goodness in our hearts to get this job done, go past any obstacles that may be there.

Again, the Southern Baptist Convention, their leadership, all across the spectrum, of course, the Jewish community, across the full spectrum of faith-based organizations, all speaking out and rallying as people rallied when we first saw the Muslim ban.

The people of faith are people of faith. They believe, and they believe that we have obligations to each other. They have spoken out in a very courageous way.

In terms of the badges, I told you some stories about DREAMers who have come forth to help with law enforcement. By and large, we have had strong support from the law enforcement community about support for the DREAMers.

And the business community, oh, my, they have been spectacular in terms of raising the profile, treating their employees who are DREAMers with respect, advocating for them.

And this Congress of the United States, they seem to have a strong voice on some issues. I wish they would be listened to as attentively on issues

of social justice here. But they do have access.

And one of the things I want to praise them for is I think that the 90 percent, 80 percent, 70 percent ratings, depending on if it is citizenship or what, but the high numbers across the board for DREAMers would not have been possible without people hearing from the bishops, from law enforcement, and from the business community making this a very high-profile issue about how their companies have benefited from the DREAMers and how they truly believe.

This is not an issue that is going to go away. It is a value. It is not an issue. It may be a subject for legislation, but this is an American value that is deeply felt across the board. And I am determined that the stories of at least some of these DREAMers—I can’t do 800,000, although I am willing to take the time. That might lose impact after awhile, after some of these great stories.

Listen to Maneri: “I’m 18 years old and from Los Angeles. I just graduated high school and will be attending UCLA to study political science in the fall. Being an undocumented student has been tough. Coming to this country at 6 years old completely changed my life. Learning English and doing well in school was a battle since everyone in my family only spoke Spanish. . . . Being a DREAMer also shaped who I am, what I stand for. . . . After graduation, I hope to go to law school. . . .”

I already told you this story, but it bears repeating.

“I dream that one day, your immigration status doesn’t define your path. . . .”

Alonso: “Growing up undocumented in Utah truly shaped me into the person I am today. My experiences growing up in the margins of society inform the work I do and the work I seek to continue doing in this life. I am passionate about working with undocumented students and families and strive to share all of my knowledge and experiences with the undocumented community as well the community as a whole.

“I was born in Peru and emigrated to the United States when I was 11. I arrived in Utah with my brother to unite with our mother, who had come to the U.S. a year before our arrival. Six months after arriving in the U.S. with a tourist visa, my visa expired. . . .”

So he came into the country with legal status. And this is something I think that is really important. Not everybody who is undocumented came here in an undocumented fashion. Some of the documentation is expired and, in the case of DACA, just a question of when the mail hit and what day it was received by the government.

“I was 12 and a hardworking student, earning good grades working toward a future that would allow me to repay my mom for all of her sacrifices. As a high school student, I enrolled in honors and AP courses, which challenged

me and furthered my plans of earning a higher education.

“I graduated from high school with a diploma of merit and went to the University of Utah, where I would major in sociology and be mentored by incredible individuals. Most pointedly, Matt Bradley Ph.D., rest in peace 2012; Caitlyn Cahill, Ph.D.; and David Quijada Cerecer, Ph.D. My mentors showed me that my work, insight, and contributions as an undocumented student are important. . . .”

Now, imagine, this child came in documented but became undocumented when the visa expired.

“ . . . and I truly owe them for showing me that I matter for being who I am.

“In 2013, I graduated from the University of Utah with an honors bachelor of science in sociology, and in 2016 with a master’s in education . . . with an emphasis on higher education administration. I am currently the Dreamer Program Coordinator for the University of Utah, which is the first center for DREAMers in the State of Utah.”

God bless you, Utah.

“In the future, I would like to pursue a Ph.D. in sociology with a focus on immigration and labor studies.”

This is important because, once again, as has been consistent in these themes, the DREAMers are grateful for the mentoring they have received from people in our country, some of whom shared their heritage, most of whom did not. That is the beautiful thing about the DREAMers: they know that they have a dream, but somebody else had a plan for their own dream that inspired the DREAMers to have their plan.

□ 1200

When Yuri Hernandez was only 3 years old, her family brought her to the United States from Mexico. Yuri grew up in the town of Coos Bay in Oregon. In high school, she was an honor roll student who was very active in her community. Yuri went on to attend the University of Portland, where she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in social work.

Yuri is now a graduate student at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. She is planning to graduate with a master’s in social work in the fall of 2017. In her spare time, she tutors and mentors high school students. Yuri dreams of becoming a social worker and giving back to her community.

Rey Pineda was brought to America when he was 2 years old. The first in his family to attend college and a devout Catholic, Rey is now a priest in the Cathedral of Christ the King in Atlanta, Georgia. If DACA is eliminated, Father Rey will lose his legal status and could be deported back to Mexico, a tragedy for Father Rey and his congregation.

After the most divisive election in recent memory, Father Rey and other

DACA recipients have a key role to play in healing the differences that divide us.

Oscar Cornejo, Jr., was brought to Park City, Utah, when he was 5 years old. He was an excellent student throughout his childhood and now attends Dartmouth. If DACA is eliminated, Oscar will lose his legal status and could be deported back to Mexico, a country he hasn’t lived in since he was 5 years old.

Will America be stronger if we deport Oscar? Will America be stronger if we deport Oscar, or if he stays here and achieves his dream of becoming an educator? The answer is clear. DACA works.

Lisette Diaz was just 6 years old when her family brought her to the U.S. from Chile. Growing up in Long Island, Lisette excelled in school and was involved in her community. She went on to attend Harvard, where she received numerous awards and participated in a variety of extracurricular activities. Lisette recently graduated Harvard with honors.

Lisette and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country, but Donald Trump and other Republicans have made their agenda clear. They want to shut down DACA and DAPA and deport hundreds of thousands of DREAMers and American children.

That is Lisette’s view. I hope that we have a better understanding of where the President may be on this. We don’t want Lisette to be deported back to Chile, a country where she hasn’t lived since she was 6 years old.

When Cynthia Sanchez was just 7 years old, her family came to the United States from Mexico. Cynthia grew up in Denver, Colorado, and was an excellent student. She went on to attend the University of Denver, where she received numerous awards and scholarships and was an active volunteer.

In 2010, Cynthia graduated from college with a degree in cognitive neuroscience, which is a double major in psychology and biology, as well as a minor in chemistry.

In 2013, she applied for DACA and was approved that summer. By September, Cynthia was working at Northwestern University in Chicago doing clinical research in the Department of Medicine’s Division of Cardiology. Her research focuses on improving treatment for patients who suffer from heart disease.

Cynthia said: “DACA has meant a new realm of opportunities for me, it has opened new doors for me, and it has allowed me to once again see my dream as a reality. I truly believe that if those opposed to DACA or the Dream Act had a chance to sit and chat with undocumented students, their opinions might change. They would see capable, smart, hardworking individuals who are Americans in every sense of the word, love this country, and want to contribute to its prosperity. After all, this is our home.”

That is really very beautiful. I do believe that the more our colleagues

know the DREAMers, the better it will be for our country.

Vasthy Lamadrid came to the United States from Mexico when she was only 5 years old. Despite her family’s modest means, Vasthy felt safe and excelled in school. Math was her best subject, and she had nearly perfect scores on standardized tests.

In middle school, Vasthy discovered the love of engineering. She excelled academically and was active in her community.

Vasthy has gone on to attend Arizona State University, again, I mention, a great school. Because of her immigration status, she does not qualify for any government assistance and has to pay out-of-state tuition, despite having lived in Arizona for most of her life.

To help pay for her education, Vasthy decided to crowdfund her college education. Vasthy shared her story online, and this brought in enough contributions to pay for her tuition. She is currently in her second year of college. In her first semester, she made the dean’s list with a 3.79 GPA in the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering.

Thanks to DACA, Vasthy is able to work to support herself and volunteer in her community. As a result of her volunteer work, Vasthy has decided that she wants to become a science teacher.

Okay. So I have been going through some of these rather quickly in order to get as many of them in the RECORD as possible. But I do want to change my pace a little bit because some of these stories are so emotion-filled, and I can place the statement in the RECORD, but I want to deliver the stories.

I am trying to be respectful of other people’s time, but I am also trying to be respectful of the challenge that we face and the need for us to find a solution which is clear in sight for our DREAMers.

Fernando’s family came to the United States when he was 9 years old. In high school, Fernando was an AP Scholar and received the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the achievement award in foreign language for French.

Fernando continued to excel academically at Santa Clara University, where he graduated cum laude with a double major in biology and french. Now a third-year doctoral student at UC San Francisco—the ultimate, fabulous place, right—Fernando—it is very hard to get in—works at the UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he is working hard to provide new insights into many diseases and disorders. Again, giving back.

Denisse Rojas—in 1990, Denisse tells her story that when she was an infant, her parents carried her across the Southwest border with the hope of giving her and her siblings a better life. Just think of this family, so courageous. Denisse’s family settled in Fremont, California.

Denisse said, in her words: “In grade school, I recall feeling different from my peers; my skin color was darker, my English was stilted, I was poor, and I was undocumented.”

In 2012, when President Obama established DACA, Denisse’s life changed. As a DACA recipient, Denisse’s dreams finally seemed within reach. She was able to apply to medical schools that before would have turned her away because of her immigration status. This meant that she could focus on pursuing a career in medicine and no longer fear the possibility of losing the only home she had ever known.

Denisse said: “I have pledged allegiance to this Nation’s values since my first day of school; I consider the United States my home. Furthermore, serving others has instilled in me the notion that everyone deserves the opportunity for prosperity. I thus aim to dedicate my life to serving others as a physician and continuing to be a voice for immigrants.”

Reading Denisse’s story about her being concerned in grade school, “I recall feeling different from my peers; my skin color was darker, my English was stilted,” I am reminded of my own grandson. He is Irish, English, whatever, whatever, and Italian American. He is a mix, but he looks more like the other side of the family, shall we say.

When he had his sixth birthday, he had a very close friend whose name is Antonio. He is from Guatemala, and he has beautiful tan skin, beautiful brown eyes, and the rest. This was such a proud day for me because when my grandson blew out the candles on his cake, I said: “Did you make a wish? And he said: “Yes, I made a wish.” We said: “What is your wish.” He said: “I wish I had brown skin and brown eyes like Antonio.” It was so beautiful, so beautiful.

The beauty is in the mix. The face of the future for our country is all-American, and that has many versions.

Kok-Leong Seow: “None of my friends from my hometown know. My parents raised me to be gritty, never to complain or take handouts. I didn’t want to have a victim mentality or be known for being undocumented. But I realized that sharing my story would be therapeutic, raise awareness, and help other underprivileged people.

“I came to America when I was 6 years old. My parents grew up poor and risked so much to move us here with hopes of giving us a better life. My dad is a waiter at a small restaurant, which is enough to put food on the table and clothes on our backs. We pay taxes, abide by all laws, and don’t live on welfare.

“As for me, I can’t legally work, drive, fly, or have health insurance. I’ve missed out on numerous opportunities because of my situation. Fortunately, I was able to pursue college.

“Fast forward 4 years, I have graduated magna cum laude in computer engineering from Wichita State University. I was at the top of my class,

number one in my major, wrote two first-author papers, won research awards, and have a patent pending.

“Consequently, I was accepted into graduate school at Columbia University. However, due to my status, I’m unable to obtain a stipend to continue my education. Receiving DACA would grant me the opportunity to acquire the funding I need, provide for my family, and master my craft to realize my full potential. But due to election results, applying for DACA is simply not a favorable option anymore.

“Without DACA, many live in daily fear of deportation. I’ve had friends whose families were torn apart.”

This is Kok-Leong Seow.

“These are genuine, everyday struggles, and it’s easy to dismiss it because it’s not happening to your family. To truly empathize, you need to dig deep and allow yourself to feel our pain and our anxiety.”

This is a very important message, for us to dig deep and experience their pain and anxiety.

“Many non-Native Americans seem to forget that they, too, have immigration in their blood. Just like everyone else, we simply want an opportunity to contribute to the only home that we know. Ironically, I’ve enjoyed the adversity. I feel alive under pressure. I am unafraid and undocumented. I’m not going anywhere.”

He is not leaving.

Gladys Klamka, Phillisburg, New Jersey. “Patience and heartache is how I would describe my past. I was 2 when my family made the most important decision for us. Moving to the U.S. meant a second chance for me. If we had stayed in Mexico, my folks would have made a decision to give me up for adoption. We settled in NJ for economic relief.

“Unfortunately, at the age of 4, my innocence was stolen from me. I was sexually molested by a 16-year-old boy, but my parents didn’t report it, they didn’t understand the law, for fear of deportation. Both of my parents worked full time to keep a roof over our heads. I wasn’t able to go off to college financially or drive or travel. I got used to doors slamming in my face,” Gladys writes.

“I was about 14 when my parents explained to me about our status. Confused about my future, I decided to push harder. I finished school, worked full time, and contributed back to the community.

“I received a taxpayer ID issued by the IRS in 1997. I always thought it was funny that the government will take our money but not let us work legally in this country.

“I applied for DACA in 2012. I still remember the day I opened my approval letter. My father said: ‘Now I don’t have to worry about you.’

“I now own my own home, car, and I work in the healthcare system. After election day, I wondered if this dream would soon end. It’s been a hard reality check that privileges could be taken

away. I only hope for other young DREAMers and undocumented children like myself to make the leap to push that shut door open, to know a dream of wanting more is not impossible.”

This is one of the DREAMers I met at the State of the Union. Perhaps you remember, America is her name. She was the guest of DAVID PRICE from North Carolina, and she spoke at our press event with the DREAMers.

America immigrated to the U.S. when she was 2 years old and has lived in Raleigh, North Carolina, for 22 years. Thanks to DACA, she was able to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees. She now teaches English as a second language at Sanderson High School in Raleigh. She was just so lovely. We thank DAVID PRICE for introducing her to us.

Another guest at that same press conference, as some of you may recall, was the guest of Senator KAMALA HARRIS. Denea Joseph is her name. Denea is a DACA recipient who came to America from Belize when she was 7 years old without her mother, father, or siblings. She attended the University of California, Los Angeles, where she advocated for the creation of an immigration attorney position and worked to increase financial aid for undocumented youth across the UC system. I wish you could have heard her personally tell her story with such intellect and such passion.

□ 1215

She goes on here to say: As a Young People For fellow, Denea addressed undocumented youths’ educational access and retention. Her story was featured in the LA Magazine’s historic immigration issue, and is currently on display as part of the Undocumented Stories Exhibit at downtown UCLA Labor Center. She is a communications coordinator for UndocuBlack Network—UndocuBlack is a resource to us. Many of the DREAMers are Black—where she advocates for the representation of UndocuBlack immigrants within the mainstream immigrant narrative. She aspires to be a human rights attorney, advocating for the rights of the most marginalized around the globe.

I mentioned here that her story is featured in LA Magazine’s historic immigration issue and is on display at the downtown UCLA Labor Center, and now it will be part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Miriam Ochoa-Garibay said: “I’m 18 years old and I’m a DACA student currently enrolled at the University of California, Riverside. I came here from a Mexican background. I was born in the Mexican state of Michoacan, but I’ve been living in the United States since I was 2. I went to preschool, kinder, elementary, intermediate school, and high school in the State of California. I always loved school. I remember being a little girl and getting home from school, and the first thing I did was start my homework. I remember that, as early as elementary school,

there was this test called GATE. It was supposed to be the smart kids' test, and every year I passed it. I remember being an honors student. My parents were very persistent on me getting good grades because that meant a better future. It wasn't until I was in high school where I realized that maybe it was going to take more than just good grades to go to college. I became really aware that I was undocumented. I became fearful that I was not going to have a 'better future' because I was undocumented. I knew that, financially, my parents weren't going to be able to pay for college. So when DACA came into place, it was a huge relief. There was finally a program that accepted me, an undocumented student. DACA means everything to me. Not only do I have financial aid for my college tuition, but I was granted the opportunity to work legally—to work legally. How lovely—"to find a job and be able to make money for my needs. DACA became a reassuring force to many students like myself, whose only desire is to be given an education in order to become a successful factor of this society. I am proud to be Mexican, but I'm also proud to be part of America's great educational system. DACA has given me the opportunity to dream of my own white picket fence one day."

This is interesting to me because, as an Italian American myself, I always reference, which is so obvious when people are proud of their heritage, especially newer immigrants, to see the pride that they take in their heritage and the fierce patriotism they have for America. That was what we saw in our community when I was growing up: fiercely patriotic Americans, while very proud of their heritage. And that is who people are. That is their authentic self: patriotic Americans proud of their heritage. We want to make this, as was said in this, to be legal.

Ana Sanchez is from Elgin, Texas. I don't know if they say Elgin in Texas. Ana says: "Like any other beneficiary of DACA, I, for once, have been given the opportunity to pursue my dreams by attaining higher education and a job. I am Ana Sanchez, an 18-year-old undocumented student who was brought to this country when I was only 2 years old. Due to living conditions in my home country, my parents decided to immigrate to the United States to offer me and my sister a much better education and a better future. Growing up, I was aware that I had been born in Mexico, however, I did not know the effects of being undocumented until high school came about. Now that I am older, I realize who I am in the eyes of the government, and it saddens me to know that people believe these misconceptions of us. I mean, ever since we arrived to Texas, my dad has risked his health and life by working under dangerous conditions just to earn enough money to provide food and shelter for my family. When it was announced that DACA would be available for people like me, my family did not

think twice. We all knew it was an advantage and a precious opportunity the country had given us. Finally, we were given the chance to prove that we are part of this country's future and success.

"Because of DACA, I am able to say that I am a part-time student and part-time staff for an afterschool program. I am two steps closer to becoming a businesswoman and a teacher, and that gives me hope. Sadly, however, the new administration has posed threats that will make my hope and my dreams unreachable. If the permit is taken away, our hard work will become worthless. I want to give back to this country, so I yearn Congress to give me that chance."

Many of the stories that I have been reading so far have been, but not all, about people in our own hemisphere. But it is important to note that many undocumented are from the Asian-Pacific region. Many are from Africa or from the Caribbean. That is our hemisphere, but not in terms of Latin America, but in terms of the Caribbean. So some are even from other places that are not necessarily ethnically diverse.

Here is one story about Ha Eun Lee. Today I want to tell you about Ha Eun Lee. When Ha Eun was 6 years old, her family came to the United States from South Korea. She grew up in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Here is what Ha Eun says about her childhood in the United States of America: "I was fortunate enough to grow up learning that diversity is encouraged and differences are not just tolerated but welcomed."

Ha Eun was a good student and committed to public service. In high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, received the Principal's Academic Achievement Award, and was an Oakland Activities Association Scholar Athlete. She was a member of the track and field team for all 4 years of high school.

Ha Eun is now a senior at the University of Michigan, majoring in English. She volunteers with the Red Cross and is the co-president of an organization called The Supply. The Supply raises money to help students in Nairobi, Kenya, to attain an education.

She is from South Korea, an all-American girl, now a co-president of an organization that raises money to help students in Nairobi, Kenya, to attain an education.

As co-president, Ha Eun has expanded the organization's efforts to include volunteering locally with Detroit charities.

Ha Eun was also a policy and programs intern for the Asian Americans Advancing Justice Center. As Ha Eun completes her last year of college, she dreams of becoming a lawyer to defend civil rights.

Ha Eun wrote me a letter, and she said: "Although I'm legally labeled as an 'alien' in this country I call home, I believe I am American. And I believe this not solely because I live, study,

work, and contribute in this country, but because I believe in the core values all Americans share as a nation: liberty, justice, and prosperity."

Ha Eun and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country. But without DACA or the Dream Act, they will be deported back to countries where they haven't lived in since they were children.

Will America be a stronger country if we deport people like Ha Eun?

The answer is clear. That is a question that has arisen throughout. We asked it earlier.

Will America be a stronger country if we deport—fill in the blank with the name?

But I love what Ha Eun has said: "And I believe this not solely because I live, study, work, and contribute in this country, but because I believe in the core values all Americans share as a nation: liberty, justice, and prosperity."

Tomas Evangelista is a DACA recipient from Auburn, California. At the age of 2, he came to the United States from Mexico with his mother in search of a better life. Unfortunately, after a year of being together in the United States, his mother passed away from cancer.

Can you imagine?

His grandparents took him in and he grew up in northern California, where he ran cross country and track at Pacer High School.

These all-American kids, it is just a beautiful story.

Following his high school career, Tomas received an associate of arts in social science, and, in 2014, he completed his bachelor's of arts degree. Today, he works for the nonprofit organization Latino Leadership Council. He also intends to attend Lincoln Law School in Sacramento, California, in spring of 2018.

Tomas cofounded California Dreamers with fellow DACA recipient Doris Romero. They seek to change the negative narratives surrounding immigration with facts. They want to change the narrative with facts, the truth, through sharing personal stories. The ultimate goal is to encourage immigration reform and to establish a pathway to citizenship.

Vanessa Rodriguez story: "My name is Vanessa Rodriguez, and they all call me Undocumented Dreamer. Undocumented because I was born south of the United States border, and Dreamer because that was the inherent last name that my parents gave me when they risked their souls to give me a better future."

They called her Dreamer—called her Dreamer as her last name.

Vanessa continues to say: "I have lived in Texas for 12 years, and for 12 years I have known no other home. My father works in construction and my mother works as a housemaid. Their hard work and humble occupations have given my family a chance to do more and dream higher; a chance that

made me the salutatorian of my class and a recipient of the State of Texas Student Hero Award. However, their work only granted me a chance to dream, not a chance to accomplish. Only the government could grant me that. So, for years, I lived under the notion of fear and uncertainty. DREAMers like me kept their dreams and secured them in a box called ‘limitations.’ It was until the arrival of DACA that things changed for us. DACA enabled us to pursue and achieve more. For me, it meant an opportunity at pursuing hiring education, obtaining a job, and acquiring something called temporary security. One year of this security from deportation was what made the beginning of my dream a success. I was free from fear of deportation that enabled me to gain competence in my abilities.”

People sharing their stories in such a clear way, and, in many cases, a very well-written way.

Vanessa continues to say: “A few weeks ago I finished my first semester at the University of Texas at Austin”—which is a very hard school to get into, by the way—“and although I was a full-time student with two part-time jobs, I still managed to obtain an outstanding GPA. DACA has made all these accomplishments possible and it has been the difference between simply existing and living a dream.

“As the time approaches for the new administration to come in, the fear is starting to become more evident. The uncertainty and anxiety is real.

“My question to Congress is: When will you unchain my dreams? When my only hope is taken away alongside DACA? Or will you fight to protect students like me from deportation?”

It is not even a fight. It is a simple decision. It is a simple decision. It has been made easy by separating it from the more complicated and controversial aspects of comprehensive immigration reform, which we must address. It is about the children. It is about the children.

Alonso R. Reyna Rivarola’s story goes like this. “I will always remember the day DACA was announced. It was June 15, 2012, and I was camping for a retreat with students, friends, and colleagues from the Mestizo Arts & Activism Collective, a youth participatory action research collective in Salt Lake City, Utah. At approximately 10 a.m., the group took a break from the agenda, which I used to go back to the tent to check on my phone. When I turned my phone back on, I was taken aback by the number of text messages, missed calls, and voicemails I was receiving. Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz.

“‘The Dream Act has passed!’ shouted a close friend of mine, a fellow DREAMer, in a voicemail. I was excited, yet confused by her words, knowing at the time no Dream Act bill was being debated in the U.S. Congress or Senate. However, as confused as I was, I was too adrenalized at the possibility that a quiet Dream Act boxcar bill had made its way into becoming a law.

“After returning her call, we shared our feelings of excitement and confusion regarding the matter at hand. Then she informed me President Barack Obama would be making an announcement at any moment. As soon as I hung up, I read through a few more text messages, called my mom, and ran outside the tent to inform the MAA family about the news.”

Can you just imagine the excitement? They were out camping.

Alonso continues to say: “Within a few minutes, all MAA participants crammed ourselves into two cars in Little Cottonwood Canyon, where we tuned into the radio eager to listen to President Obama announce the program which we all have come to know as consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA.”

□ 1230

“My story is one of hundreds of thousands of DACA stories across the United States. We all have different backgrounds, first and last names, interests, journeys, and goals; however, we all have at least one thing in common: we are all American DREAMers. Since DACA, I have earned an honors B.S. in sociology and M.Ed. in educational leadership and policy from the University of Utah. I am an active community member and have most recently been honored to serve as the Dream Program Coordinator at the University of Utah, where I seek to support undocumented students, with and without DACA, to access, persist, and achieve a higher education in the country we all call home.”

The way they write these stories and the excitement and the anxiety that they convey is really something that the printed word may not convey. But I hope at least the RECORD will show the cumulative effect of all of these stories. I wish you could see them.

A person who has seen more of them than anyone honors us with his presence in the Chamber. We all get emotional on this subject, but no one has put more brainpower and passion into this subject than the distinguished Senator from Illinois.

He has served in this body for a long time, so we know of his leadership and his values. But for all the years he has served in public life before Congress and since, and in the House and now as a leader in the Senate, the DREAMers have been a priority for half of his service in public life.

He first introduced the DREAM Act in 2001 into the Senate. It was introduced over on our side by LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD around the same time. She is the mother, the godmother of the DREAM Act that has been advanced.

In 2010, we were able to pass the DREAM Act in the House under the leadership of Mr. DURBIN, Senator DURBIN. It received a majority of the votes in the United States Senate but did not reach the 60 threshold, and so the discussion goes on. As you know, shortly thereafter, a couple of years later,

President Obama issued the DACA executive order.

None of this success would have been possible without the leadership, persistence, optimism, and the courage of Senator DURBIN. He has heard all of these stories, so many of these stories firsthand for nearly two decades. I congratulate him.

And as I have said earlier, our call today is for our Speaker to give the same opportunity to House Members to vote on a DREAMers bill, just as they were able to achieve in the Senate.

Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate leader, has been working with a bipartisan group of which he has always been a part—it has always been about bipartisanship—pledged to bring to the Senate floor a vehicle that the Senate will act upon, no guarantees. The Senate will work its will. What dignity that brings to the United States Senate, what commitment to the purpose of America that is there.

We feel like second-class Members of Congress over here when it is not within our realm to discuss something that is being discussed across the country, in the Senate of the United States, at the White House. But here, we can’t have the opportunity to officially discuss legislation that is on the floor.

That is why I am taking this time, my congressional leadership 1-minute, to read into the RECORD these inspiring stories. Again, it brings tears to my eyes. Excuse me for being emotional about it, but when I think of the contribution that Senator DURBIN has made to this, the stories he has heard, the stories he has told—I have seen him receive with great respect and honor across the country getting so many awards from people who see him as a person who understands their anxiety and concern but, as important as that, their possibilities and their contribution to America.

That is why, as I said earlier, Senator DURBIN should think of this as the CHIP versus healthcare; as the chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congresswoman MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM, has described in front of the Rules Committee, think of this as CHIP versus healthcare, children versus comprehensive immigration reform.

This is one clear opportunity where we can come together not as a substitute for comprehensive, but as a step, confidence building, trust building, in a bipartisan way, with transparency and in a unifying way for our country.

So I thank the gentleman, Senator DURBIN.

Because of the leader minute, I am not able to yield; otherwise, I would have nearly 200 people seeking recognition on the floor to tell the stories of their DREAMers. I have told some of them, but our colleagues are so committed and unified on this subject, and their constituents are.

But even if a colleague on the other side of the aisle would say, “Will the gentlewoman yield?” the rules do not

allow me to yield, so I am keeping the time.

As said earlier before the gentleman came, I thought about saying the Rosary on the floor to pray for our leadership to act with a heart full of love, both here and at the White House, on this subject. I said not just 5 decades, all 15 decades, including the Glorious Mysteries. They were the sad ones in the middle: the Agony in the Garden, the Crowning with Thorns, Scourging at the Pillar, the Crucifixion. Then it takes us to the Glorious Mysteries. But all of it is prayerful. I believe in prayer.

And so many of our, as I call it, Bible constituency—not the National Catholic Conference of Bishops but the evangelical community—has been so spectacular in supporting immigrants to our country and, especially in this case, of DACA.

This is the statement of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops: “The president and vice president, along with the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops”—in this case, meaning the president of the organization—“along with the chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have issued a statement denouncing the administration’s termination of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program after 6 months.

“The following statement from the USCCB”—that is, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops—“President Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, along with USCCB Vice President Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles; Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin, chairman, Committee on Migration; and Bishop Joseph J. Tyson of Yakima, chairman of the Subcommittee on Pastoral Care, Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers says the ‘cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible.’

“Over 780,000 youth received protection from the DACA program since its inception by the Department of Homeland Security in 2012. DACA provided no legal status or government benefits but did provide recipients with temporary employment authorization to work in the United States and a reprieve from deportation.”

A quote by the Bishops: “‘The cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible. It causes unnecessary fear for DACA youth and their families. These youth entered the United States as minors and often know America as their only home. The Catholic Church has long watched with pride and admiration as DACA youth live out their daily lives with hope and a determination to flourish and contribute to society: continuing to work and provide for their families, continuing to serve in the military, and continuing to receive an education. Now, after months of anxiety and fear about their futures, these brave young people face deportation. This decision is unacceptable and does not reflect who we are as Americans.’”

The bishops go on to say: “‘The Church has recognized and proclaimed the need to welcome young people: ‘Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the One who sent me’—Mark 9:37.’”

That is so beautiful because what they are saying is, when you reject these newcomers, you are rejecting who sent them, and who sent them but our Lord.

Today, our Nation has done the opposite of how Scripture calls us to respond. It has stepped back from the progress that we need to make as a country.

“Today’s actions represent a heart-breaking moment in our history that shows the absence of mercy and goodwill and a shortsighted vision of the future. DACA youth are woven into the fabric of our society and our Church, and are, by every social and human measure, American youth.

“We strongly urge Congress to act and immediately resume work toward a legislative solution. We pledge our support to work on finding an expeditious means of protection for DACA youth.”

The bishops go on to say: “‘As people of faith, we say to DACA youth, regardless of your immigration status, you are children of God and welcome in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supports you and will advocate for you.’”

That is such a beautiful statement.

As I noted earlier, tomorrow is the National Prayer Breakfast, and many people who will be gathered there are among those who have been so supportive of our DREAMers. We thank them for their leadership and their courage. I mentioned some earlier. I don’t know if these people will be there tomorrow, but certainly members of their church. As I mentioned, Dr. Sam Rodriguez, Reverend Sam Rodriguez has spoken out as a leader in the evangelical community.

So, hopefully, tomorrow, as they pray and come together, they will be speaking about what we see from the pulpit, from the bishops, from the evangelical community. If you believe that we are all God’s creation, as I do, as people of faith do—and I do believe faith is a gift that everyone doesn’t have.

So you may not have that same perspective, but if you do believe—and I believe that everyone gathered there tomorrow will believe—and many people across our country subscribe to “In God We Trust,” then you must subscribe to what the Bible tells us. To minister to the needs of God’s creation is an act of worship; to ignore those needs is to dishonor the God who made us, dishonor the God who made us, reflected in the Gospel of Matthew that I referenced earlier.

So when we are thinking about this subject, we also have to recognize the diversity in our DREAMer population.

In 2002, Luke was 11 years old. His family brought him to the United States from South Korea.

The Senator has left us, but Senator DURBIN inspires us. He is such a great leader on this subject because it is from the heart and the right thing to do, but with great intellect, to have a vision and a dream, but an intellect with a plan to get the job done.

There is a clear path. It exists in the Senate. We don’t know why that door is shut to us in the House. We call upon the Speaker to open the same door in the House, through discussion, that is in the Senate.

I want to commend, once again, Senator DURBIN for his extraordinary leadership. DREAMers know him.

In 2002, when Luke was 11 years old, his family brought him to New York State from South Korea. Luke grew up in Palisades Park, New Jersey. Here is what Luke said about growing up in Palisades Park:

“It didn’t take long for me to adjust and assimilate because my elementary school offered bilingual classes in Korean and English. This is the kind of America I have known and experienced—not just mundanely accepting diversity, but going above and beyond to serve the unique needs of a diverse community.”

From an early age, Luke had a passion for science. He was accepted into a math and sciences magnet high school called Bergen County Academies, which was ranked by Newsweek as one of the top five public high schools in the country. At Bergen County Academies, Luke won several awards at regional science fairs. He also volunteered as an emergency medical technician in the local ambulance corps.

In 2013, Luke graduated—are you ready?—summa cum laude with a bachelor’s of science in chemistry and received an award for the highest grade point average of any chemistry major.

□ 1245

This brilliant young man is currently a Ph.D. graduate in chemistry at the University of Chicago. He also works as a researcher at the university. In his spare time—in his spare time, how does he have spare time—but in his spare time, he also works as a researcher. He volunteers for the Chicago Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, an organization that provides services to disadvantaged members of the community. Good for you, Luke.

Consider this: without legal status, Luke’s talents would have been squandered. But now, thanks to DACA, when we had DACA, Luke was on the road toward making his childhood passion into a promising career as a scientist.

Luke has written: “DACA did much more than shielding me from deportation and changing my immediate circumstances; it gave me a new faith and brought out a new me to reject fear and continue worthwhile pursuits. DACA has been tremendously empowering. Wherever I find myself in the future, I hope to mentor, encourage, and ultimately empower others.’”

Luke and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country.

Do we need more talented scientists like Luke Hwang in America? Of course we do. Will America be stronger if we deport Luke Hwang or if he stays here to contribute his talents to America's future? The answer should be obvious. I thank Luke.

Her parents brought her to the United States from the Philippines when she was 5 years old. Mithi grew up in California. She was an excellent student who dreamed of becoming a doctor. In high school, Mithi was on the principal's honor roll and was an AP scholar. She received the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma and is a Governor's Scholar Award recipient. Mithi was admitted to the University of California, Los Angeles, one of the Nation's top universities. Congresswoman WATERS would attest to that. UCLA is one of the Nation's top universities. We all are proud of the UC system.

At UCLA, Mithi volunteers as a research assistant in lab studies of infants at high risk of developing autism. That was her field. She also volunteers as a crisis counselor for UCLA Peer Helpline advising students who are victims of rape, child abuse, and substance abuse. Mithi eventually became a trainer for new counselors.

Mithi also volunteers as a mentor and tutor for at-risk middle school children in Los Angeles. She graduated from UCLA with a degree in psychology. But her options were limited, Mr. Speaker, because of her immigration status. She was unable to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

Then, in 2012, President Obama established the DACA program, and Mithi's world changed. Mithi began working as a research assistant at the UCLA School of Medicine, and she applied to attend medical school.

During her spare time, Mithi continues to volunteer with the Autism Research Lab where she started her research career 7 years ago. She also serves as a peer mentor to 10 undergraduate students at UCLA.

Mithi wrote to Congress these words: "Please, please listen to our stories. This is my home, and the only country I know. DACA gives us greater opportunities to give back to the country we love."

Listen to that sentence again, Mr. Speaker. Mithi wrote: "DACA gives us greater opportunities to give back to the country we love."

That is what the DREAMers are about. Their dream is to give back to America. They have benefited from our country. They want to give back; and the courage, optimism, and fortitude that they have is really a blessing.

Mithi and other DREAMers like her have so much to contribute. Will America be stronger if we deport Mithi and others like her? Will we be a better country if we tear apart American families? Of course not.

This is going to be a hard name for me to pronounce. It is Jirayut New

Latthivongskorn. His parents brought Jirayut to the United States from Thailand when he was 9 years old. New—we will call him New. New grew up in San Francisco. New said: "I forced myself to read mystery novels, dictionary in hand, in order to expand my vocabulary, one word at a time. I mispronounced words, even in the face of ridicule, until I mastered the English language."

New became an excellent student and dreamed about becoming a doctor. Throughout high school, New worked 30 hours a week at his family's Thai restaurant. Here is what he said about the experience: "I spent most of my time at the restaurant working as a waiter, cashier, and chef, scrubbing toilets, washing dishes, and mopping floors. It taught me to have faith, work hard, and persevere."

New's hard work paid off. He graduated as a salutatorian of his high school class with a 4.3 grade point average. New was admitted to the University of California, Berkeley, one of the top schools in California—in the Nation. He won a scholarship that would have covered most of his tuition, but he was unable to accept it because of his immigration status.

Despite the setback, New persevered. In May, 2012, he graduated with honors with a 3.7 grade point average with a major in molecular and cellular biology.

Just 1 month after he graduated, President Obama established the DACA program. As a result of DACA, New was able to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor. That fall, New began medical school at the University of California, San Francisco, a very difficult school to get into. During his spare time, he volunteers at the homeless clinic that is run by the students of the University of California, San Francisco. In his spare time.

New has cofounded Pre-Health Dreamers, a national network of more than 400 DREAMers who are pursuing careers in healthcare. New and other DREAMers like him have so much to contribute to our country. Will America be a stronger country if we deport New and others like him? Will we be a better country if we tear apart American families? Of course not. We all agree on that.

Aaima Sayed was brought to the United States from Pakistan when she was only 3 years old. She grew up in Chicago like a typical American kid. Aaima says: "I have no memories but those of living in the United States. I am an American in every way, except on paper."

Aaima was an outstanding student. She graduated in the top 10 percent of her high school class where she was secretary of the Spanish club—mind you, she is from Pakistan. She was secretary of the Spanish club, secretary of the math team, and a member of the National Honor Society of High School Scholars. Aaima's dream was to become a physician.

Here is how she explains it: "It completely breaks my heart to see thousands of children die of treatable diseases due to inadequate basic healthcare facilities, and I want to have the skills and ability to change that."

In January 2012, Aaima graduated from Rutgers University magna cum laude, Mr. Speaker, with a major in psychology. She was on the dean's list six times and has a grade point average of 3.75 out of 4. She was a research assistant at Rutgers Department of Psychology and an intern with the local cardiology practice. Aaima took the medical college admission test, the MCAT, and scored in the 90th percentile—better than 90 percent of those who took the test.

Shortly after she graduated, President Obama announced the DACA program. Because of DACA, Aaima is now a medical student at Loyola University pursuing her dream of becoming a physician. After she graduates, she will work in a medically underserved area of Illinois.

Here is what Aaima said about the DACA impact on her: "I went from feeling hopeless and full of uncertainty regarding my future to feeling confident and optimistic that I will one day get the opportunity to help my community and people in other poverty-stricken areas."

But if the House Republicans have their way, Aaima won't be able to attend medical school and become a doctor. Instead, she will be deported back to Pakistan, a country she hasn't lived in since she was a toddler.

I wouldn't attribute it to the Republicans. I think that plenty of Republicans are on board to help our DREAMers. That is what I am hopeful about, just that we need to be given the chance to have a respectful vote on all sides of the issue which we have bipartisan Democrats' strong support, but strong Republican support as well.

Give us a vote, Mr. Speaker. Give us a chance. Treat this House with the dignity it deserves so that we can represent the people and the wishes of our country.

Will America be stronger if we deport Aaima? Of course not.

Today, I want to tell you about our Al Okere. Al was born in Nigeria. In 1990, Al's father was killed by the Nigerian police after he wrote a newspaper column criticizing the Nigerian Government. The killing of Al's father was documented in the State Department's annual Human Rights Reports. In 1995, Al's mother fled Nigeria and brought him to the United States. He was only 5 years old at the time.

Al's mother applied for asylum, but her application was denied, and she was deported in 2005, when Al was 15. Now, mind you, her husband had been assassinated for articles that he had written criticizing the Nigerian Government, a well-founded fear of persecution or danger in Nigeria, yet her application was denied in 2005. Al was 15.

Al graduated from Rogers High School near Tacoma, Washington. He attended Central Washington University where he was an honors student with a 3.5 grade point average. He was an active volunteer in his community.

Here is what Al said about his goals for the future, and I quote Al very proudly: "I have been in accelerated academic programs most of my educational life and hope to be a medical doctor some day to contribute to the well-being of my fellow humans. I hope to continue to emulate and walk in the great academic shoes of my late father, who earned a Ph.D. degree from a university in Paris, France. My family and community support has been enormous, and it gives me the zeal to work hard in my studies, to be able to lend a hand to others in need, and to realize a bright future!"

Al grew up in this country. We have already invested in Al, who has received his entire education from kindergarten to college in the United States. He has great potential to contribute to our society. He does not remember anything about Nigeria and cannot speak any of Nigeria's native languages.

Here is what Al said about the possibility of being deported: "I do not remember anything about my mother's country of Nigeria. I cannot even speak the language. Every experience I have had in life that I can remember have been in the United States of America. Everyone I know and care about are all here, except for my mother, who was sadly removed and remains in hiding in fear of her life."

Would America be stronger if Al Okere were deported? Of course not. Al is not an isolated example. There are literally thousands of others, hundreds of thousands of others like him around the country. I thank Al for being so generous in sharing his story.

I want to tell you about Novi Roy. Novi Roy grew up in the State of Illinois. Novi was brought to the United States from India as a child. He attended Evanston Township High School. This is a story that Senator DURBIN provided.

He attended Evanston Township High School where he graduated with a 3.9 grade point average. During high school, Novi began volunteering at a soup kitchen in Rogers Park in Chicago, which he continues to do today.

Novi went to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics. Novi graduated from the University of Illinois with two master's degrees, one in business and one in human resources. Novi's dream is to be able to provide affordable healthcare to the less fortunate.

Here is what he said in the letter he wrote to DICK DURBIN: "I love America for all its opportunities, and, like any other aspiring student, I want a chance to realize the American Dream. I owe the State of Illinois, its taxpayers, and America a huge debt of gratitude for

the level of education I have attained thus far. I'm confident that my education will serve me well enough to make a difference in people's lives. There is nothing I would like more than to give back to the community that has been so good to me."

Novi grew up in this country. We have already invested in Novi, and he has obtained a first-class education in Illinois. He has great potential to contribute to our society. Will America be a stronger nation if Novi is deported? Of course not. He has overcome the odds to achieve great success. He would make America a strong country.

Again, Novi's story comes to us when he came from India as a child. There is a large number of Asian-Pacific American Dreamers.

Yaniv Steltzer was brought to the United States by his parents from Israel when he was just 3 years old, a DREAMer from Israel. He grew up in this country like any other American child. In 2010, he graduated from Richard Stockton College in New Jersey with a bachelor's degree in hospitality and tourism management.

□ 1300

In college, he was the chair of the Jewish Student Union/Hillel Club and was an active volunteer with several other student groups.

Yaniv's dream is to open a restaurant. He wrote a letter, which said:

I fell in love with cooking in high school when I took a home-economics class, and I knew this is what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I would love to give back to America by opening my own restaurant, creating jobs, contributing to the economy, and becoming a citizen in the country I love.

Unfortunately, under our immigration laws, Yaniv cannot become a citizen. His father was born in the United States. But Yaniv was born in Israel, so he is not an American citizen. Yaniv's father applied for Yaniv to become a citizen, but because the process took so long, Yaniv is no longer eligible.

Under our immigration laws, once Yaniv turned 21, his father could not petition for Yaniv to become a citizen.

So, Yaniv, who has lived his whole life in this country since he was 3, since his father is an American citizen, he is an undocumented immigrant. The only solution for him is the Dream Act.

Here is what Yaniv said about his situation:

America is the only country I know. I grew up here, all my family and friends are here, and everything I know is America. The Dream Act is important to me and also to many others like me who are in the same situation. We have the resources to help this country greatly, but don't have that piece of paper that allows us to do this. I have high hope and optimism that Congress will do the right and humane thing, put all political issues aside, and pass the Dream Act.

Yaniv is right.

I ask my colleagues: Would America be better off if we deported Yaniv?

The answer is very obvious.

Eighteen years ago, in 1992, Minhaz Khan's parents brought him to the

United States from Bangladesh. Minhaz was only 4 years old at the time, and has overcome great obstacles to complete his education. In 2009, he graduated from the University of California, Riverside with a bachelor's degree in neuroscience.

Here is what he said about his dreams for the future:

"My dream is to make several contributions to science, and become a physician's assistant as a career, and eventually a teacher as well. I have great aspirations, but I do not dream of big houses or tons of cars. I want normality, stability, and liberty."

Today, Minhaz lives in Palo Alto, California, with his wife, who is an American citizen. Minhaz spoke about what it would mean for him if the Dream Act were to become law. Here is what he said:

"Imagine the countless numbers of individuals ready to contribute to our society as law-abiding, successful individuals who live life with a sense of strength and morality. Abraham Lincoln once said, 'I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice,' and this is more true now than ever. I have a great amount of hope, optimism, and belief in this country and that one day we will see the Dream Act enacted into law."

This is his statement, Minhaz Khan, from Bangladesh.

Another child brought here from India, as was an earlier DREAMer, Mandeep Chahal. Mandeep was brought to the United States from India 14 years ago, when she was only 6 years old. A beautiful little child.

Mandeep has been an academic all-star. She was an honors pre-med student at the University of California, Davis, where she majored in neurology, physiology, and behavior.

Mandeep is also dedicated to public service. In high school, she helped to found One Dollar for Life, a national poverty relief organization. She was voted the member of her class "Most likely to Save the World. Imagine, most likely to save the world. At her college, Mandeep is the co-president of STAND, an anti-genocide group.

Mandeep has so much to offer to our country. She wrote: "I . . . consider the United States my only home. My family, friends, and future are in the United States, which is where I belong. My dream is to become a pediatrician so I can treat the most helpless and innocent among us. I hope to serve families in low-income communities who otherwise are unable to afford medical care. I wish to remain in the United States so that I can continue to make a positive difference and give back to the community that has given me so much."

How beautiful. You see the recurring theme of the DREAMers: wanting to give back to America, appreciative of the opportunities they have received here—the mentoring, the friendship, the love; wanting to give back.

Dominique Nkata and Tapiwa Nkata. There are two.

Tapiwa's and Dominique's parents, John and Joan Nkata, brought their family to the United States from the African country of Malawi in 1990. At the time, Tapiwa was 4 and Dominique was only 11 months old.

The Nkatas came here legally. They had work permits. John, an ordained Christian minister, worked as a hospice counselor. Joan, his wife—their mother—worked as an accountant.

The Nkatas filed papers to stay here permanently. For years, their case was stuck in immigration court. Finally, in 2009, John and Joan Nkata were granted legal permanent residence. But by that time, Tapiwa and Dominique were adults and unable to obtain legal status through their parents. That happens at 21.

Here is what Dominique said about being deported to Malawi: "The looming fear of having everything I know, including part of my family, here in the United States, while I am removed to the other side of the world, is crippling."

Tapiwa said: "I can't imagine my life in Africa. I am an American. I know this culture and speak this language. I pledge allegiance to this flag."

It would be wrong to send these women back to Malawi, a country they don't even remember. Remember, one of them was 11 months old when she came.

In 2007, Tapiwa graduated summa cum laude from the University of Cincinnati with a degree in finance. She then worked at an accounting firm. She dreams of becoming a certified public accountant.

Tapiwa explained what America means to her: "Quite simply, when you say 'The American Dream' all around the world, they know what you are talking about. People who have never been to our shores, eaten our food, or even spoken our language have heard of a prosperous nation that, above all else, grants freedom and rights to all people."

Dominique graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a degree in chemistry and pre-medicine. Remember, her sister graduated summa cum laude with a degree in finance. Dominique graduated with a degree in chemistry and pre-medicine and began working at University Hospital and the Jewish Hospital in the research department as a clinical studies assistant.

Dominique planned to apply to medical school. She said: "I dream of being a doctor and of giving back to a country that has given so much to me."

Would America be better off if we deported Tapiwa and Dominique back to Malawi?

Of course not. The Dream Act gives them a chance.

Let me introduce you to another DREAMer, Monji Dolon.

Monji's parents brought him to the United States from Bangladesh in 1991. He was 5 years old. As he grew up in his new home, he immersed himself in the study of computers and technology.

Monji wrote: "For as long as I can remember, I have had an intense passion for technology. In middle school, that passion led to spending many nights constructing remote-controlled model airplanes and Van de Graaff generators. In high school, I fell in love with computers and the internet, spending my senior year creating an online newspaper for my school."

Monji did not know about his immigration status until he was applying for college. He asked his parents what to say about his status on his college applications. That is when Monji learned that he was undocumented.

In 2008, Monji graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, an outstanding school. Very soon, Monji began to be courted by the technology industry. He was even offered a job as the lead engineer for a startup in Silicon Valley.

Monji's prospects would be limited because of his immigration status.

The Dream Act would give Monji a chance to pursue his dream and contribute his talent to the country he calls home.

Here is what he has to say: "I've turned down several great jobs from reputable companies because of my status. The Dream Act would let me take my passion for technology to the next level by allowing me to move to Silicon Valley and pursue my dream as an internet entrepreneur."

So, we have someone like Monji, with his talents, his entrepreneurship, his passion, and his intellect. What a resource to our country.

I keep asking the question: Would America be better off if we deported Monji back to Bangladesh, a country he left when he was 5 years old?

Of course not.

Herta Llusho was brought to the United States from Albania when she was 11. She and her mother settled in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit.

Herta and her mother came to the United States legally. Shortly before arriving in America, Herta's mother filed an application to stay in the United States.

Herta quickly learned English and became an academic star. She graduated from Grosse Pointe High School with a 4.05 grade point average. In high school, she was a member of the varsity track team, won an Advanced Placement Scholar Award, and was a member of the National Honor Society.

Herta then attended the University of Detroit Mercy, where she was an honor student and studied to be an electrical engineer. She had a grade point average of 3.98 and completed two internships at engineering companies.

She is from Albania, I remind you.

Herta has been very involved with her community, volunteering at homeless shelters, tutoring programs, and her church.

Listen to what one of her friends said about her: "I am humbled by Herta's willingness and desire to serve. I have

had the privilege of going to the same church at which she faithfully serves. She spends hours tutoring kids and volunteering with the junior high Sunday school class. It is a joy to watch so many children run up to her at church because of the love they receive when they are with her."

Would it be a good use of taxpayer dollars to deport Herta?

Of course not.

Again, there is so much discussion in the United States about the need for more young people to study what is known as STEM—science, technology, engineering, and math. Of course, we add the arts in there: STEAM.

Every year, we issue tens of thousands of H-1B visas to bring foreign students here to work in the STEM fields. Herta is a straight-A student in electrical engineering, a STEM field. She doesn't need an H-1B visa. She is a homegrown talent.

Herta came to Capitol Hill to speak at a briefing on the Dream Act. Here is what she said: "I'm a typical story. There's thousands of stories out there just like mine. Please support the Dream Act so students like me don't have to leave. We are worth it. This is the country we have come to love."

Herta is right. She and hundreds of thousands of others are worth it.

Eliphaz Omote is 25 years old, and he is from KEITH ELLISON's district in Minnesota.

Eliphaz was born in Kenya and came to Minnesota at age 11. He didn't know he was undocumented until he graduated from high school.

Imagine the maturity of these kids. They are teenagers, they are babies, they are 11 years old, and all the rest, and carrying this weight. Growing up is hard enough, right, but carrying this weight?

He writes: "I wanted to go to college and pursue education, but I couldn't. It was a grueling experience, especially for me being a highly driven and ambitious person."

After DACA, Eliphaz graduated from St. Cloud State University with a degree in psychology and management. He is about to start classes for a master's degree in divinity at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Eliphaz wants to be a chaplain in the United States Senate one day, but he can only do that if the Dream Act passes. The Senate. Maybe the House, if he were given a chance to, might rise to the level.

The Congressional Black Caucus—I mentioned earlier that the chairwoman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus—has been very much involved in this issue and they gave me these statistics.

There are 5,302 DACA recipients from Jamaica, 4,077 recipients from Trinidad and Tobago, and 2,095 DACA recipients from Nigeria, just to name a few. There are more, as I mentioned, from Africa, but this just named the Nigerian ones here. I thank them for their work and the effort on activities that have gone with this.

We have another visitor from Albania. Things were tough in Albania a while back. Our distinguished colleague, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL, has been Albania's best friend from Congress, but he can attest that there was cause to leave at an earlier day.

Ola Kaso was brought to the United States by her mother from Albania in 1998, when she was 5 years old. Ola went to high school in Warren, Michigan. She was a valedictorian of her class. She took every advanced placement class offered by her school.

Are you ready for this?

She had a 4.4 grade point average.

Ola was on the varsity cross country and tennis teams. She was treasurer of the student council and treasurer of the National Honor Society at her school. She tutors children who are learning English. Ola was also a member of the homecoming court.

I don't have her picture here, but she was lovely.

□ 1315

Ola was then accepted into the honors program at the University of Michigan, where she would study premed.

Here is what she said about her dreams for the future:

"I aspire to ultimately become a surgical oncologist, but more importantly, I intend to work for patients that cannot afford the astronomical fees accompanying lifesaving surgeries, patients that are denied the medical treatment they deserve. My goal is not to increase my bank account; my goal is to decrease preventable deaths. I wish to remain in this country to make a difference."

How beautiful. Thank you, Ola, for sharing your story.

This takes a great deal of courage for these young people to share their stories and the intimacy of the personal challenges they face, so we thank them for their generosity of spirit as well as their courage.

Steve Li's parents brought him to the United States when he was 11. He studied at City College of San Francisco, where he majored in nursing and was a leader in student government.

Here is what Steve said: "My dream is to become a registered nurse at San Francisco General and to be a public health advocate. I want to be able to give back to my community by raising awareness about preventive care and other healthcare issues. I'm well on my way to achieving my dream. By passing the Dream Act, I will be able to achieve these goals and contribute to the growing healthcare industry."

Could we use more nurses in this country? We sure could. In fact, the United States imports thousands of foreign nurses every year because we have such a large nursing shortage.

So why would we consider sending Steve Li back?

Tolu Olumini: Tolu was brought to the United States from Nigeria when she was a child. As a child, Tolu dreamed of becoming an engineer.

Tolu graduated from high school at the top of her class. She won a full scholarship to a prestigious university in Virginia. In 2002, she graduated with a degree in chemical engineering.

Back in 2011, at a press conference announcing the reintroduction of the Dream Act, here is what Tolu said:

"The dreams of my youth have stalled, yes, but my country still needs me. So I volunteer full-time to ensure a better future for thousands of others. Passing the Dream Act is critically important to me and to so many others. I don't believe that I am entitled to anything more than what this great Nation has taught me: that we all have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Imagine. Tolu is right. Thousands of immigrant students in the United States were brought to the United States as children. It was not their decision to come to this country, but they grew up here, and this is their home.

The fundamental premise of the Dream Act is that we should not punish children for their parents' actions. This is not the American way. Instead, the Dream Act says to these students: America will always give you a chance. And I—me—say to their parents: Thank you for bringing these DREAMers to America. We are in your debt for the courage it took for you to take the risk physically, politically, and in every way to do so.

David Cho was brought to the United States from South Korea when he was 9. Since then, David has been a model American. He had a 3.9 GPA in high school. He attended UCLA, where he obtained a bachelor of arts in international finance, with a 3.6 GPA.

As you can see, David is also the leader of the UCLA marching band. There is a picture of him, but the RECORD will not reflect that, the leader of the UCLA marching band.

David then obtained a master's degree in public policy, with a GPA of 3.9, and was the UCLA commencement speaker.

He worked as a business technology analyst at Deloitte Consulting, where he earned the highest possible performance rating, representing performance in the top 5 percent of all analysts. Today, David works in business and technology, consulting as a sales force scrum master and project manager.

Thank you, David, for your contribution to our country.

Minchul Suk: Minchul was brought to the United States from South Korea by his parents in 1991 when he was 9.

I just want to make this point, Mr. Speaker. When I mentioned about Senator DURBIN, he introduced the Dream Act in 2001, it is 17 years later, so some of these children have grown up. But some of them whom we are addressing came to the United States in the nineties, and so 17 years later we still haven't been able to take care of the children? They were very little children when they came, and some of

them are still young. But they came, some of them, as I said, 11 months, 6 months, babies.

Minchul came when he was 9. He graduated from high school with a 4.2 GPA. He graduated from UCLA with a degree in microbiology, immunology, and molecular genetics. With the support from the Korean-American community, Minchul was able to graduate from dental school. He passed the national boards and license exam and became a dentist.

Here is what he wrote: "After spending the majority of my life here, with all my friends and family here, I could not simply pack my things and go to a country I barely remember. I am willing to accept whatever punishment is deemed fitting for that crime; let me just stay and pay for it. . . . I am begging for a chance to prove to everyone that I am not a waste of a human being, that I am not a criminal set on leaching off taxpayers' money. Please give me a chance to serve my community as a dentist, to be a giver rather than a receiver."

Thank you, Minchul.

Senator DURBIN has sent over some stories, and I am going to read some of them.

Jean-Yannick Diouf: When Yannick was 8, his father, a diplomat from the African country of Senegal, brought his family to the United States. Unfortunately, Yannick's parents separated and Yannick's father returned to Senegal, leaving Yannick and the rest of the family behind. Yannick did not realize it at the time, but when his father left the United States, Yannick lost his legal status to live in this country.

Yannick grew up in Montgomery County, Maryland, nearby. In high school, Yannick was a member of the National Honor Society. He also volunteered weekly at a homeless shelter and organized soccer tournaments for 3 years to raise money for the Red Cross for earthquake relief in Haiti.

Mind you, he is from Senegal, and he is raising money for earthquake relief in Haiti. God bless him.

After high school, he continued his education. He earned an associate degree in business from Montgomery College, where he was on the dean's list. He then transferred to University of Maryland, College Park, where he is working on a bachelor's degree in business management. Yannick runs the Achievers Mentoring Program, an after-school program that advises middle school and high school students on how to get into college and be successful—very valuable, mentoring. He is also a volunteer for United We Dream, the largest organization of undocumented students in the country.

May I pause for a moment to commend United We Dream. They have been so spectacular, so dignified, so prestigious in how they have protected the DREAMers' case and enabled DREAMers to present their own case.

Yannick was a leader in the campaign to pass the Maryland Dream Act,

which allows Maryland residents who are undocumented to pay instate tuition. Keep in mind, Yannick is undocumented, so he does not qualify for any official aid from the Federal Government. Here is what he wrote:

“DACA means dignity. More than making money, having a job gives us dignity and self-respect. I want to work for what I have. I don’t look to anyone for pity. People should judge me based on what I do and what I stand for, not based on status. I want to be given a chance to prove that not only am I a functioning member of society, I am here to serve and share my talents with those in my community.”

Yannick was one of six DREAMers who met President Obama in the Oval Office. Here is what President Obama said after that meeting: “I don’t think there’s anybody in America who’s had a chance to talk to these six young people . . . who wouldn’t find it in their heart to say these kids are Americans just like us, and they belong here, and we want to do right by them.”

President Obama is right. Yannick and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country.

The question again: Would America be a stronger country if we deport Yannick and others like him? Of course not.

Another DREAMer from India, this is Harminder Saini. When Harminder was 6 years old, his family moved to the United States from India. He grew up in Queens in New York City. He was a typical American kid, playing sports and going to the park every day. Harminder’s dream was to serve his country as a soldier in the United States Army. In his words, he simply wanted to give back.

Harminder was a born leader, and in high school he was active in student government and ultimately was elected class president.

He first learned that he did not have legal immigration status when he was in high school and was unable to apply for a driver’s license, Mr. Speaker. Harminder is now a student at Hunter College at the City University of New York, working toward his bachelor’s degree in history. And thanks to DACA, he is on his way to fulfilling his dream. Last year, he enlisted in the Army through the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest program, known as MAVNI.

The MAVNI program allows immigrants with critical skills vital to the national interest to enlist in the Armed Forces. More than 800 DACA recipients with these critical skills have joined the military through MAVNI.

Some Trump administration officials have claimed that DACA recipients are taking jobs away from Americans, but Harminder and hundreds of other DREAMers have skills that our military couldn’t find anywhere else.

Harminder, along with many other DREAMers, is now waiting to ship to basic training. He continues his under-

graduate studies and is working full-time waiting for his chance to serve the country he loves.

Harminder wrote: “All I want to do is serve. I want to do my part to give back to this country because it allowed me to serve.”

Without DACA, Harminder and hundreds of other immigrants with skills that are vital to the national interest would be kicked out of the Army. They want nothing more than to serve, and they are willing to die for the country they call home.

Thank you, Harminder.

Representative ESTY of Connecticut sent us this story about Daisy Rivera. Her story is in Daisy’s own words:

“I came to the United States when I was 2 months old.”

How precious.

“The day I entered high school, my parents broke the sad news to me that I was undocumented. Yes, I did grow up not knowing my true status, and at that very moment I felt I didn’t know who exactly I was anymore. It made it very difficult to try and understand when all my siblings were born here in the U.S. and were given opportunities that I wasn’t able to have. When I graduated high school in 2012, I found out that President Obama took action to grant undocumented people like me the DACA.

“Ever since then, I have been able to feel free, support my daughter, my parents, and younger siblings still working on their dreams. I now have a beautiful job with a Head Start program for youth development and healthy living. This is a job that not only I enjoy, but my 3-year-old daughter attends as well. DACA has been more than a blessing and a relief for me and my friends and family.

“But now that it has been put in jeopardy, I can’t even go to sleep at night. I look at my daughter thinking: What can I do so I don’t end up like other families that have been separated and destroyed? What can I do to support my child? How do I explain to my friends and family that my future has been taken away, that I am not like them?

“This might be another challenge for me as an undocumented, but I know that this is just the start of my new beginning that will label me a warrior because I will not sit here and have my future taken. I will not stand by the corners of the streets to ask for anything. I will fight and raise my voice alone or with the other 800,000 DREAMers, and we will obtain what we deserve, and we won’t give up.”

That story comes from Representative ESTY. I think it is important to note here that some of these people are, again, working; they are giving back to the community. DACA made a big difference in their existence. For some of them, they found out that they were undocumented at a critical point in their own development, and it foisted uncertainty upon them, which DACA relieved.

So I think there is just a misunderstanding here about what President Trump did in September. It was very harsh. As the National Catholic Conference of Bishops said, it was reprehensible.

I don’t think that the administration understood the impact it had on people’s lives. I think they thought they were giving a 6-month reprieve, but what they were doing was giving 6 months of uncertainty and removal of protections for these people.

And you have heard some of the statements that have been made in the last day or so about mischaracterizing why some people have lost protections. I will reiterate that this all came fast. Many of the people who needed to sign up right away found it difficult to access the \$495 immediately. Most people in our country could not have access to \$495 in the spur of the moment, especially young people. So, anyway, we have always treated this with respect.

I would like to talk now about Julia Verzbickis:

“When I was 9, my family and I moved to the United States to find some stability that wasn’t present in our home country. We always had plans to make the move permanent, and the seemingly endless paperwork process began nearly immediately. However, we didn’t know what we were in for. The lawyer we had turned out to be fraudulent, and, as a result, my parents, my sisters, and I lost our status in the country. It was the summer before my first year of high school.

“The future remained unclear, but I made some choices. I chose to keep my grades up in school. I chose to give myself the opportunity at a future. I worked hard. I graduated 28th in a class of 620. I had a 3.6” GPA. “I got into Rutgers early admission.

“The week after my 21st birthday, I got notice that my DACA application had been approved. Within 12 hours, I had applied for a Social Security card, and, within a week, I’d filled out dozens of job applications. I got a license for the first time ever.

“In November 2014, I got into Teach For America. I was placed in San Antonio, 1,800 miles away from New Jersey.”

□ 1330

“I graduated college the following May, cum laude, with a double major in English and journalism.

“In August 2015, I started teaching. I also met the man that would become the love of my life. I had a new life in a new State, and I was all by myself for the first time ever, and I couldn’t be more excited.

“I’ve been teaching middle school since then, and I love it. My kids are amazing. They drive me nuts on any given day, but I love them.

“DACA gave me my independence back. It’s the single reason I am able to teach, and live on my own, and pay for my car, and feel like I belong in the country I have lived in for 15 years.

“Knowing that I could lose all the freedom I’ve gained is a paralyzing fear. I’ve worked so hard, and my life was just coming together, and now it might fall apart again. I hope that doesn’t happen, but if I’ve learned anything these last 15 years, it’s to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.”

That is Julia’s story.

This is from Zuleyma Garcia.

“Hi, my story started 22 years ago when I was only 3 years old. My parents, both from Mexico, had crossed over, summer of 1994, through the hot and unforgiving desert. I have always admired my parents’ drive and courage to go after a better life. I couldn’t imagine leaving my country, U.S., for one I know nothing about. Which is why I’m so thankful for DACA.

“My mom always showed me anything is possible by working hard for it. I never really noticed or felt like I wasn’t American.

So my freshman year, after passing my driver’s ed, I was very quickly disillusioned by my mother, who explained we were here illegally and could not get a driver’s permit. I broke down crying because I felt like my world crumbled. So many thoughts went through my mind, mainly fear at the moment, but I eventually gripped myself together. With the passing years, frustration added to the list of emotions, when I couldn’t attend class trips to other States, apply for scholarships, or even just special programs at colleges, while I was still in high school, because of the lack of a Social Security number and an ID.

“Once I graduated and it was time to face the real world, things hit the fan. I felt like the doors closed in on me. I had nice internships lined up. I had managed to get into a special program at my college, which I wasn’t able to do because of my status. A year into working a minimum wage job and attending college for a preschool teacher, I now felt like I had been torn apart, felt like no matter how hard I worked, I would never accomplish my goals because of this barrier. So I dropped out of college and just focused on working, got a second job, and moved out of my mom’s home. Soon after, I met my husband of 5 years now, which is an American citizen; we have a 5-year-old child.

“DACA allowed me to feel like a human again and to live without fear. I’m not a bad person. I have a clean criminal record and am a good member of society, and, like me, there’s so many. This is why I call for an extension of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.”

Again, the uncertainty, the anxiety, that is injected into people’s lives. I thank them for sharing these deep concerns.

We are now hearing from Isabelle Muhlbauer.

“By junior year of high school, I spoke English fluently and attended all honors classes, but, unlike most 15 year olds, my future was uncertain due to my immigration status. It was this

uncertainty that led to my interest in American politics. I wanted to understand why I was not eligible to apply for certain schools, scholarships, and financial aid despite being a top student at my high school.

“There seemed to be something fundamentally unfair about a system that excluded students like me. However frustrating my situation was, I was fortunate to live in New York, where residency laws made the possibility of attending college a reality.

“At Baruch College, I studied political science. I attended school full time and, by sophomore year, had the opportunity to intern at Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND’s office at the Veterans’ Affairs casework department. I knew then that I wanted to pursue public service, but was well aware of the legal hurdles ahead of me due to my undocumented status.

“I was unsure what life after graduation would be like without authorization to work. Thankfully, the DACA program was announced a few semesters before my graduation. Although it was still difficult to find the right job, my persistence eventually led me to the New York Legal Assistance Group. I now work as a paralegal in the Veterans Assistance Project at NYLAG. I have the opportunity to work with a team that is committed to helping the low-income veteran population in NYC get access to the benefits they earned through their service.”

A DACA—a DREAMer—helping our veterans.

“I had hoped to attend law school to further advance my career in public interest law, but given the current uncertainty of what will happen with DACA, it’s become increasingly difficult to plan for the future. While DACA is not the solution to the current state of immigration affairs, it has given me and over 700,000 other DREAMers the path to achieving the American Dream.”

We thank Isabelle for sharing her story.

This is from Bruna.

“There are a few minutes left of President Obama’s Presidency and a feeling of dread fills me. Not only because I’m saying goodbye to a President that has meant so much to me and thousands of DREAMers, but because within a few minutes the new President may choose to remove DACA—taking away a sense of security we’ve had these past years.

“In 2012, President Obama presented DACA, giving me and my sister another chance at life. Before then, we did truly feel like we were going to lose everything: friends and family we made in this country, the home we built, and the future we envisioned.

“Born in Brazil, but raised in Tampa, Florida, my parents always pushed us to excel in school, in leadership positions, and in sports. We planned to go to college, travel the world, volunteer, and to make a difference in a country that had generously welcomed us.

“After a third failed attempt at securing a green card, we had given up.

My parents had done everything they could. They paid the expensive lawyer fees, opened a small business, and had secured and renewed work visas throughout our time here. There was no explanation as to why U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services would deny legal immigrants with a business, a home, savings accounts, and a decade in the country, a chance at becoming permanent residents.

“With the threat of being deported looming over my head, I did everything I could to help reelect President Obama. I joined OFA in Gainesville, Florida, and spent countless nights with volunteers and staffers.”

“So although I am scared of what comes next, if we lose DACA, if we’re no longer able to continue working in the U.S., I am empowered by an important lesson President Obama taught us: We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek. In this time of uncertainty, we must carry that lesson and fight so that all people, including DREAMers, can continue working towards the American Dream.”

I know that Representative JAYAPAL is on the floor, and I wish that she could deliver it herself, but the rules do not allow.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The gentlewoman will state her parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. PELOSI. Are we going to be able to have Special Orders for our colleagues at the end of the session?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman may consult with leadership on matters of scheduling.

Ms. PELOSI. Okay. I didn’t know if a decision had been made about that yet.

Then I will continue to read.

Amy Kele. This is from Representative JAYAPAL, a leader on the immigration issues, as you probably all know, an immigrant herself to our country, and now a Member of Congress. I am so proud of her.

Amy Kele and her family moved from Fiji to settle in Everett, Washington, staying on their father’s student visa. Things change when Amy’s parents left the U.S. to attend a wedding in Fiji.

“They were only planning to stay for 2 weeks, but then my mom’s visa got denied,” said Amy, the oldest of four children. Amy is now 19, but the last time she saw her parents was when she was just 11 years old.

How sad.

When Amy’s parents left for Fiji, Amy’s grandmother came from California to babysit. When they weren’t able to reenter the country, she picked up her life and moved to Everett to care for her grandchildren. “She’s the heart of this whole family. She’s kept us together this whole time. I don’t know where we’d be right now, maybe back in Fiji or in a foster home. I’m really thankful for her in our lives,” said Kele.

Though Amy’s grandmother has been living in the U.S. for almost 20 years, she is also undocumented. “Because she’s also undocumented, she can’t get benefits like Social Security and things like that. It kind of breaks my heart whenever I think about it.”

With the exception of Amy's younger sister, who was born in the United States, the Kele children have all enrolled in DACA.

Amy is now a nursing student and healthcare worker for the elderly. As the oldest sibling, she takes pride in being able to help her grandmother support their family. She provides for her three siblings, is an active member of her church, and is looked to as a leader at the University of Washington. Amy is shy, full of heart, and cares deeply about her family and community.

Without the support of DACA, Amy fears never being able to complete her nursing degree. Without a work permit, the livelihood of their family is at stake. The risk of deportation means she could be separated from her family, possibly leaving her youngest sister in foster care.

What? This is a very sad and challenging situation. So many families affected that just being able to vote on the floor could correct. It is about the children.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for sharing that story with us.

Whip HOYER wanted to tell this story on the floor himself, and other stories as well, but the rules at the moment do not allow him. We are uncertain as to whether there will be an opportunity for Special Orders where Members can speak afterward.

Lisia Vala, Indian American, her personal story.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Whip HOYER for his leadership. Whip HOYER has been so much a champion on this issue, fighting so hard in every possible venue, under any auspices, there every step of the way. He submits this story.

My family moved from Canada to San Antonio in 1996 when I was 6.

Mr. Speaker, this is a DREAMer from Canada.

We had a visa, and my parents worked to change our immigration status for as long as I can remember. We spent decades playing by the rules. But one time our immigration attorney filed our paperwork late, and another time our sponsor sold his business, forcing us to restart the entire application process.

For more than 20 years, we attempted to navigate the broken immigration system, an emotionally exhausting and financially draining process. Suffice it to say that I am not undocumented for lack of trying.

Growing up in Texas, I always felt like an American because, in every possible way, I was. I went to elementary, middle, and high school in San Antonio, enrolling in Girl Scouts, and spending my summers playing league basketball. I volunteered at the local food bank, took far too many AP classes, and worked behind the cash register at the neighborhood grocery store.

In 2008, I left for college. Four years later, I graduated, and, thanks to DACA, I was suddenly eligible for relief from immigration worries. DACA has helped me become the person I am today. Because of my work permit, I have been able to buy a home, a car, and pay off my student loans.

I launched a small business helping U.S. citizens with their resume so they can get jobs. I have a meaningful job and pay State and Federal taxes, I pay rent to live in my apartment in Washington. I eat at restaurants, shop at local stores, and pay for public transportation.

All the dollars that I have spent, and the dollars that 800,000 people like me spent, are reinvested back in the community and help improve the lives of our American citizen neighbors and friends.

A beautiful story from Lisia, and, again, there is nothing lazy about this family, or any of these families, as to how they want to achieve legal status in our country. The only violation in hundreds of thousands of these cases is a status, either a lapse, in this case, or a violation, but nothing in terms of breaking the law in any other way.

□ 1345

From California, Congressman JIMMY PANETTA, a member of our freshman class, tells us the story of Adriana from Salinas. I thank JIMMY for the work he tried to do with the group that he works with in a bipartisan way to advance the cause of the DREAMers.

Adriana tells this story: "At the age of 7, I migrated to the place that I now call home. I came with the dream of pursuing an education and becoming someone important, someone who would give back to the community. I am working to achieve my dream. To my community, I am a student, I am a peer, I am a leader. To the Trump administration, I am a criminal. I stood in the shadows for a very long time, and education was always my outlet. I grew to be the person I am today because of my mother, a cook, who told me that education was the most important thing I could earn.

"People tell me to go back to my country, but people do not realize that this is my country. I work, I pay taxes, I go to school, I stand for the national anthem, and I know the Pledge of Allegiance. This country has seen me grow, and this country has contributed to my dreams. I aspire to attend law school. DACA has helped me achieve my dreams. I was able to get a Social Security card. I was allowed to apply for a driver's license. DACA allowed me to be like any other person my age.

"People have asked me what would I do without DACA. To be honest, I have faith in my elected officials. I do not want everything handed to me, nor do I believe that I deserve everything. What I do ask for is the ability to be like any other 25-year-old in this country. I don't want the termination of DACA to be the termination of my dreams."

Thank you, Adriana. Thank you, JIMMY PANETTA, for submitting that story.

Juan Escalante tells us that he was working at an unpaid internship in 2012 when he caught word of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, announcement via Twitter. He said: "I ran to the office lobby, turned on the TV, and immediately knew right away that life would not be the same. I called my mother in tears and proceeded to tell her that my brothers and I would be able to benefit from a program that would temporarily shield us from deportation, while allowing us to work and drive legally. I understood DACA was a temporary program that would not cover parents, but it renewed my commitment to fight for relief for the rest of the immigrant community.

"Since that day, I have taken every opportunity to grow, learn, and contribute back to my community. In 2013, DACA allowed me to re-enroll in Florida State University and pursue a master's degree in public administration. By 2014, I was in the middle of working a job in Tallahassee, Florida, studying for my master's classes, and advocating at the Florida Legislature for a bill that would allow undocumented students to obtain in-state tuition at State colleges and universities. In a rare display of bipartisanship, the bill passed and was signed into law by Florida Republican Governor Rick Scott.

"I graduated with my master's in 2015 full of hope and energy that I would be able to put my education to good use. With degrees in hand, I was able to obtain a job as a digital immigration advocate, putting my years of experience and passion to good use. Simultaneously, and thanks to the new in-state tuition law in Florida, I was able to help both of my younger brothers enroll at Miami Dade College and Florida International University. They are currently pursuing degrees to work in business and communications, respectively."

I just want to say that I have spoken at the graduation at Miami Dade College and spoken also at Florida International University, two magnificent schools. And what is beautiful about them is to see the beautiful diversity in the large number of students that they teach, and the many cases of first children to attend college, but with all the optimism, dignity, and hope that you could ever imagine. They are two great institutions.

I actually spoke at the commencement address one year, the year before President Bush spoke there. I have said earlier, President Bush was a wonderful President dedicated to recognizing how important immigration was to our country and how we should value our immigrants and treat them with respect when we have the debate on these issues.

Juan goes on to say: "There are a lot of misconceptions regarding the DACA program, but perhaps the biggest one is that beneficiaries of the program are asking for a free pass. DACA does not grant citizenship. Rather, it allows individuals like myself, who have benefited from State-funded investments like public education, to move forward with their lives and continue to contribute to their communities. That means DACA beneficiaries could continue to pursue higher education, starting businesses, or putting their skills to use without the constant fear of deportation if the program is kept in place."

Of course, we hope the Dream Act will have a more beneficial impact than just the DACA announcement, but that is what we are asking the Speaker for a vote for.

We thank Juan for sharing his important story and reinforcing the constant message that people are working hard

and they want to give back to the community; the immigrant commitment and recognition that education is the source of making the future better for their families and for our country.

Denis Montero Diaz tells his story: "I didn't cry. I knew it was for the best. I said good-bye to many: the people I love. I felt uncertainty, yet I didn't cry.

"You see, I knew of the American Dream. Every evening I'd watch American films filled with white picket fences and big city aspirations. I dreamed of setting foot in the land of opportunity.

"After a disastrous journey, we arrived home. Every morning I pledged allegiance to the flag. I meant it. I excelled in school. That is why our parents worked so hard, why we risked so much; opportunities that come through education and hard work."

Again, that immigrant ethic of hard work ethic and education ethic.

Denis says: "Later, I learned what my undocumented status truly meant. I felt uncertainty, shame, no future. Rattled by depression, I contemplated giving up.

"Lucky, I had educators that told me I was wasting a mind. So I've continued to pursue my education and help run our family business.

"Through DACA, me and 800,000 others live freely. We can contribute. That's our American Dream. That is why my mother works so hard, hands aching, yet a kind smile on her face. That's why I study economics, to one day enthrall my mind to the betterment of this Nation."

Giving back.

Denis says: "I watched Trump make his way to the podium. I felt uncertainty. My own need for an answer was channeled through the screen into the mind of a reporter who asked about DACA. No answer. Silence.

"The 45th President took office. Cannons fired, people applauded, rain fell. But I do not believe in omens. If the life of 800,000 'DACAmended' Americans is altered, it will not be by virtue of the rain. It will be by the lightning strike of one man's hand.

"We ask only to let us contribute freely. Let us walk along you, shoulder to shoulder, on that same road our hands helped to pave. Human decency and morality demand it. The American people, our people, demand it."

So we thank Denis for sharing his story. You hear, Mr. Speaker, reiterated time and again, the work ethic, family values, education, giving back to America, no free ride.

I have mentioned the Congressional Black Caucus and their leadership on this issue; the Hispanic Caucus and their leadership. I am very, very proud of CAPAC. I represent a district that, as they say in San Francisco, the beauty is in the mix; and one-third of my district is Asian-Pacific American, so I take a great pride in being part of the CAPAC, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

So here are the statistics that they have given us:

Twenty percent of DACA recipients are Asian-Pacific Islanders.

Did Members know that?

More than 130,000 Asian-Pacific Islander DREAMers. And 7,000 DREAMers are from South Korea. Nearly 5,000 DREAMers are from the Philippines. More than 3,000 DREAMers are from India. Nearly 2,000 DREAMers are from Pakistan. And thousands more are from the rest of the Asian-Pacific area.

In addition to DACA, though, there are many people from the Asian-Pacific area who would be benefited if we did comprehensive immigration reform. Today we are just speaking about the DREAMers.

So I thank Congresswoman JUDY CHU for her persistent, relentless leadership on this subject as the chair of CAPAC—the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus—and also her insistence in presenting the value of family unification as a value, as a source of strength to America. This is an important debate that will be part of whatever comes next in legislation. But I thank her for her leadership in that regard.

An icon in the Congress, JOHN LEWIS from Georgia, has submitted this testimony. JOHN has spoken so beautifully on this subject. I think if anyone listened to him, if the DREAMers heard him, they would feel so comforted, inspired, and optimistic. If others heard him, if their hearts are open, they would have to say we must get a result, we must do the right thing. JOHN always inspires us in that way. What an honor it is for all of us to serve with him, to call him our colleague.

JOHN submitted this story from a Georgian. This is a Georgian's statement: "Last week, on January 30, 2018, President Trump, in his State of the Union, said, 'Americans are DREAMers, too.' He didn't mention the second part: DREAMers are American, too.

"My name is Daniela, and I was there at the State of the Union last week when I heard President Trump say these words."

Daniela is a Georgian, as JOHN LEWIS has indicated.

Daniela goes on to say: "I was brought over at age 4 because my mother realized that, if we stayed, we wouldn't survive."

She is from Acapulco, Mexico.

Daniela says: "And at the time, there were very limited ways to get into the U.S. legally. It required a lot of money and time, something we didn't have.

"Put yourself in her shoes. What would you have done for you and your child?

"Wait years in a country that wasn't safe, for the hope that someday maybe you could come to America. A someday that never came for some because death came knocking first."

Death by violence.

Daniela says: "My mother did what any good parent would do in that situation. She decided to risk her life so that her child could have a future.

"I am currently a student down the street at George Washington University. I grew up in Georgia. I speak English more fluently than I do Spanish. America is home. I am an American. I am currently studying political science, and aspire to work for the United Nations as an advocate for human rights. I earned over \$30,000 in private scholarship money to attend college."

She worked and did that.

Daniela says: "Nothing was handed to me. I did not qualify for instate tuition or any type of Federal financial aid.

"They call us DREAMers, but we are actually working every day to make our dreams into a reality. It's cruel to deny me and the 800,000-plus DREAMers a clean Dream Act. The impact of losing DACA would be devastating not just emotionally and personally, but also detrimental to the economy. DREAMers are going to school, opening up businesses, working, paying taxes."

I would add, serving in our military.

Daniela says: "A study by the Center for American Progress estimated that the loss of all DACA workers would reduce U.S. gross domestic product by \$433 billion over the next 10 years. Yes, \$433 billion."

Mr. Speaker, that is over the next 10 years.

Daniela says: "Removing the DREAMers is not only unethical and unjust, it's also simply un-American because of the damage it would do to the economy.

"You gave an oath to protect the interests of the American people. I am an American. This is not a partisan issue. Please choose to be on the right side of history."

I thank JOHN LEWIS for submitting this beautiful statement. I also thank this Georgian for her testimony. I just want to say to Daniela that not only would we be—you ask us to be on the right side of history. I would say that, in this Congress and in this country, we not only want to be on the right side of history, we want to be on the right side of the future. And to be on the right side of the future, we have to recognize who we are as a country, what our values are.

Imagine Founders who would say it is our national purpose and what we owe people is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The pursuit of happiness is one of the goals of our Nation, one of the standards of what we stand for, to use the word again.

This is not just about protecting the economy. It is about protecting our country, who we are as a country. So I thank JOHN LEWIS, and I thank Daniela for her impressive, impressive presentation.

□ 1400

Brisa E. Ramirez's statement says: "I was born in . . . Mexico. I am 26 years old, and I have lived in the United States as an undocumented immigrant for 25 years."

Do the math, Mr. Speaker. That means Brias came at 1 year old.

“Throughout my childhood, I did not fully understand the repercussions that came from hearing the status of ‘illegal’ in this country, but I did know my mother and I had to be ‘careful.’ As an adult, I am now experiencing firsthand the restrictions, prejudice, and fear illegal immigrants must confront. Since childhood, I have always wanted to make a tangible difference in the world.”

Listen to that sentence. “Since childhood, I have always wanted to make a tangible difference in the world.”

“Growing up in adversity inspired me to obtain a college degree; I wanted to become someone who could right the wrongs experienced by those living in poverty.

“In 2012, when I first heard about DACA, I was skeptical. The idea of self-disclosing my immigration status, especially to the government, was terrifying. I waited 2 years to see what would become of those who bravely stepped out in order to receive their 2 years of deferment from deportation. Eventually, I had to do the same. I understood that I could continue to be ‘safe’ in the shadows but live as a criminal or expose myself and live as a law-abiding individual. Even though I feel like I have an expiration date, I am much happier thanks to DACA.

“DACA has given me the ability to drive without fear, work legally without fear, and earn jobs where I am not exploited. DACA has given me the ability to use my college degree, which I earned through private donations in the form of a full-tuition scholarship through years of hard work, perseverance, and many, many tears. DACA has given me the ability to earn a position as an AmeriCorps VISTA and serve in the fight against poverty in Boston. . . . It’s amazing how nine digits and a flimsy piece of discolored paper can change your life.

“My dream is to create a more compassionate society that restores human dignity to those who are pushed further into the margins. I want to earn my Ph.D. I want to become a leader of an organization that seeks to provide opportunities that do not trap people in misery and dependence. I want to be a voice for the voiceless. My dream is to discover potential in people who are thought to have none because I know what it is like.”

Thank you, Brisa, for your courage.

Giovanni writes: “I left Panama on my eighth birthday on a flight bound for Los Angeles, California. At the time, I didn’t fully understand the weight of what was happening. I was excited to have the people on my flight sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to me. I was intrigued by the smoked salmon that the stewardess served me for lunch. I had no idea that to this day, almost 20 years later, I would not return to my hometown or my childhood friends or the house that I was born in.

“From the moment I arrived in the United States, I tried my hardest to fit

in. I learned English quickly and dropped my Spanish accent. I tried to excel in my studies, even though this prompted comments that I was ‘acting White.’ I made friends, consumed popular culture, played video games. I assimilated well because of that immense pressure known only to those who leave their homes for the land of opportunity. I looked at other immigrant kids with their broken English and hand-me-down clothes and the way they were being teased. I wanted, and often failed, to distance myself from the perception that I did not belong.

“The older I got, the more I realized that my situation wasn’t going to get any better,” Giovanni writes on. “‘Close’ friends criticized and spewed toxic mistruths about immigrants and how they were ruining this country. I lived under the constant fear that my home would be raided or that my parents would get arrested and sent to a detention center. I became better and better at coming up with excuses for why I had no license, no car, no job, why I couldn’t travel or take advantage of scholarships, why I turned down internship opportunities and research positions with my professors.

“At the risk of sounding cliché, DACA opened doors for me. It goes well beyond just being able to work and get a license and fly domestically. You see, what all of us want is simple. We just want the opportunity to emerge from the shadows, to work and support our families, to contribute back to our communities, to love our partners/spouses without the fear of being deported at a moment’s notice. We have that now. But for how long?”

We thank Giovanni for his message, but again, fear, tears. As I said, the Statue of Liberty must have tears in her eyes when she hears some of the comments that are made about immigrants, fear in the hearts of some of these people. Giovanni talks about doors opening, saying it is like a cliché, but DACA opened doors for him. Let’s hope that passing the Dream Act will keep those doors open.

Deyanira writes this: “‘Adversity causes some men to break; others to break records’—William Arthur Ward.

“Although being undocumented has been my toughest struggle here in the United States,” Deyanira writes, “it has shaped me to highly appreciate education and encourage my younger siblings to excel in their studies in order to pursue a career.

“I was born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. My parents decided early on that they wanted their children to grow up in better environments than the ones they grew up in. They migrated to the United States of America when I was very young so that they could work endlessly and send money back home to Mexico. At the age of 5, I migrated along with my sister. I was excited about my family being united once again, despite the adversity we face.

“The hardships range from medical situations to owning a driver’s license.

The cost of visiting a clinic is tremendously overwhelming due to the fact that we did not have the documents required for a medical insurance plan. My parents, like many others throughout the U.S., risk so much by pursuing the American Dream every day.

“On August 12, President Obama introduced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program. My sister and I applied and we received our work permits. My soul was euphoric with the joy of being legal in this country, but then I discovered this valuable permit would only help me work legally but would not grant me permanent residence.

“I qualified for scholarships like the Gates Millennium Scholarship, but I would not even be considered because of my status. I looked high and low for any scholarship that would accept undocumented students and made sure to apply because they were few and far between. Regardless of not being a permanent resident or citizen, I still made my dream of attending the University of Texas”—Austin, Texas—“majoring in neuroscience a reality.

“I consider myself blessed and hope that others can learn from my struggles. I am involved in UT University Leadership Initiative, an organization that advocates for immigrant rights and helps the community fight injustices. Despite DACA only allowing temporary relief to me, I appreciate it because it removed the burden of my status from me and allowed me to work and contribute to society. If DACA were removed, we would have to return to the shadows and live life in constant fear.”

We cannot let that happen.

Another student from Georgia, this time McDonough, Georgia, Anayancy Ramos, writes: “I learned to live as an American before the memories of my homeland solidified into a permanent impression. My mother tongue was forgotten as I learned to speak English, weakening the profound virtuosity of my heritage and reshaping my family’s mannerisms and grandiose personalities. In pursuing the American Dream, my parents not only offered their lives, but also their youngest daughter.

“In spite of losing my ancestors that both defined me and were unknown to me, I have fought for the new self I have built up from the ashes of the broken dreams they tried to burn down. While in community college, I steadfastly held the distinction of a dean’s list scholar and successfully completed the requirements for earning an honors certificate by completing eight honors courses. I held the merit of being inducted into an honors society, Phi Theta Kappa, and was appointed president of the Alpha Beta Gamma chapter the following year, all the while working full-time at an animal hospital.

“I poured the desperation I felt over being denied my education at the top research schools in Georgia into my school and work. I rose to the position of manager at the animal hospital and

was the sole student awarded the distinction of Student of the Year in Biology out of the total college population of 21,000 students”—top student, 21,000 students.

“In an attempt to continue my education further than a 2-year associate’s degree, I was chosen from a pool of thousands as a semifinalist for the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke scholarship. Later that year, I was offered a different private scholarship to attend Eastern Connecticut State University at no cost to me. In another 2 years’ time, I will graduate with a double major in biochemistry and biology.

“Four years was all it took for me to effectively and irrevocably pursue the education I have proved that I deserve. However, these dreams have an expiration date. Every 2 years, I must go through the taxing process of applying for DACA. Every 2 years, these dreams may die. Until then, I breathe the heart and soul of my denied ancestors into my studies to keep them alive and to keep them ingrained in my pursuit of the American Dream.”

So beautiful. Thank you, Anayancy.

And then I want to talk about Cindy: “My name is Cindy Nava. I was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, and arrived in the United States in 1997. I have been blessed to grow up in a State that has demonstrated its appreciation and support to immigrant communities over the years. The State of New Mexico is not only the place I call home, but it is the State that has nourished my deep love and passion for civic engagement and policy.

“I began my college life at Santa Fe Community College and then transferred to the University of New Mexico, where I obtained a BA degree in political science in 2014. I did not obtain DACA until spring 2016 due to a local attorney who advised me not to apply. However, this did not stop me from continuing my education. I served as an intern and fellow for more than a dozen State and national political organizations, regardless of the fact that they could not hire me.

“I collaborated with organizations to register high school students to vote, while still not being able to cast a vote myself. I interned at my State legislature for 6 years and went on to become the first undocumented student to serve as an intern . . . through my selection for the Rilla Moran NFDW Award.

“Thanks to DACA, I was able to begin a graduate program and thus was able to accept a job as a graduate research assistant at the University of New Mexico. Having the ability to travel to border States granted me the ability to become the second DREAMer in the country to graduate from the EMERGE America women leaders training program.”

Wow.

“DACA has changed my life, and I will always be grateful to President Obama for taking the first step to uplift our immigrant communities

through his efforts to support us, regardless of the criticisms he received.

“DACA will forever hold a special place in my heart, as it is through the benefit of being able to apply for advanced parole that I was able to travel to Chihuahua, Mexico, after 21 years to be with my beloved lllalla Eva—grandmother—until her very last moments on this Earth.

“I will forever cherish the fact that DACA opened a world of opportunities for me to support my family and communities in ways I would have never able to do otherwise.”

Thank you, Cindy Nava, for sharing your personal story with us.

Here on the floor, Representative BLUNT ROCHESTER from Delaware, I thank her for being with us. A member of the freshman class, Representative BLUNT ROCHESTER was effective from the start and into advocacy for our DACAs from day one, and I thank her for giving us this story of Indira Islas.

Her story says: “I was born in Guerrero, Mexico, and I came to the U.S. with my parents at the age of 6. I am a 19-year-old DACA student currently studying biology.

“September 16, 2013, seemed just like any day. I was on my way home from school when my bus came across heavy traffic just a few miles from my stop. As it inched forward and approached the turn that led to my house, flashing lights and the scene of an accident came into view. When we saw that an ambulance was blocking the intersection, we all stood up eagerly from our seats—intrigued, fascinated, and curious to see what happened. In the distance beyond the comfort of my seat, my heart dropped as I recognized what was unmistakably my dad’s crushed car.

“After arriving in the emergency room, I was told to have a seat in the waiting area. As I sat down, so many things went through my mind before I was finally allowed to see him. A nurse with a clipboard escorted me back, and I held my breath as she opened the curtain to his room. There was my dad, handcuffed to his hospital bed and looking utterly defeated.”

□ 1415

“After a long embrace, he finally spoke. In his voice, he carried fear of the unknown and uncertainty of the future; he knew of the adversity ahead of us. Though his words were few, he began telling me that I was going to have to be strong and to not lose focus of my education. He was then taken to jail.

“From that day on, I knew that my life would be different. In the midst of all of this, I found refuge in the one thing that I had control over: my education. If I were to have lost my dad that day, September 16, I know he would not have been disappointed because he would have been content knowing that his children are going to be left in a good place—which is all an immigrant parent ever wants.

“At that moment, the flames of disparity gave way to the fire of indignation, but this conflagration only kindled within me a phoenix of preservation: I would persevere in spite of these obstacles. I spent countless hours researching every possible opportunity that would allow me to further my education.

“Lastly, I would like to encourage you to think of the thousands of undocumented people like myself. I stand before you to ask you to pass the Dream Act so I and many other undocumented people not only can continue pursuing the American Dream, but also no longer fear being separated from our loved ones.”

I thank Congresswoman BLUNT ROCHESTER for this beautifully written, almost poetic statement. Like so many other DACA students and DREAMers, it is a story of family, of education, of commitment, of patriotism—also beautifully written.

I know that in the course of the day, we have been joined by Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, who has been a real champion on the issue of immigration and a champion, relentlessly, for our DREAMers. She has served as the chair of the Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee. She is now the ranking Democrat on the Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee. She has practiced immigration law. She has taught immigration law. She is a recognized leader, called upon by all kinds of constitutional institutions for her views on this and other subjects that relate to our Constitution and our country. She is relentless to satisfy and persistent. She is not only a leader, but also a strong advocate. I thank the Congresswoman for her leadership.

I mentioned earlier Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Also, when I mentioned the Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee that Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN serves on, that is a subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee of which she is a leader.

Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, also a member of the Judiciary Committee, a leader on the immigration issue and expert on it, earlier I read her statement that she presented from a DREAMer from Houston, Texas. I thank the Congresswoman for being with us.

Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN from New Jersey is with us, too, and she is a very outspoken force on many subjects in the Congress. As you see, we had many testimonies from New Jersey, and I know she knows this issue so well.

But for all of us, it is not just an issue. It is a value. It is something very important to us.

Earlier, also from New Jersey, was FRANK PALLONE, our ranking member on the Energy and Commerce Committee, who cares so deeply about this issue. He has been in and out for most of the 4 hours that I have been speaking.

JOHN LEWIS, we had his beautiful statement from a DREAMer, Daniela, a dreamer from Georgia. I thank the gentleman for his great leadership. I sang his praises earlier. I could spend another 4 hours just talking about the gentleman. I thank him so much.

Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS has been here for most of the time. She, too, as a Californian, understands the impact of public policy on the lives of people. As Dr. King told us, the ballot, legislation, your life, there is a direct relationship. Legislation here has a direct impact on the lives of these people, and nobody understands that better than MAXINE WATERS, our ranking member on the Financial Services Committee. I commend her for her leadership on the part of the American taxpayer as well as consumer.

Congresswoman NYDIA VELAZQUEZ was also here earlier, a leader on the committee, the Financial Services Committee, also a leader, the Democratic leader on the Small Business Committee where many, many minority-owned businesses enjoy the benefit of her leadership. She also was the chairman of the Hispanic Caucus the year that we passed the DREAM Act in the House of Representatives. I thank her and the members of the committee for making that victory possible then.

Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO of California, she has been a tremendous force on this issue. A number of the testimonies that I have read have been either from the Silicon Valley area or aspire to be from the Silicon Valley area. There are a lot of entrepreneurship, STEM, and engineer aspirations in this list, so we thank Congresswoman ESHOO for her role as a leader on the Energy and Commerce Committee and for her strong advocacy for many. She and ZOE LOFGREN know better than almost anyone the contributions that immigrants have made.

Most of the new startup companies in our area are started by immigrants to our country. Many of the people who would like to be part of that are part of the DREAMer community. So we thank Congresswoman ESHOO also for her extraordinary leadership.

I am going to go on to Alejandra Gonzalez. The story goes like this, Mr. Speaker:

“I was 12 years old when I found out I was undocumented and when I found out I couldn’t be a teacher like I’ve always wanted to because, without the proper documentation, I couldn’t receive grants and loans to afford a higher education. I had to settle for jobs that didn’t allow me to use my full potential because I didn’t have a Social Security number, and it was then that I started to live a life full of anxiety, stress, and depression because of the uncertainty of my future and the threat of deportation. DACA was an instant relief from that.”

Alejandra goes on to say: “Since DACA, I have been able to acquire the funds to go back to school. While some had seen DACA as a form of am-

nesty”—no—“and have pledge to fight against it, it should be stated that it is far from that. If anything, it is a Band-Aid solution of addressing the needs and concerns of the millions of undocumented immigrants in this country.

“My plan after graduating from Alverno College consists of making healthcare accessible to all and giving back to the community that I love so much. There are DREAMers that have become lawyers, doctors, police officers, and small-business owners thanks to DACA, and their career choices benefit the country as a whole.

“We are a group of hardworking individuals who just want the opportunity at a better life. My parents’ choice to smuggle me across the border was irresponsible,” Alejandra says, “but I understand why they did it. Our home country is being terrorized by poverty and drug cartels, and I can’t imagine what my life would have been like if we would have stayed. I am grateful for all the privileges the United States has granted me, and while DACA is just a temporary fix to immigration policy, it is one that provides a pathway to success for millions of DREAMers in the country.

“If we are to lose DACA, I hope that the new administration implements a reform that assures the well-being of DREAMers—but if it doesn’t, I know that our will to keep fighting and progressing won’t end. With or without DACA, my future doesn’t feel uncertain anymore. I will continue to pursue my goal of making healthcare accessible.

“We aren’t asking for a handout. We are asking for the same opportunities to succeed in the country we call home.”

Thank you, Alejandra.

Miriam Santamaria writes: “‘Don’t worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition.’”

Who said that? Abraham Lincoln.

“‘Don’t worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition.’—Abraham Lincoln.”

Miriam writes: “I have carried Lincoln’s advice throughout my life. It resonates with me now more than ever.

“I was 4 years old when I was brought to this country. After my father passed away, my mother was faced with the difficult task of raising two children on her own. It was then that she made the decision to come to the United States. Leaving all of her comforts behind, she sacrificed everything to pursue a better life for us. I have lived in this country ever since. It was in Houston, Texas, where I went to school, learned a second language, graduated from high school with honors, and paid my way through community college.

“I grew up with a vision of achieving the ‘American Dream,’ the same ‘dream’ they teach you in school, the dream that anyone with honest character and conduct can succeed in this country. Yet none of that matters if you do not have the ‘right’ identity card.

“Because of DACA, I was able to apply for and obtain a work permit and driver’s license. DACA also gave me the opportunity to live out my dreams. I am now a manager at a construction company and own my own photography business. I plan to continue pursuing my aspirations regardless of my status.

“I consider myself lucky among others who were denied the rights granted by DACA. That is why I decided to share my story. I am not looking for any kind of recognition or sympathy, but looking to make a difference and inspire others. Hopefully, the Trump administration takes into consideration all of our stories when they make a decision about the future. In the meantime, we, the DREAMers, need to continue to set a high example for others and give back to our communities which have given us so much, even while political forces threaten our daily lives.

“I know my story is one of many others and that I speak for them when I say we are not asking for handouts, only for an opportunity to work hard, pay taxes like other citizens, and, mostly, live our lives in peace for the first time, and for some of us, to live in peace in the only country that we call home.”

Before I go into other testimony, I want to recognize so many of our Members who have been here on the floor with us and some who are watching from their offices and sending their memos.

But I do want to acknowledge the presence of Congressman CARBAJAL of California, a champion on this.

They are all distinguished champions on this issue, very concerned, working very hard for us to get a debate and a vote on the floor.

Congressman CARBAJAL of California, a freshman member; Congressman KILDEE of Michigan, who leads the way with 1-minutes on the floor; Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, whose birthday was yesterday and who is sharing, today, with us. I acknowledged her earlier. I thank her.

Congresswoman WATERS; Congresswoman VELÁZQUEZ; Congressman CORREA of California; Congresswoman MATSUI of California; Congressman GOMEZ of California; again, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE, now my third time to acknowledge Congresswoman JACKSON LEE; Congressman TAKANO of California; Congresswoman BARBARA LEE. I read the testimony of her DREAMer earlier.

Congressman LOWENTHAL of California; Congressman DARREN SOTO of Florida. He has been such a champion right from the start. I was down with him at a university like the first month of his being in Congress, and that day I spoke to General Kelly right from the venue where we were speaking to the students, and General Kelly told me that he cared deeply about DREAMers. I had confidence that he would help us, and I still do, on this very important value that we share.

Congressman MIKE THOMPSON of California; Congressman CÁRDENAS, who was just here, of California; Congressman TONKO of New York; Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS of North Carolina. I mentioned Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN. Again, I acknowledge her. Congressman PANETTA, who presented testimony here; Congressman NORCROSS of New Jersey. There is lots of New Jersey testimony here.

Congressman CARTWRIGHT of Pennsylvania has been with us for a long while; Congressman SERRANO of New York, a champion of all of those issues, including our fight to be fair and just to Puerto Rico; Congressman ELLISON. I read the testimony of his DREAMer earlier.

Congresswoman ESHOO, I acknowledge her again for her extraordinary leadership. She has faith that this will happen, and we pray together over it.

Congresswoman NORMA TORRES of California, reminding me that tomorrow is the National Prayer Breakfast; Congressman RUIZ of California; Congressman MCGOVERN from Massachusetts, who has been with us a long time; Congresswoman VAL DEMINGS, a new member of the Judiciary Committee from Florida; and Congressman CASTRO of Texas, San Antonio. We had testimony from there.

□ 1430

I acknowledge Congressman AL GREEN from Houston, Texas; Congressman GENE GREEN from Houston, Texas; Congresswoman BLUNT ROCHESTER, whom we had beautiful testimony from earlier; Congresswoman SLAUGHTER from New York; Congressman HUFFMAN from California; Congressman MCNERNEY from California; Congresswoman BARRAGÁN from California; Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY from Illinois; Congressman GARAMENDI from California; Congresswoman BONAMICI from Oregon; Congresswoman JAYAPAL—again, I acknowledge her leadership—who is a member of the Judiciary Committee, the committee of jurisdiction for this; again, I acknowledge Congressman JOHN LEWIS; Congressman CICILLINE, who is a member of the Judiciary Committee; and Congressman JUAN VARGAS from California.

They have been just extraordinary, all of them.

Again, the members of the Homeland Security Committee, Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON was in meetings with us preparing to come to the floor, and I want to acknowledge his leadership on this as well. Congressman ADAM SCHIFF spent some time with us in Caucus downstairs on this subject. So many of our colleagues participated in our early morning meeting until our next meeting to come to the floor.

I will tell you about the early morning meeting, which began around 8 a.m., because when I went into the meeting at 8, I said to our colleagues that from 8 this morning until 12 tomorrow night is 40 hours, Mr. Speaker. Forty hours.

A strong Biblical number: 40 years in the desert for the Jews, Moses and Aaron; 40 years. Forty days in the desert with Christ. Forty days of Lent, so important to many of us here. Forty hours as a Catholic ritual, the 40 days observing the 40 hours. Forty hours is a number that is fraught with opportunity.

It is a prayerful time, too, whether it was in the desert with Christ or in Lent or 40 hours of religious devotion. We should use these 40 hours.

I thought of coming to the floor, as I said earlier, when Senator DURBIN was here and we sang his praises for being such a champion on this issue. I was going to come and bring my rosary blessed by the Pope and talk about not just one rosary, five-decade, but all three, the full rosary. That would take some time. Prayerful about that.

Instead, I did that during the night and came here to make sure that everyone who follows Congress knows the stories of these DREAMers and how consistent they are with the aspirations of our Founders; how proud our Founders would be of the aspirations of these young people to make the future better; to give back to community; to pledge allegiance to America; and to fulfill life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that our Founders—imagine Founders putting as a purpose of our Nation the pursuit of happiness. They were so wonderful. Everything we do here has to be to honor the vision of our Founders, to honor the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform and what they do to make America the country that we are, the home of the brave and the land of the free, and also the aspiration of our children.

So I reiterate the statement I made earlier: this is about the children. It is about the children. Think of it as CHIP. CHIP is a healthcare program for the children. It is handled discretely. It has broad support. It is not the whole healthcare bill. It is CHIP for the children.

This is DREAMers for the children. It is not the whole immigration bill. It is this. It is a confidence-building step, a first step. We go to the next, more complicated step of comprehensive immigration reform we all know. That is why it is in our legislation that we are beseeching the President—excuse me, well, the President to support, but our Speaker to give us an opportunity to bring to the floor.

It recognizes our responsibility to protect our borders. It recognizes our need to be true to who we are and true to our nature in terms of being inspired by these DREAMers and giving them the protections that they should have. So we want that opportunity.

Some other colleagues have arrived who have been helping work on this issue. Our distinguished chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, Mr. CROWLEY. I think he has been present at every meeting we have had with the large and small DREAMers, friends of DREAMers, and the rest. I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. LEVIN has also been a strong advocate. Coming from Michigan, he brings a heartland perspective to our discussion. I thank Mr. LEVIN.

I thank CAROLYN MALONEY from New York. Of course, New Yorkers think they own this issue, but so do we in California. But it is a heartland issue as well.

So I am very proud of all the Members who have come here, and also for the work that they have done. There are many others who have been working very hard on this issue when we started our meetings at 8 o'clock this morning, continued in our leaders meeting with Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. HOYER about where we go from here in terms of the budget negotiations that have gone on.

As I said earlier, there are many good things in the budget agreement. They have been responsive in a bipartisan way. Again, it is a compromise. I just return to that because some people may not have heard my first statement.

The budget caps agreement includes many Democratic priorities. With the disaster recovery package and dollar-for-dollar increases in defense and non-defense budget, Democrats have secured hundreds of billions of dollars to invest in communities across America. There will be billions in funding to fight opioids and to strengthen our veterans. Remember what our priorities were. They were bipartisan priorities that we were fighting for, appealing for: fighting opioids, strengthening our veterans, the National Institutes of Health, to build job-creating rural infrastructure and broadband, and to fund access to childcare and quality higher education. So it is a good piece of work.

This morning we took a measure of our Caucus because the package really does nothing to advance a bipartisan legislation to protect DREAMers in the House. Without a commitment from Speaker Ryan comparable to the commitment from Leader MCCONNELL, this package cannot have my support. However, I am hopeful that we can get that commitment.

Let me say about this House of Representatives, first of all, as far as the Constitution is concerned, we take the oath to protect and defend it. That is our responsibility.

Of all the things I thought—I thought I might be hungry, I thought I might be thirsty—I never thought I would get the sniffles from the rug. But I can handle it if you can.

Honoring the Constitution of the United States is so important. The first branch, Article I, the legislative branch, we are the first branch of government. We are the people's House in the wisdom of our Founders elected every 2 years to have us constantly accountable to our constituents.

The Constitution said that appropriations bills should begin in the House. So the House sent over a continuing resolution.

Was that yesterday?

It seems like a long time ago now.

The Senate is acting upon that by adding to it the compromise that I described and which I think is a good piece of work. I commend both the leaders, MITCH MCCONNELL and CHUCK SCHUMER, for their negotiations for which our House Democratic input was a major part. So I associate myself with it.

However, the difference between the House and the Senate is that Senator MITCH MCCONNELL, the Republican leader in the Senate, was respectful of his members who asked in a bipartisan way for him to bring a bill to the floor, and he will give that opportunity. The chips will fall where they may when they have the debate, but they viewed that opportunity as a fair one.

We are asking for the same thing.

Now, in our House, our bipartisan bill is further developed. It is the Hurd-Aguilar bill, which, as I said, recognizes our responsibility to protect our borders, but also does the job for our DREAMers. It is just a piece of the immigration bill, but a confidence builder in a bipartisan way, done, again, in a bipartisan way to build unity with transparency.

Let's have the debate on the floor.

So why should we be considered the place where appropriations begin, the place where we will have to take a vote on that again, the only place in America where you can't debate the issue?

Give us a chance. Give us a vote. Put it all on the floor. Make it queen of the hill. Bring your Goodlatte bill to the floor. Maybe what the Senate comes up with should be on the floor as well. We will see what that is.

It is bipartisan. We know that it will be bipartisan. That requires a big vote, a supervote in the Senate, the Hurd-Aguilar bill, which has enough Republican cosponsors and many more supporters to justify it being brought to the floor.

So what we are asking for is just simply a vote. No guaranty. Just the ability to debate and consider. Queen of the hill, whoever gets the most votes, that is the bill that would prevail in the House of Representatives. If that would be the Senate bill, then that would be the end of it, and that would go to the President. If it is the Hurd-Aguilar, that would go to Conference, as would the Goodlatte bill, should that get the highest number of votes. But I don't anticipate that would be the case because I don't think it has bipartisan support. But, again, have the debate and let the chips fall where they may.

So that is why we are here. Since we can't have that debate, all night, as I was saying my rosaries blessed by the Pope in honor of my mother, I thought: Can we say the Rosary on the floor? Where can we have this debate?

MAXINE's bill. We have to be here for MAXINE's bill. I will use my 1 minute—my leadership 1 minute to tell these stories, which they are so much more

eloquent than anything any of us can say.

But we do not deserve any right, any of us, to say we love DREAMers or anything like that unless we have an intention of doing something about it. The DREAMers have worked so hard with such dignity over so many years, some of them. They have earned the high regard of the American people. One of the figures that is so overwhelming: 90 percent want the DREAMers to stay, 80 percent with citizenship, and 70 percent of the Republicans support the DREAMers.

So we are not asking for something off the wall. It is something that is—yes, maybe it is off the wall. Maybe the wall is the issue here, but nonetheless.

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, again talking about those Founders, a new order for the ages, every generation taking the responsibility for making the future better for the next. Every testimony talks about that. Parents are making sacrifices for their children to have a better life, a direct reflection of the American Dream of hope, determination, optimism, and faith, faith in God, faith in the future, faith in America, faith in family, faith in the work ethic, and faith in education.

All of these testimonies talk about giving back. There is not an ounce of arrogance anywhere. All of them are appreciative of what America has given them. Sometimes naming names, other times schools, other times churches, but always understanding that the opportunities they have are a blessing from our country, and we recognize that they are a blessing to America.

With that, we will go on to Ana Sanchez. Ana says: "Like any other beneficiary of DACA, I, for once, have been given the opportunity to pursue my dreams by attaining higher education and a job. I am Ana Sanchez, an 18-year-old undocumented student who was brought to this country when I was only 2 years old. Due to living conditions of my home country, my parents decided to immigrate to the United States to offer me and my sister a much better education and a brighter future.

"Growing up, I was aware that I was born in Mexico. However, I did not know the effects of being undocumented until high school came about. Now that I am older, I realize who I am in the eyes of the government, and it saddens me to know that people believe these misconceptions of us. I mean, ever since we arrived in Texas, my dad has risked his health and life by working under dangerous conditions just to earn enough money to provide food and shelter for my family.

□ 1445

"When it was announced that DACA would be available for people like me, my family did not think twice; we all knew it was an advantage and a precious opportunity the country had given us. Finally we had been given the

chance to prove that we are part of this country's future and success. Because of DACA, I am able to say I am a part-time student and part-time staff for an after-school program."

Ana goes on to say:

"I am two steps closer to becoming a businesswoman and a teacher, and that gives me hope. Sadly, however, the new administration has posed threats that would make my hope and my dreams unreachable. If the permit is taken away, our hard work will become worthless. I want to give back to this country, so I yearn Congress to give me that chance."

We thank Ana for her statement.

Fidencio Fifield-Perez says:

"A high school teacher told me, 'People like you don't go to college.' I was accepted to seven colleges after graduating with honors from Emsley A. Laney High School, and I now hold a BFA from Memphis College of Art as well as an MA and MFA from the University of Iowa.

"In July 2012, I stood in front of the television with tears rolling down my face as I heard President Obama enact the controversial executive action after the DREAM Act, a bipartisan bill, failed to reach cloture in the Senate. Even through those tears, I knew that my life and the lives of so many others were at risk and that most people would never see this.

"I was the first of my family to graduate from high school. Every undocumented person I knew, other than my two younger brothers, dropped out either because it was expected of them or because a high school diploma meant nothing for the jobs to which they applied. I remember being told to get a job that paid under the table and to keep my head down. This was contrary to what my elementary and high school teachers had told me. 'Work hard, and you too can make something of your life.' Of course, they were as unaware of my status as I was of the full repercussions that came with it."

Everyone was excited to start college, and he goes on to talk about all of that, but it is a similar story about the sacrifices of parents, the sacrifices of parents to take the risk, parents to work hard and encourage education, parents wanting to make the future better for their children. It is a beautiful, beautiful story.

Julyanna Carvalho Rogers:

"I came to the United States for the first time when I was 11 years old. My younger sister was brought to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital with leukemia."

How beautiful.

"We came back 3 years later for her checkup, and we found out she had relapsed. My dad was afraid of trying to change our expiring tourist visa in case we had to go back to Brazil and my sister would not be able to receive treatment. My sister is now a cancer survivor and would not have been if we had gone back to Brazil. My family left everything behind to save her and give

us a better life. Thanks to Obama's DACA, I was able to work and help pay for my college education. Thanks to Obama, my sister also received health insurance; as a two-time cancer survivor, she needs a lot of care and attention.

"I thought about giving up many times. I've always been afraid to tell my story because so many times I've felt judgment towards immigrants. I'm no longer afraid, I feel that if everyone shares their story, others will empathize and realize we all have the same story.

"Four years ago, when I felt my lowest, I met my husband. We fell in love right away. We found each other after years of searching. We now have two dogs, and we plan on having kids in the next few years."

That sounds like my daughter. She says: You are going to be a grandparent of a grandpuppy. Okay, thanks. Now we have nine, but our first grandchild was a big dog.

"I'm extremely passionate about helping others, and I currently volunteer for One Family Memphis, a foundation that is building from the ground up. I am looking forward to making a difference in the Memphis community as well as raising my kids to see the light hidden in every darkness."

CAROL SHEA-PORTER is here from New Hampshire, as well as SUSAN DAVIS from California. I thank them for their leadership and being here.

Another story from SHEILA JACKSON LEE. Alonso Guillen.

Last September, Alonso, a Mexican National and DREAMER, drove more than 100 miles from his home in Lufkin, Texas, to help those trapped by Hurricane Harvey's flooding in the Houston area. But he and another man disappeared after their boat capsized in the flood-swollen creek Wednesday, and relatives went back searching for their bodies.

He moved to Lufkin at age 14 from across the border in Mexico, graduated from Lufkin High School, and worked in construction. He often organized fundraisers for those in need and masterminded his rescue trip to the Houston area on the fly with friends' help. When Hurricane Harvey hit, they borrowed a boat and drove South to save strangers.

How beautiful.

Alonzo is survived by his 8-year-old daughter, Mariana.

Mariana, you are in our prayers, and we thank you for sharing your father with America and for his sacrifice. How sad. Thank you.

DONALD PAYNE, Jr.'s State of the Union guest was Juan Lopez from New Jersey.

Juan Lopez migrated to the United States from Uruguay at age 2 and was raised in Newark, New Jersey. He was selected for the Rutgers Future Scholars program, which is a college preparatory mentoring program for select first-generation, low-income, academically promising students from local schools.

Lopez is a senior at Newark Science Park High School and plans to attend Rutgers-Newark on a scholarship to study pre-engineering.

In anticipation of the State of the Union Address, Lopez issued the following message:

"My name is Juan Lopez, and I arrived in the United States of America at the young age of 2 years old. I have been living in the United States for over 15 years now."

He is 17 now, Mr. Speaker.

"I remember the first time I heard my legal status referred to as illegal alien. I immediately felt as though the term did not fit. Alien means outsider, and I have never felt like one.

"I have lived the entirety of my life in the same place, but I am not ashamed of where I was from. I embraced the term undocumented and have used it as a propelling force in my own pursuit of greatness."

Imagine, his own pursuit of greatness. You go, you 17-year-old Juan Lopez.

"I am a recipient of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, otherwise known as DACA, and it is something I am very proud of. I am a DREAMER, and I will continue to dream whether it is here or wherever the government sends me."

Karji Forhit. This is the opening line:

"I think you get married after you graduate high school." These are words my SAT tutor said to me during my college consultation visit. Halfway through making my college list, he abruptly halted the conversation and, for a moment, my future. He did not think that I was fit for college, despite my top-notch academic record that I maintained since the day I entered pre-kindergarten. The only viable options he saw from all undocumented youths was marriage."

"My name is Karji Forhit, and I am an undocumented immigrant. I was born in India and grew up in the diverse streets of Jackson Heights"—in the heights, New York City—"since third grade. I have worked hard not only to help myself, but help those in undocumented communities."

He goes on to say:

"My mother decided to move to America because it is where the rains of hard work, sprinkled with luck, equals success. When President Obama created DACA, it gave me the opportunity to attend the University of Notre Dame, where I am pursuing my goal of getting a Ph.D. in economics. DACA allows me to work not only as a research assistant to Professor Jeffrey Bergstrand, but also as a tutor at the Notre Dame writing center. Honing my writing and research skills will not only advance my career, but will also advance the careers of my fellow undocumented peers at Notre Dame. While Notre Dame has provided numerous opportunities for its DACA students, there is still a lot of work to be done. I am the second generation of undocumented students that Notre Dame has publicly accepted. Last summer, I conducted research on medical school admission policies for undocumented students. This research is critical for

the campus career services when providing guidance and up-to-date information for current pre-med majors looking for medical schools that are mostly DACA friendly."

Karji Forhit goes on and on and talks about that and the need for doctors in our country.

So it is, again, another chance for more doctors. We have talked about health professionals. We have talked about researchers in the healthcare field. We have talked about doctors, dentists. We have talked about graduate students and health-related issues and the need for more health professionals in our country to meet the health needs of our country. We hear this coming from these students.

Since we were talking here about this, I wanted to just mention we talked about Notre Dame here, but so many of the institutions of higher learning in our country have been so supportive of our DREAMERS. The administrations of these institutions of higher learning have been advocates for the DREAMERS. They have tried to accommodate them where possible, advocate for them wherever, and part of what we talked about earlier.

Earlier, we talked about Bibles, badges in our law enforcement community, and the business community. The business community, tied in with the academic community, has been a tremendous resource.

I particularly want to mention the CEO of IBM.

IBM has been so good to its DREAMERS. They have respected them, given them opportunities, and advocated and brought them to the Capitol, come here with their CEO.

It is just really quite remarkable, but I could say that about a large swath of companies in Silicon Valley. Bill Gates has been a champion on this issue. I really give them credit for keeping the prestige of this issue in such a high, high place and making it a priority in their advocacy here and, importantly, in their community. The business community has been spectacular both in terms of small business and corporate America as well.

Again, since we have newcomers here, I want to go back to our bishop statement from earlier. I thought it would be useful once again, since we have a new Speaker, to read the statement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

This was their statement on the decision to end DACA and urge Congress to find a legislative solution. That is what we are trying to do today, is find a legislative solution, or at least give it a chance to be debated on the floor.

The following statement from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, President Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo from Galveston, Houston; along with Vice President Archbishop Jose H. Gomez from Los Angeles; Bishop Joe S. Vasquez from Austin, Texas, who is the chairman of the Committee on Migration; Bishop Joseph J. Tyson from

Yakima, chairman of the Subcommittee on Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers says the “cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible.”

The statement follows:

“The cancellation of the DACA program is reprehensible. It causes unnecessary fear for DACA youths and their families. These youth entered the U.S. as minors and often know America as their only home.

“The Catholic Church has long watched with pride and admiration as DACA youth live out their daily lives with hope and a determination to flourish and contribute to society: continuing to work and provide for their families, continuing to serve in the military, and continuing to receive an education.

“Now, after months of anxiety and fear about their futures, these brave young people face deportation. This decision is unacceptable and does not reflect who we are as Americans,” the bishops said.

□ 1500

They go on to say: “The Church has recognized and proclaimed the need to welcome young people: ‘Whoever welcomes one of these’—now, this quote is so beautiful, and we should remember it in everything we do. It is in Mark 9:37. ‘Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.’ Christ welcoming, we welcome Christ, we welcome God who sent him—so beautiful.

The bishop goes on to say: “Today, our Nation has done the opposite of how Scripture calls us to respond. It is a step back from the progress that we need to make as a country. Today’s actions represent a heartbreaking moment in our history that shows the absence of mercy and good will and a shortsighted vision of the future. DACA users are woven into the fabric of our country and of our Church and are, by every social and human measure, American youth.

“We strongly urge Congress to act and immediately resume work toward a legislative solution. We pledge our support to work on finding an expeditious means of protection for DACA youth. . . .”

“As people of faith, we say to DACA youth—regardless of your immigration status, you are children of God and welcome in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church supports you and will advocate for you.”

That was September 5, 2017. That was the day that the President issued his statement.

Now, having worked with the bishops for awhile, for them to have such a definitive statement so quickly is pretty remarkable because sometimes it takes a bill longer for their deliberative process to work, but this came right away.

Okay. This is doctors and DREAMers. I mentioned about the need for doctors

and the ambition and the vocation that these young people were feeling towards becoming doctors, and I read this. The Association of American Medical Colleges reports that the Nation’s doctor shortage will rise between 40,000 and 105,000 by the year 2030. Both the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges have warned that ending DACA will exacerbate this physician shortage in the United States, and they have urged Congress to pass legislation to protect DREAMers.

Are you listening? Listen to what the AMA said.

“Estimates have shown that the DACA initiatives could help introduce 5,400 previously ineligible physicians into the U.S. healthcare system in the coming decades to help address physician shortages and ensure patient access to care.”

Remember, those with DACA status will particularly create care shortages for rural and other underserved areas. Without these physicians, the AMA is concerned that the quality of care provided in these communities will be negatively impacted and that patient access to care will suffer.

This is remarkable, and I am glad it will be submitted for the RECORD, but I am going to make sure all of our Members have this.

I acknowledged Mr. THOMPSON earlier. Congresswoman GRACE NAPOLITANO of California is with us now. We have got JACKIE SPEIER, I acknowledge her; JAMIE RASKIN of Maryland; VAL DEMINGS, I mentioned earlier.

Let me see. ALMA ADAMS, I recognized earlier, too. Ms. BARRAGÁN; BRENDA LAWRENCE from Michigan, who brings that heartland of America perspective to it; ANN KUSTER of New Hampshire. Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas is with us as well.

Many Members have come and gone, some on more than one occasion, but I acknowledge everyone who has been here already.

Anybody new on this side?

Okay. So we probably want to hear now about Victor Esparza.

Victor Esparza says: “The day I received my employment authorization card through President Obama’s DACA program is the day I began to live without fear. The uber-small and not very well-known village of Eau Claire, Michigan, is the place that raised me since I was 7 years old.

“My elementary school teachers never treated me differently because I came from somewhere else and didn’t speak the language at the time, and for that, I loved them. I took pride in doing my best in my high school courses even though I was filled with anxiety for not knowing what would be next in my life after my graduation in the summer of 2008.

“As my former high school peers went off to universities and employment, I went off to live in the shadows, living under the metaphorical shadow

referred to as driving without a proper driving permit, as the State you lived in required proof of legal residency when applying for a driver’s license. Driving like this meant risking legal problems when heading out to the grocery store if you made a driving mistake and got caught for it.

“Living in the shadows meant no financial assistance at your local community college, which pretty much created an impossible financial barrier between your career dreams and you. In the shadows, you had no options but to work in the same farm as your family.

“And let me tell you, perseverance is a requirement when laboring for below the minimum hourly rate in sweat-inducing conditions. This life was my own before DACA, and I may not be in the shadows any longer, but my families and relatives haven’t escaped yet.

“I have been working as an IT supporter and analyst for a midsize drug company for under a year now. This is the best job I ever had, and I don’t say this because my hourly pay has increased. I genuinely love what I’m doing now,” Victor tells us.

“Unless you know me on a deep level, you would think I was just another 26-year-old with a promising career and not someone plagued by fear of Trump campaign promises. This narrative, I feel, is not only mine. It is owned, shared by hundreds of thousands of others who also have persevered because of DACA. If I could have had a conversation with the President-elect, I would tell him just that, that we have persevered.”

Thank you, Victor.

Senator DURBIN has sent us some more stories. Again, he is our hero in the Senate. He introduced the bill in 2001. He has spent most of his official career with DACA as a priority. He has been a champion for America’s working families. He is about creating jobs, good-paying jobs for the future, about safety in the workplace.

He is the person, along with Frank Lautenberg, who got smoking off of airlines. Thank you, as one who travels. Last week, I had eight flights in 10 days. I thank Senator DURBIN for that.

He has been a champion in so many, many ways: champion of the National Institutes of Health, of learning from experience in his own daughter’s health, about the need for Biblical power to cure that the National Institutes of Health has and appropriated for. The list of his accomplishments is great, and this is one of them, the DREAMers.

So he sent us this story from Cesar Montelongo:

Today, I want to tell you about Cesar Montelongo. When Cesar was 10 years old, his family came to the United States from Mexico.

He grew up in New Mexico, where his academic prowess was quickly apparent. He graduated high school with a grade point average above 4.0, and he was ranked third in his class—third in his class.

Cesar was a member of the chess, French, Spanish, physics, and science clubs. He even took college courses the last 2 years of high school.

Cesar went on to New Mexico State University, where he was a triple major in biology, microbiology, and Spanish, as well as two minors in chemistry and biochemistry. Cesar graduated with distinction in the honors track with a 3.9 GPA.

Cesar then earned a master's degree in biology, with a minor in molecular biology, while also working as a teaching assistant. Today, Cesar is the first DACA student enrolled in the M.D.-Ph.D. program at Loyola University—Chicago—Stritch School of Medicine. He is entering his third year of this highly competitive program, and upon completion, he will receive a medical degree and a doctorate degree in science.

Cesar is one of the more than 30 DACA recipients at the Stritch School of Medicine, which was the first medical school to admit students with DACA status.

Thank you, Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine. This began in 2014 when they admitted DACA students.

DACA students do not receive special treatment in the selection process and are not eligible for any Federal financial assistance. Many have committed to working in a medically underserved community in Illinois after graduation.

Cesar Montelongo is researching how bladder viruses shape bacteria populations and the potential implications for urinary infections and disease.

Wow.

He is also a member of the pathology medical group, a Spanish interpreter at a clinic, and a mentor for other medical students.

When asked what drew him to medicine, Cesar says: "When I was very young, my father became ill and then was bedridden for months. He was the primary breadwinner, and I saw him as our protector. Watching him immobilized and screaming in pain impacted my world view. Years later, we found out that my father had suffered from diabetic myopathy and neuropathy. Learning that both his illness and our family suffering could have been prevented by education and relatively inexpensive medication was heart-breaking. By that time, it made me realize the potential of medicine."

Cesar's dream for the future? To become a practicing physician and a scientist and to develop new and improved clinical diagnostic tools so that doctors can diagnose and treat disease faster.

Close to 70 DREAMers are in medical school around the country. But without DACA, these DREAMers will not become physicians and they could be deported back to countries where they haven't lived since they were children.

Will America be a stronger country if we deport people like Cesar? I don't think so. The answer is clear.

Remember that AMA statement from earlier about how important this all is. I don't have it here right now.

We now want to talk about William Medeiros:

When William was only 6 years old, his family moved to the United States from Brazil. William grew up in the Boston area and then moved to Florida.

In high school, he was an honors student and graduated with a 3.8 GPA. He was also an athlete, playing on his high school's soccer and football teams.

William is now a student at the University of Central Florida, where he has a 3.5 GPA. He will graduate in the spring of 2019 with his bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

He is also working a full-time job in order to support himself. Because he is a DACA recipient, William is ineligible for any financial aid from the Federal Government.

William's dream? To enlist in the military, and then, after serving his country, to become an officer with his local police department.

Thanks to DACA, William is on his way to fulfilling his dream. Last year, he enlisted in the Army through the Medical Accessions Vital to National Interest program, known as MAVNI.

And here is a photo of him with his recruiter at the enlistment ceremony.

The MAVNI program, as I mentioned earlier, allows immigrants with skills that are vital to the national interest to enroll in the armed services. More than 800 DACA recipients with these critical skills have joined the military through MAVNI just through that program.

Some in the Trump administration claim that DACA is taking jobs away from Americans, but William and hundreds of other DREAMers have vital skills that our military couldn't find elsewhere. William, along with other DREAMers, is waiting to ship out to basic training. He continues his undergraduate studies and working full-time, waiting his chance to serve the country he loves.

William wrote this letter: "My desire to serve this Nation and help people, to pay back my dues for everything I received from this great country, and to lead by example by showing my fellow DACA members that anything is possible with hard work, perseverance, and dedication."

William Medeiros and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country, but without the Dream Act, William and hundreds of other immigrants with skills that are vital to our national interests will be kicked out of the Army.

They want nothing more than to serve, and they are willing to die for the country they call home. Instead, they could be deported back to countries they haven't lived in since they were children.

Will America be stronger if we deport William and people like him who want to stay here and serve in the armed

services? I think the answer is quite clear. No, we won't be strong.

Today, again, I want to tell you about Ximena Magana. When Ximena was 9 years old, her family came to the United States from Mexico City. She was raised in the city of Houston. We have a lot of Houston folks.

JERRY MCNERNEY, I acknowledged him earlier, and thank him for being here. Mr. MCGOVERN, I acknowledged him earlier.

Mr. GRIJALVA, RAUL GRIJALVA, who has been really an outstanding leader on this subject, has joined us, but he has been with us in every meeting today on the subject. I thank RAUL for joining us here.

I acknowledged her earlier, Congresswoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, the fact that she was the chair of the Spanish Caucus the year when we passed the DREAM Act in the House of Representatives.

And as I acknowledged earlier, Senator DURBIN was the author in the Senate. It got a majority of the votes, but not 60.

So I thank those two leaders once again.

□ 1515

Ximena was 9 years old when her family came to the United States from Mexico City. She was raised in the city of Houston and lives there today.

In high school, Ximena served in the United States Army's Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corp, known as the Junior ROTC program. Under her leadership, Ximena's battalion was named the best battalion in the Houston Independent School District.

Ximena also serves as captain of her high soccer team and a regular volunteer at the Houston Food Bank. A real leader, Ximena is majoring in communications at the University of Houston.

She has interned with United States Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE and City Council Member Robert Gallegos. Due to Ximena's community service, she was asked by the mayor of Houston to serve as the youngest member of the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Board. She is the first DACA recipient to serve on the board.

Last week, in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Ximena stepped in to help her community just like she has always done. She volunteered at shelters helping people with FEMA and Red Cross applications. She was joined by many other DACA recipients. It is a stunning story of DACA recipients helping after Hurricane Harvey.

Ximena wrote me a letter—this is from Senator DURBIN. She asked for only one thing: for President Trump to come visit the Houston DACA volunteers, to meet these heroes, to look in their eyes, hear their stories before deporting them to countries they barely know.

Ximena and other dreamers have so much to contribute to our country. Again, I ask the country: Will America be stronger if we deported Ximena? I don't think so.

Cristina Velasquez—no relation to Congresswoman VELÁZQUEZ.

Today I want to tell you about Cristina Velasquez. When Cristina was 6 years old, her family came to the United States from Caracas, Venezuela. She went to elementary school in Madison, Wisconsin.

Cristina wrote this letter. In it, she talked about her childhood, and she said: “I spent my formative childhood years in the Midwest, where I learned to assimilate and learn the values that this country was founded on. The salt-of-the-earth quality of the people around me and extraordinary kindness between strangers shaped my own values and attitude towards others. Growing up in Madison taught me a great deal about compassion, patience, and hard work.”

Cristina was an outstanding student. In high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society—you have heard that over and over and over again, the National Honor Society—and she also was elected as vice president of her class and manager of the track team. She also found time to volunteer.

I love the way kids are so top-notch, academically, participate in athletics and the rest, and in their spare time work at the local camp for pre-K students or the food bank or whatever it is.

Cristina graduated with honors from Miami Dade College. She is currently a student at Georgetown University, majoring in international law, institutions and ethics. She received the President’s Volunteer Service Award 2 years in a row and is a Walsh Scholar.

And as a Hoya mom and Hoya wife and Hoya grandmother, I can tell you, being a Walsh Scholar at Georgetown, that is a very big deal.

During her time at Georgetown, Cristina has interned at the U.S. House of Representatives and piloted a college mentorship program at a local high school. In addition to this, she finds time to work two part-time jobs.

How many hours do you have in a day, Cristina?

She has also dedicated two of her undergraduate summers during the school year to volunteer as a teacher in Miami and in San Francisco.

In both these positions, she works with high-achieving, low-income students providing support for their path to college. You see, Cristina’s dream is to be a teacher.

She will graduate from Georgetown soon. She has been accepted to Teach For America, a national nonprofit organization that places Talent Regents graduates in urban and rural schools. Teach For America has 190 teachers who are DACA DREAMers and are teaching our children across the country.

Is that beautiful?

In any event, Cristina is scheduled to start the program next summer and start teaching next fall, but without DACA or the Dream Act, Cristina and

190 other teachers will be forced to leave their students behind.

Again, will America be stronger? I don’t think so.

Jesus Contreras: Jesus was only 6 years old when he was brought to the United States from Mexico by his mother, who sought safety from violence. He grew up in Houston.

After graduating from high school as a top student, Jesus obtained DACA. This enabled him to pursue his dream of becoming a paramedic. Jesus attended Lone Star College in Houston and earned his paramedic certification. Today, Jesus is 23 years old. He works as a paramedic in the Montgomery County Hospital District.

Through Hurricane Harvey, Jesus Contreras worked six straight days rescuing people from flood areas. He helped people who needed dialysis or insulin. He took flood victims to local hospitals. Afterward, he would stop at home for a quick shower before heading to his local church to volunteer, helping flood victims with their medical needs.

Jesus sent this letter, and it says: “Houston is my home, and these are my people. I love my career. It has given me the opportunity to help people in ways I never imagined I could. DACA means everything to me. I would lose my license and certifications without it. I would be sent back to a country I don’t know and would lose everything.”

Jesus and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country. But without DACA, Jesus couldn’t have worked to protect his community through Hurricane Harvey, and he could be deported back to Mexico, where he hasn’t lived since he was 6 years old.

Will America be stronger if he goes away?

I don’t think so, no.

We have another Georgetownner here: Luis Gonzalez. When Luis was 8 years old, his family came to the United States from Mexico. Luis had a difficult childhood in Santa Ana, California. After his parents separated, he lived with his mother in a car garage for several years. Then, after his mother remarried, Luis lived with an abusive stepfather.

But Luis overcame these circumstances and became an excellent student. He graduated high school in the top 1 percent of his class—now that is a 1 percent we like to talk about—with a 4.69 GPA, and he passed all nine advanced placement exams that he took.

Luis was also very involved in extra-curricular and volunteer activities. He was the secretary of the school’s—here it is again—National Honor Society chapter. Luis helped organize an anti-bullying campaign at a local elementary school. He created a mentorship program to help incoming freshmen at his high school.

On Saturdays, instead of relaxing, he volunteered to tutor other students in

math—on Saturdays, every Saturday—and he volunteered to help a teacher at a local elementary school.

Luis was also very active in his church. Every Sunday, he translated the pastor’s sermon into English for those who didn’t speak Spanish. And he cleaned up the church before and after Sunday service.

Because of his outstanding record in high school, Luis was admitted to Georgetown University. He is currently a sophomore and majoring in American studies and minoring in government.

Luis continues to use his spare time—really—to give back to the community. He is a member of the Provost’s Committee for Diversity. He is the co-chair of the Hoya Saxa Weekend, a program that brings students from underrepresented communities to visit Georgetown. And Luis is a leader of Stride for College, a program that mentors students at local inner-city high schools.

Luis’ dream is to be a high school teacher, which is not surprising, given the strong commitment he has already shown to helping young people.

Luis wrote in his letter: “DACA gave me the confidence and the security I had not had before. I lived in fear and in the shadows. Thanks to DACA, however, I have been able to do things I otherwise wouldn’t be able to do, like traveling through an airport or working on a campus. I’ve always felt that I am an American, but having DACA allowed me to stop living in constant fear and uncertainty. Now these fears have come back again.”

Will America be stronger if we deport Luis Gonzalez if he stays here and becomes a high school teacher?

I think that the answer is obvious.

Now, on this subject of Georgetown and English, his second language, and translating into English for those who don’t speak Spanish. He cleaned up the church before and after Sunday service. The thing about the church that is interesting, I just recently—and I won’t read it again right now, but the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ statement I read from His Holiness about immigrants when he was here in the Capitol—but I also mentioned Dr. Sam Rodriguez and other leaders in the evangelical community who have been so outspoken on protecting our DREAMers.

I know we all go to church services every week. I mean, that is what I hear. I go to a lot of different places because I travel around the country. And more and more around the country, and in my own community in California, more and more of our parishioners are from the Philippines or from Latin America. So a lot of the future of the church—by the way, in one of the churches I go to in California, our pastor was from Nigeria. In my church in San Francisco, one of our priests was from the Philippines. The idea of parishioners being more diverse is also the clergy being more diverse.

So when we talk about faith and building faith and strong faith in our

country, recognize how faith-filled so many of these families are who come to our country. Again, our motto is “In God We Trust.” It is wonderful to see their faith in God, their faith in America, their faith in the future, their faith in themselves, their faith in their families, and their faith that gives them hope, the faith in the goodness of others, as I said, hope, sitting right there between faith and charity.

So just, again, that spark of divinity that we all have, we have to act upon.

We will talk about Benita Veliz. Benita was brought to the United States by her parents when she was only 8. She graduated as the valedictorian of her high school class at the age of 16. She received a full scholarship to St. Mary’s University. She graduated from the honors program with a double major in biology and sociology. Her honors thesis was on the Dream Act.

She wrote: “I can’t wait to be able to give back to the community that has given me so much. I was recently asked to sing the national anthem for both the United States and Mexico at a Cinco de Mayo community assembly. Without missing a beat, I quickly belted out the Star Spangled Banner. I then realized that I had no idea how to sing the Mexican national anthem. I am American. My dream is American. It is time to make our dreams a reality. It is time to pass the Dream Act.”

We have some photos.

This is Javier Cuan-Martinez. Javier was only 4 years old when his family brought him to the United States from Mexico. Javier went to elementary school in Texas, and then moved to Temecula, California.

Javier was an excellent student, who was very involved in extracurricular and volunteer activities as the member of the National Honor Society and was named Riverside County’s Student of the Month.

He also received an award from the College Board’s National Hispanic Recognition Program, which is given to only 5,000 of the 250,000 Hispanic students who take the test.

Javier was a member of the math club and a drum major in the school’s marching band. He volunteers in his town’s soup kitchen for the homeless, and received the President of the United States Volunteer Service Award.

Javier didn’t know he was undocumented until he was applying for college and learned that he was ineligible for Federal financial assistance. Thanks to his academic achievements, Javier was accepted at Harvard University. He is now majoring in computer science. He is also a member of the Harvard Computer Society and Harvard’s marching band. Thanks to DACA, Javier is supporting himself by working as a web developer.

Javier sent his letter. He wrote: “DACA doesn’t give me an advantage. Rather, it gives me the opportunity to

create my own future on the same grounds as any other student. I would like to be judged upon my qualities as a person than what papers I happen to have in my hand. I hope to be a computer programmer and begin earning my living as a contributing member of America’s society.”

Consider this: every year, thousands of foreign computer programmers come to the United States as temporary guest workers under H-1B visas. It makes no sense to deport a homegrown talent, like Javier, when American companies are importing foreign computer specialists. Javier and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country.

God bless you, Javier.

This is a story from TERRI SEWELL.

Mr. Speaker, I thank TERRI SEWELL for joining us.

TERRI brings this story of a DREAMer from Alabama. Fernanda Herrera said: “I came to the U.S. when I was 2½ and grew up in Gadsden, Alabama, where I attended Gadsden City High School and played the flute in the band, serving as a section leader for 2 years.

□ 1530

“I moved to Birmingham in 2013 to attend Samford University as an honor student majoring in International Relations. I graduated this past May, with thousands out in loans for my degree and am hoping to attend law school.

“My parents and U.S.-born little brother live in Ragland, where they own a small Mexican restaurant under my name since I am the only person of age and with a Social Security number.”

They own it under that.

“I recently had a car wreck that put me \$40,000 further into debt. If DACA is taken away, I will not be able to work to pay back my loans, my hospital debt, my car payments, or my debt from helping my parents with their restaurant. Without a clean Dream Act, my U.S. citizen brother is forced to choose between having his sister or his parents here.”

Oh, we do have a picture here. How lovely. How cute the little brother is. How lovely.

I thank TERRI SEWELL for that and thank her for her extraordinary leadership from Alabama about a DREAMer.

The DREAMers are all over our country, Mr. Speaker. They are a blessing so across the board.

From the heartland of America, we have many from Michigan, from Illinois, from Alabama, of course Texas heartland as well, but it is also a border State.

Lara Alvarado was 8 years old. Her family brought her to the United States from Mexico. She grew up in Chicago, Illinois. In high school, Lara was an excellent student and was involved in many extracurricular and volunteer activities. She was a member of the National Honor Society—the Na-

tional Honor Society, the resounding theme of all of this, a member of the National Honor Society.

She played soccer, tennis, and basketball, and she was a member of the student government, the school newspaper, the chess club and the yearbook club.

Lara went to Northeastern Illinois University. In college, she worked two jobs to pay for her college tuition. Keep in mind, she is ineligible for Federal financial assistance because of her immigration status. In 2006, Lara graduated with honors with a major in justice studies; but then she was stuck. Lara wanted to become a lawyer but was unable to pursue this dream, Mr. Speaker, because she was undocumented.

Six long years later, in 2012, President Obama established DACA, and Lara’s life changed. In 2013, Lara received DACA and enrolled in law school at Southern Illinois University. In law school, Lara won the moot court competition. She won the moot court competition—how about that—and was selected for the Order of Barristers, a legal honor society.

This spring, 10 years after she graduated from college, Lara received her law degree. Over the summer, she passed her bar exam; and just last month, Lara received her Illinois law license, which she is proudly holding in this picture.

You see, Lara never gave up on her dream of becoming a lawyer, and thanks to DACA and her hard work, this dream has become a reality. Now Lara is planning a career in public interest law. She says: “I would like to be of service to others.”

In her letter, she says: “DACA has opened the door.”

I keep hearing that theme: open the door, open the door. Let the Speaker please open the door so we can have that debate here, as MITCH MCCONNELL has done in the Senate.

Lara writes: “DACA has opened the door to possibilities that were beyond my reach. DACA represents a better life and the opportunity to achieve the American Dream. DACA has given me the freedom to live without fear. I now have the confidence to know that my hard work, dedication, and achievements can be recognized. I will continue to work hard and lead by the example of what I can accomplish if given the opportunity.”

Lara and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country. Will America be a stronger country if we deport Lara? I don’t think so.

This is from Representative ENGEL from New York; it is one of his constituents.

“My name is Diana, a constituent of yours from Yonkers, New York. I am a DACA recipient who is currently in limbo not knowing what my future holds. I was able to obtain a driver’s license and put myself through tech school where I obtained my EMT license. I also obtained phlebotomy and

EKG certifications, which have certified me to work in the emergency room. If Congress approves a path to citizenship, I would be able to accomplish so much more to give back to my family and community. I love what I am doing and do not want to lose all that I have worked for. Thank you for taking the time to read my message. Sincerely, Diana.”

Another from Congressman ENGEL, a constituent.

“My name is Justa, from the Bronx, New York. I applied for DACA in July after finding out from an ICE officer that I had 60 days to leave the country or face deportation. I am also about to lose my job because I have not received my new EAD card. DACA is my only hope.”

Elizabeth, again from ELIOT ENGEL, from Yonkers. She writes to Congress: “I am contacting you because I submitted my initial DACA application earlier in 2017 and completed my biometrics in April. I have yet to receive any other guidance. I humbly ask if there’s any way that you can help me out. I am absolutely heartbroken and in deep emotional stress because of everything that is going on at the moment with DACA. I have two children in 4th and 6th grades. I would not be able to imagine my life without them. I arrived in the U.S. when I was 9 months old and am now 28. I have called USCIS, and the only information they provided was the one already on their website. I just asked if it was possible to request an inquiry, and they said it wouldn’t be possible. I just had to wait.”

Another one, Stephanie. Stephanie is the girlfriend of an unnamed DREAMER in ELIOT ENGEL’s district. “I write to you today about DACA. My boyfriend is a DACA recipient. He is a building engineer who lives in New Rochelle, New York. He is a high school graduate and has his associate’s degree. He has no criminal record. He pays taxes yet reaps none of the benefits available to citizens, welfare, Social Security, et cetera. He is a good person from a good family. I am terrified that Congress will not be able to come to an agreement over DACA and his safety will hang in the balance; that he could be sent back to a country he barely knows. I understand that you are against the decision to end DACA, but I beg you, please do not party lines and bargaining chips get in the way of fixing this. Do whatever is necessary. This has been a horrible day, but, in 6 months, it could get so much worse.”

I thank ELIOT ENGEL for giving us those stories from his district.

This is from Barbara. In 2002, when Barbara was 5 years old, her family brought her to the United States from Mexico. Barbara grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, and she knew she would face challenges because she was a DREAMER.

Her older sister had been accepted at a State university but could not afford to attend. As an undocumented immi-

grant, she is not eligible for Federal financial assistance, and Arizona law prohibits State financial assistance to DREAMERS like Barbara and her sister.

During her freshman year in high school, the mentor told her that, as a DREAMER: “You’re going to have to try harder than everyone else.” She says: “Those words confirmed what I had known all along. Although I was only starting high school, I began to dread what most students anticipate with excitement, graduation day. What if I got into my dream school, but I couldn’t go because I couldn’t afford it?”

In high school, Barbara was an excellent student and was involved in many extracurricular and volunteer activities. She was a member of the Academic Decathlon team for 4 years and was a team captain during her senior year. She was a member of the student government, the yearbook club, the homecoming court; she volunteered to tutor middle school students and worked part-time to save money for her education.

Barbara also participated in a number of programs at Arizona State University, including the Walter Cronkite journalism institute. She recorded a story about her life, and it was aired around the country on National Public Radio. This experience sparked her interest in journalism and led to an internship at KJZZ, the Phoenix affiliate of National Public Radio.

Last year, Barbara graduated as valedictorian of her high school with a 4.5 GPA. As a result of her accomplishments, Barbara was accepted at Dartmouth College, an Ivy League school, where she is now a sophomore—a great Ivy League school.

Barbara writes: “I’m very grateful for DACA allowing me to work and not be deported to a country I didn’t know and have not been since I was 5. Just like thousands of other undocumented students, I have grown and become accustomed to the culture here; this is where I belong. I want to be a contributing member of society, as I have proven in my 13 years.”

As we know, Barbara and DREAMERS have so much to contribute to our country.

We have a little boy here, Aciel. He was a 5-year-old boy. His family brought him to the United States from Mexico. He grew up on the north side of Chicago. We have got a lot of Chicago, a lot of New Jersey here. Aciel was a bright child, but when he learned that he was undocumented, his life took a downturn. He was failing his classes and dropped out of high school for 6 months.

He wrote: “I felt that because of my status I had no future. As a result, my grades and attendance plummeted, and I struggled to do anything productive.”

Then, in 2012, President Obama announced DACA and everything changed for him. Here is how Aciel explained it. “DACA meant I had a future worth fighting for and, because of that, I re-

turned to school and reignited my passion for studying. Because of DACA, I want to do whatever I can to contribute to my country.”

In his senior year in high school, he turned his life around; he improved his grades; very active in the community, head of the school fundraising committee, and volunteered with the mentoring program. He also worked full time to support himself and his family.

He is in his sophomore year in Honors College at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He has a double major in psychology and political science. He has a perfect 4.0 grade point average. He is involved with student government, and leads a recreational bike club.

Every week, he delivers food from the college dining hall to a homeless shelter. He mentors middle school students. He is a part-time security guard at local events. He dreams of working in Chicago city government. He gives hope to people who need it to turn their lives around. Now he wants to give back to the city and country he loves.

I do note that we will have an opportunity to hear from the Vice President. Do we have to have the vote here first before Members can go—the floor vote will occur soon after I yield back. I have no intention of yielding back, Mr. Speaker. I have a lot more.

Do we know yet if there is any possibility of a Special Order later? We asked about 3 hours ago. There are other Members to participate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARPER). The gentlewoman from California is free to consult with leadership on that issue.

Ms. PELOSI. Well, that is what we asked earlier, and we had made that overture but never did get an answer back.

We have been joined by Congresswoman JUDY CHU who, as I mentioned earlier, is the chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, a leader fighting for family fairness and the issue of family unification in any of our immigration discussions; Congresswoman NITA LOWEY, our ranking member on appropriations and really central to all the discussion this is about, about the appropriations bill that will come back from the Senate.

It will come back from the Senate with a promise from their leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, that we would—that they, in the Senate, would have a vote on a DREAMERS bill to be debated, and the chips will fall where they may. We are simply asking the Speaker for the same opportunity.

So I thank Mrs. LOWEY for her leadership. Congresswoman ROYBAL-ALLARD, as I mentioned earlier, was the original—I called her the godmother—of the DREAM Act. She had the original bill, and then she joined with Senator DURBIN in advancing it in 2001.

Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, part of our communications group on this

and other subjects, I thank HAKEEM JEFFRIES from New York.

Congressman GONZALEZ from Texas who knows firsthand the border, the challenges that we face; Congressman JOE KENNEDY from Massachusetts, again, a strong supporter, mentioned again in his response to the President.

I mentioned ADAM SCHIFF earlier about his being involved in our discussions and our earlier meetings today on the subject; and Congresswoman HANABUSA from Hawaii, of course, very involved in this issue, as you would suspect.

So I thank so many of our colleagues for joining here on the floor. I don't know if they have—I have so many more, but I didn't know if they had any. These are from my colleagues. This is my stack, but these are from my colleagues; so I will go to those.

From Congresswoman LOWEY, this is a letter from a DREAMer to Congresswoman NITA LOWEY. “I want to thank you for your support of DACA. I know you are doing all you can to fight heartless legislation and initiatives that would deport a potential 800,000 young people. I am 28 years old, and I am one of the DREAMers, having come to America from El Salvador when I was 15 years old.

“I attended school in Ramapo, New York, and now make my home with my wife in Pearl River. Life in El Salvador, where I was born, was dangerous and brutal, which is why my father moved us to America in 2005.”

And this is a story we have heard over and over.

“I am grateful every day for all the opportunities presented to me here. I currently work as a technology specialist at Apple and feel it is so important to continue achieving, setting goals, and giving back to my community.”

□ 1545

“It would break my heart to lose my home and life here in New York.

“The prognosis on DACA seems to be changing daily, adding to growing uncertainty. My status expires in November.

“What will my future be?

“I am reaching out to you to ask if I could meet with you at one of your local offices to discuss DACA.

“My employer has offered support and legal assistance. . . .”

That is from Hugo Alexander Acosta Mazariego.

And as I said earlier, our business community has been superlative in all of this.

Representative TORRES sent a story from Leydy Rangel: “My name is Leydy Rangel, and I have lived in the United States since I was 8. I am now 22. In June, I graduated from Cal Poly Pomona, where I earned a degree in journalism. I have always known I am undocumented because I remember the first day of elementary school and how kids pointed out my brown skin so much.”

I told you my story about that before.

Leydy says: “I know that my parents moving to the States was extremely horrifying and leaving everything behind was difficult, but it makes me feel better knowing that my future here was brighter than the one I could've ever had in Mexico.

“Regardless of not having enough food on the table, not having help on my homework, not having any resources to help me apply to college, I managed and got accepted to college and moved hours away from home with the purpose of bettering myself and my family.”

This is really the American Dream story over and over again.

She references when DACA was created, she had stability, if only temporarily, in America, the only country she knows. By repealing DACA, her hopes and aspirations were forced into another place.

Leydy says: “I do not have any clear memories of Mexico, and I do not know anyone in Mexico. My entire life is in the United States. Here is where I have made my life for myself, and taking that away from me is inhumane. This Nation is the only one that I aspire to contribute to and the only one I belong to.”

Graciela Nunez is a 22-year-old student, a Washington graduate, who works at a humanitarian law firm. She is a driven person with a desire to give back, and she has big ambitions for the future. She is also a DREAMer and DACA recipient who was born in Venezuela.

When Graciela was 7 years old, her parents moved. They told her that her family was going to the U.S. to visit Disney World on a short vacation. Only as she got off the plane did she realize that she was not going back to Venezuela. They were fleeing the Chavez regime, and they were in the United States to stay.

This is the only country Graciela knows. She, like 1.8 million other DREAMers in this country, has built her life here. She is as American as it gets. A piece of paper could not negate her participation in all of the things that make this country great. Graciela feels little connection to Venezuela. She doesn't know how many Presidents that country has had. She is unfamiliar with the geography, but she has got a 5 in AP U.S. history and she can talk about the documents that built this Nation with more detail than any of us.

In Graciela's words, she has been living under constant heightened stress because of the fate of DACA. And we know what that program is about.

Graciela says DACA has let people know that undocumented youth have potential. It gives them upward social mobility and a way out. It allows DREAMers to do exactly what their name implies: to dream for a better life and to not let paper limit potential.

JIMMY PANETTA has sent us a story from Katherine from Salinas. I men-

tioned JIMMY earlier and his work in trying to find a bipartisan solution.

Katherine says: “I'm very grateful for all the things this country has done for me, but I think it's not their turn to see what I have done for them, to see everything that I've accomplished: the awards, the high GPAs, and all the amazing people that are DACA recipients. The process you have to go through and the strictness to obtain DACA is so hard. If you have just a little detail on your record, that's it, you're out.

“We're some of America's best. And I want to know why they are taking this away from us.

“Why don't you want us here? Don't you want people with degrees? Don't you want people with cool internships and cool jobs? Why don't you want me here?

“Our parents are original DREAMers, and we're here trying to accomplish their dreams. Please be able to see that for yourselves.”

So this is that same thing about parents.

Mr. HOYER has a story from Ivy Teng Lei, a Chinese American DACA recipient raised in Manhattan's Chinatown. She is the youngest of three and became the second to graduate college in her family from Baruch College. Today, she continues to devote her free time to empowering underserved communities. She chairs the Professional Leadership Council on Asian American Federation, hosts seminars and workshops on professional and cultural engagement activities. She is now an independent consultant for small business, nonprofits, and immigrant organizations. She just devotes so much of her free time to empowering underserved communities.

Ivy Teng Lei's story is just what this country needs. I thank Mr. HOYER for referring her to us. She is a Chinese American.

Jung Bin Cho's family emigrated to the United States in 2001 from South Korea. They decided to leave to attain the American Dream for their children. He enrolled in first grade in Virginia, and, in 2016, proudly graduated from Virginia Tech.

Jung Cho says: “The U.S. is the only home I know. Because of DACA, I worked and could save money to help pay for college. Where I live in Northern Virginia, you need a car to get anywhere. Because of DACA, I can drive, giving my family rides or to study.”

Anyway, these are all just very personal stories about the struggles, the obstacles, but the optimism, the determination, and the hope that all of these people have. Isn't that what America is about? America is about optimism and hope.

This one is from Representative ESTY about Carolina Bortolletto. She had other testimony earlier. ELIZABETH ESTY from Connecticut has been a champion on this issue, and she sends this other testimony.

Carolina says: “I was born in Brazil and moved to the U.S. with my family

and my twin sister when I was 9 years old. I came to Connecticut. I knew I was undocumented, and so I'd face a tougher path to college, but I made the decision to keep fighting.

"I was able to graduate in top 5 percent of my class and got a scholarship to Western Connecticut State University, where I graduated in 2010 with a degree in biology. In 2010, I cofounded a local organization working for the rights of undocumented students in Connecticut.

"I was able to buy my first car and obtain a driver's license. At the end of 2014, I suffered a severe medical emergency and spent 8 months in the hospital. But due to DACA, I was able to get a job that offered health insurance with the national organization United We Dream."

Here we are again with United We Dream.

Carolina says: "Now my DACA expires on March 2019, and, with it, I will lose my health insurance that I need to live."

Again, these stories go on and on. I think, really, the point is that these young people have accomplished things that I think many of us would not have been able to accomplish. Perhaps some. I give everyone credit for obstacles they have overcome. But if you have all of the obstacles of economic disadvantage, plus being undocumented, uncertainty in your family, and all the emotional unrest that that causes, and to see them in the National Honor Society, the top 1 percent, the top 10 percent, the top 5 percent of their classes, giving back, volunteering over and over again in their communities, these are the best of the best. They are so fabulous.

Again, their parents were so courageous. They had a dream for their children, and some of these children are now reflecting that they are living their parents' dream for them. And that is what America has always been about.

Mr. Speaker, I have plenty more stories to tell. Some of them submitted by our colleagues, but I know that there is supposed to be a vote sometime soon.

Is that correct? Or can we just go on?

Mr. Speaker, may I ask what the order of things is here? Do I have just time to go on and on? Or is there a vote being called? Or what?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RICE of South Carolina). The House is currently considering H.R. 1153.

Ms. PELOSI. Aldo Solano was at the State of the Union address. He was the guest of Congressman EARL BLUMENAUER. Aldo moved from Mexico when he was 6. He grew up in one of the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation's affordable housing communities in Woodburn, Oregon. At 15, he started volunteering at FHDC's afterschool program and later interned for its Funds Development Department, creating his pathway to a career in community development and a passion for social equity.

After graduating from Woodburn High School, Aldo became a DACA recipient. He has extensive experience with electoral and community-based organizing in areas of farmworkers' rights, immigrants' rights, youth employment, and education.

Aldo currently serves as the policy director for the Oregon Latino Health Coalition, where he is part of a team that helped pass State legislation that extends health coverage to undocumented children in Oregon.

God bless you for that, Aldo.

We have been joined by Congressman ERIC SWALWELL from California, and we thank him for his leadership on this very important issue working with the Future Forum, visiting with DREAMers all over the country.

Also, KEITH ELLISON joined us, who I referenced earlier his testimony from his constituent in Minnesota as well.

Mr. HOYER has another testimony from Chirayu Patel, an Indian American who arrived here when he was 11 years old. For 23 years he has lived here. He was from Gujarat.

Isn't that where the Prime Minister is from in India?

Chirayu has spent years and thousands of dollars to resolve our status. He says: "However, due to incorrect filing by a notary that took advantage of my father's lack of knowledge about U.S. immigration process, our current lawyer has said that there is simply no way for us to get right with the law unless there is a change in law by the Congress."

Again, I won't read the whole statement, but Chirayu says: "Over the years, our family has built a life here and given back to the only country we know as home. My parents have paid income taxes, property taxes, and even business taxes. I was also the first person in my family to graduate from college. The introduction of DACA in 2012 was a consequential day for me.

"The President's decision to rescind the DACA program was a punch in the gut, and I felt the floor disappear under my feet."

Chirayu says:

After 23 years, my life may be destroyed overnight. I continue to raise awareness on this issue by sharing our stories and asking our families, friends, and neighbors to continue pushing Congress. In return, we hope that Congress can deliver.

I thank Mr. HOYER for submitting that.

Mr. SWALWELL's testimony is from Jose from Hayward, California. He came to the United States as a child from Mexico. He has only pledged allegiance to the United States of America. He is headed to college soon and wants to be a police officer in the only country he has called home.

Thank you, Mr. SWALWELL, for bringing that to our attention.

Valentina Garcia Gonzalez was only 6 years old when her family brought her to the United States from Uruguay. She grew up in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia. She was a bright child and

learned English after a few months of college. Valentina says: "After that, I became my parents' right hand. Everything and anything that involved speaking to the outside world meant I was in the front translating and representing my parents. It was a lot of responsibility for a young undocumented kid."

In addition to this responsibility, Valentina was an excellent student. She received the President's Education Award twice, once from President Bush and once from President Obama. In high school, she was an honors graduate in advanced placement, a leader in student government, a member of the Beta Club.

Somehow Valentina found time to be the president of the school's environmental group and manager of the varsity basketball team.

They have so many hours in a day, these DREAMers. She was a very accomplished student, but Georgia State law bans undocumented students from attending the State's top public universities. As a result, Valentina applied and was accepted to Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Congratulations, Valentina.

She is now a sophomore there. To help pay her tuition, she works as a projectionist at a theater, as an undocumented student. She still finds time to volunteer and mentor children.

In her letter, she wrote: "I am beyond grateful because, by receiving DACA, the U.S. has given me an opportunity to give back to this country that has given me so much. This is my country. I have worked hard to prove myself worthy in the eyes of my American counterparts, and knowing that I am in a weird limbo in regards to my legal status doesn't make me sleep any easier. My name is registered with the government, so I might be deported if they decide to end DACA."

It would be so sad if she were deported back to Uruguay, a country where she hasn't lived since she was 6 years old. I don't think our country would be stronger without that.

Oscar Cornejo, Jr., was 5 years old when his family came to the United States from Mexico. He grew up in Park City, a small northern suburb of Chicago. He became an excellent student in high school. He was a member of, again, the National Honor Society, and he was an Illinois State Scholar. He received several advanced placement awards. He graduated magna cum laude.

What he says is: "My parents always instilled in me the value of an education, which is one of the main reasons they decided to leave everything in Mexico and come to the United States. I dedicate myself to my education to honor the sacrifices my parents made."

□ 1600

Because of his outstanding academic achievements, he was admitted to Dartmouth. He is the first member of

his family to attend college. He excelled at Dartmouth. During freshman year, he received the William S. Churchill prize for outstanding academic achievement.

Just absolutely fabulous. Thank you. Thank you for submitting Oscar's story.

He says: "When I received my DACA, the threat of deportation had been lifted and I felt I could actually achieve my dreams. DACA has allowed me to work for the first time, and the money I earn goes to support my education and my family."

Again, a valuable asset.

Let me just recap a little bit of this, Mr. Speaker.

So many of our DREAMers are interested in becoming doctors and healthcare professionals, whether it be researchers, nurses, or other healthcare professionals.

I just want to read once again this statement from the Association of American Medical Colleges:

The Association of American Medical Colleges reports that the Nation's doctor shortage will rise to between 40,000 and 105,000 by the year 2030. Both the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges warn that ending DACA will exacerbate this physician shortage in the United States, and they have urged Congress to pass legislation to protect DREAMers.

Listen to what the AMA says: "Estimates have shown that the DACA initiative could help introduce 5,400 previously ineligible physicians into the U.S. healthcare system in the coming decades to address these shortages and ensure patient access to care.

"Removing those with DACA status will particularly create care shortages for rural and other underserved areas. . . . Without these physicians, the AMA is concerned that the quality of care provided in these communities would be negatively impacted and that patient access to care will suffer."

That is a quote. They are saying there could be as many as 40,000 to over double that number by 2030, and 5,400 previously ineligible physicians come to us by making DACA, by passing protection for our DREAMers, 5,400 previously ineligible physicians. That is quite remarkable.

So when you see the need and you see the ambition and the vocation and the dedication, especially to help in underserved areas, it is quite remarkable.

This is another of Senator DURBIN's. He wanted to introduce to the Senate a DREAMER from Speaker RYAN's home State of Wisconsin. Her name is Maricela Aguilar.

In 1995, when Maricela was 3 years old, her mother brought her to the United States with the hope of giving her a chance for a better life. Maricela's family settled in Milwaukee. Maricela worked hard, and she excelled in school.

During high school, she was on the honor roll and was a member of the Na-

tional Honor Society—we keep hearing that over and over—and captain of the cross country team. At the same time, Maricela was active in her community, volunteering at a local homeless shelter.

When it came time to apply for colleges, Maricela knew she wanted to stay close to her family in the only home she'd ever known, Wisconsin. She applied to many local schools and was offered a full-tuition scholarship to Marquette University in Milwaukee.

At Marquette, Maricela was on the dean's list and was a double major in political science and English literature. She also worked part-time as a waitress to support herself and her family.

Maricela became involved in advocating for immigration reform. In December 2010, Maricela was here in the Senate gallery, along with hundreds of other DREAMers, when the Senate failed to pass the DREAM Act due to a Republican filibuster.

I remind that, just shortly before that, we passed it in the House. It got over 50 votes in the Senate, but it did not get to the 60th vote. She came to raise concerns about the DREAMers again and again.

She graduated with honors in her graduating class. She is now in graduate school at Brandeis University in Boston. She plans to return to Milwaukee when she graduates. She wants to become a public schoolteacher.

Maricela and other DREAMers have so much to contribute to our country.

Could we use more public schoolteachers like Maricela? I think so.

Would we be a stronger country if we deported her? I don't think so.

So we have another one from Mr. DURBIN. Her name is Naomi Florentino. Her parents brought her to the United States from Mexico when she was 10 years old. Naomi grew up in the town of Smyrna, Tennessee.

Naomi was an excellent student and active in her community. In high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, and she received Student of the Year awards for algebra and art. She served on the student council and played on the varsity soccer team and the varsity track and field team. She was also a shot put and discus thrower.

These people are so accomplished, I just don't know how many hours they have in the day.

Naomi's dream was to become a robotics engineer. She participated in the NASA Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy and performed so well that she won the Next Generation Pioneer Award.

She graduated high school with honors, but her immigration status limited her. She didn't give up. She took mechanical engineering courses at Lipscomb University in Nashville. She then went to community college. In the spring, she is graduating with an associate's degree in mechatronics technology, a field that combines me-

chanical engineering, electrical engineering, telecommunications engineering, control engineering, and computer engineering.

Could you do that? Could any of us do that?

Naomi is now working on her bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University. In her spare time, she is also involved in her community doing all kinds of wonderful things.

She says: "DACA has meant the opportunity of a lifetime for my academic and professional career. As a student at Smyrna High School, driving past the Nissan plant motivated me to be a better student with hopes of, one day, being part of a company that is highly regarded in my community. However, without proper work authorization, that goal seemed far-fetched. Today, it is a reality for me."

So, hopefully, we can continue to make that a reality for Naomi Florentino, and I submit her statement for the RECORD.

I wish I could excuse my colleagues, but they have all been such champions on this issue, and their dedication to it is obviously demonstrated here, as it is with some of those who can't be with us right now.

This is another story that is about a DREAMER, and I want to tell the story of how DACA has given one DREAMER the chance to contribute to the country she loves.

This is Maria Ibarra-Frayre. Maria's parents brought her to the United States from Mexico at 9 years old. She grew up in Detroit, Michigan, the heartland. She was an excellent student who was dedicated to community service.

In high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society—you keep hearing that, Mr. Speaker. I have been here all day, but all day you have been hearing members of the National Honor Society—Key Club, and the school newspaper. She volunteered twice a week tutoring middle school students and performed over 300 hours of community service. She graduated with a 3.97 GPA and was admitted to the University of Michigan, but was unable to enroll at Michigan because of her immigration status.

She entered the University of Detroit Mercy, a private Catholic school. She was elected vice president of the student senate. She helped found Campus Kitchen to take leftover meals to the homeless—not to the homeless, but other people who have a hard time leaving home and needed meals to be brought to them.

She participated in helping elderly couples, homeless people, et cetera, and graduated valedictorian of her class. Her options were limited because of her immigration status.

When she got DACA, she wrote: "DACA means showing the rest of the country, society, and my community what I can do. I have always known what I'm capable of, but DACA has allowed me to show others that the investment and opportunity that DACA provides is worth it."

Maria and other DREAMers like her have so much to contribute to our country.

Will America be a stronger country if we send Maria away? No, I don't think so, and I think you would agree.

JUAN VARGAS from California. I acknowledged him earlier. He is here. Congressman JUAN VARGAS, 51st Congressional District, would like me to read a statement from a constituent, former intern, and a DREAMer:

My name is name Jacqueline Olivares. I was brought to the United States at age 2.

Now, you know, age 2.

I was raised in San Diego and never felt different from anyone else. I speak the language and know the culture. I knew I had no papers, but I never really knew what that meant. I didn't realize the importance of those documents until I wanted to go to college.

I always knew I wanted to move forward with my education. I was an avid student in high school and was always encouraged to apply to universities because I had the grades to compete. Then my parents told me that it wasn't a possibility. I realized I was different. I would always ask myself: Why me? But when DACA was announced in 2012, it gave me relief. I am proud to call myself a DREAMer.

Jacqueline says:

I am proud to call myself a DREAMer. DACA gave me hope, opportunity, and motivation, and that won't be taken away.

My name is Jacqueline Olivares, and DREAMers are American, too.

I thank Mr. VARGAS for that.

Another one, from KEITH ELLISON from Minnesota:

Itzel came to the United States when she was only 15 years old. Despite initial language difficulties, she worked hard and graduated from high school with honors. She completed one semester of college after high school, but economic difficulties forced her to focus on work instead.

However, when she was granted DACA in 2012, she got a better-paying job, was able to go back to college, and graduated with honors. The last 2 years, Itzel has been working for the State of Minnesota as a senior court clerk. She bought a house and supports her family.

The week before DACA was terminated Itzel applied for a job as a probation officer, her dream job, a probation officer. But the elimination of DACA now makes that goal appear impossible.

Itzel was also planning to start a master's degree in criminal justice next semester. That, too, now seems impossible.

Itzel told me, "I don't want to go back to dreaming of a better future. I want to be part of a better future for me, for my family, and for my country."

Again and again, for our country.

I thank Mr. ELLISON and Itzel.

From Congresswoman MATSUI of California, acknowledged earlier, an unnamed DREAMer from her district says: "September 1990 my life would change forever."

This is her story: "My family and I had migrated to the United States.

"The first six years of my life pales in comparison to what I have been introduced to within a few months of living in the U.S. All I do know is that my clear, joyful memories started when we moved to America. I was living in the best country in the world, a place I would call my home, and yet I didn't even know it.

"Fast-forward 27 years later, and today my family sit here in deportation proceedings, given 45 days to pack up their lives and leave. The past few weeks have been the most painful, fearful, helpless, and hopeless days of my life."

□ 1615

"My parents and sisters are being deported, and I most likely have a few months left before I will be deported as well. I am considered a DREAMer, probably one of the oldest DREAMers in the United States; had my oldest sister been eligible, she would have been the oldest of us DREAMers.

"However, I was the only one of the three to be granted protection with DACA, and now my family has been ordered to leave the United States with a 10-year ban on reentry."

The 10-year ban on reentry—you are probably familiar with this, Mr. Speaker—this 10-year ban is just deadly.

"I can't separate from my family and have them do this on their own. My family and I are one cohesive unit—family always stick together, it's what we believe in, so there is no choice but to go with my family, to help each other reconstruct what we built here over the last 27 years. At this point, I don't know what to do. What am I supposed to do? We have exhausted all of our options and met failure at each end. All I can do is leave it in God's hands, pray for strength and guidance, and hope my prayers are heard with a miracle.

"I understand that there are those who commit horrible crimes and shouldn't be given the opportunity to stay. However, for us as a family, we didn't do anything to harm our country. We went to school, educated ourselves, had good jobs, pushed our limits, helped others, are great Samaritans"—there we are with great Samaritan again—"pay and paid our taxes, and strive to better ourselves and our country and the community we live in.

"As for my family and I, no matter the distance, no matter the 10-year ban, no matter what . . . our heart and spirit will always be here in the United States."

" . . . the place I call home. I have spent the majority of my life here, and it has shaped me into the woman I am now."

These people are being deported, and that is why we need to have comprehensive immigration reform to address the bigger issue. But we can do something today to at least make whole the children.

This is another one, a Sacramento State graduate that Congresswoman MATSUI submitted to us.

She said that DACA gave him peace of mind. He currently holds a master's degree and plans to pursue a doctoral degree. He wants to work in the field of education and is worried that the President's decision to rescind DACA will lead to less people becoming teachers. He said that he believes "there is something good in all of us." Oswaldo deserves to continue to fulfill his dreams in his community.

Gustavo, also from Sac State, came to the United States at the age of 7 with his brothers and parents.

He said: "I am happy to say that my parents' courage and willingness to risk it all for their children's future was worth it."

Gustavo recently graduated from Sacramento State with a bachelor's in psychology and a minor in counseling and would like to pursue a master's degree. Gustavo said: "We as DREAMers are here to build a better society, to change the cycle of our family's struggles, to better ourselves, to help build bridges amongst society and to be educated individuals with the hunger of striving for a better tomorrow."

Another from Congresswoman MATSUI. Jesus is a DREAMer and DACA recipient from Sacramento who was brought to this country by his mother at the age of 8. He is also a full-time English professor at Sacramento City College and part-time lecturer at Sacramento State University.

He has devoted himself to the classroom, oftentimes working with young DREAMers.

He said: "I am honored to have the opportunity to teach the youth of my community, to empower the reentry students, and to help improve the culture of both local campuses who gave me an education."

Juana from Congresswoman MATSUI's district: "DACA has allowed me to feel protected from being deported, to feel accepted and acknowledged in this country we grew up in and love. My DACA status has provided me the opportunity to pursue my dreams like many other people.

"Thanks to DACA, I was able to work and go to school. I just recently graduated from Sacramento State, this spring 2017, with my B.A. in sociology. I graduated from high school in 2006 and had to put my dreams aside because I was not able to continue my education; but once I got DACA status, I was able to go to a university. Now that I just graduated and would like to start my career, it would be horrible if my status was rescinded.

"I've been in the U.S. for 27 years. I have never left America. I was born in Mexico but have no clue what it is like. The only place I know is California. This is my home and all I know."

From Representative LOFGREN, whom I mentioned earlier, who has been such a champion on the Judiciary Committee on this, a former chair of the

Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee. She has taught immigration law. She has been an immigration lawyer. She knows it all. She has just been a tremendous leader and very dedicated advocate and champion.

She submits this from Ms. Mandy Lau: "I wanted to take a moment to express my frustration with the repeal of DACA. As an educator, I have seen how DACA has improved the lives of the students and families in our community here in San Jose. DACA has been a resounding success, and this administration should not end this crucial program. Nearly 800,000 young men and women have been able to contribute to their communities, to work, go to school, and to live their lives without fear of being ripped away from their families and from a country they consider home.

Ms. Lau, Mandy that is, went on to say: "Recently, I held a crying student who was disheartened that although she worked hard to maintain her 4.0 GPA throughout high school, fought stereotypes of gang affiliation, and resisted negative influences to create better opportunities for herself and her family, there would also be a possibility that her dream of attending college would no longer be an option. She asked me how this was possible in the land of the free, how quickly an opportunity could be stripped from a person with ambition, hopes, and dreams. DACA has given these young adults a lifeline and hope for the future. Ending the program would be devastating for DREAMers and their families. Without DACA, these 800,000 DREAMers would be subject to deportation to countries they may not even remember and no longer able to work legally to support themselves and their families"—in the place they call home, Mandy says.

"I have spent the majority of my life here. It shaped me into the woman I am."

So I thank the lady very much. These are beautiful, beautiful statements from some of these DACA recipients, from our DREAMers, but it is even beyond those who are recipients.

Two brothers, Jhon Magdaleno and Nelson, his brother. Let me tell you about Nelson and Jhon. These brothers came to the United States from Venezuela when Nelson was 11 and Jhon was 9. They are both honor students at Lakeside High School in Atlanta, Georgia. Here is a picture of Nelson.

Jhon served with distinction in the Air Force Junior Officer Reserve Corps. He was the fourth highest ranking in a 175-cadet unit and commander of the Air Honor Society in his unit. Here is a picture of Jhon in his ROTC uniform.

They went on to both become honor students at Georgia Tech University—Nelson in computer engineering, Jhon in biomedical engineering with a 4.0. In 2012, he graduated from Georgia Tech with honors.

Do you understand being graduated with honors from Georgia Tech in computer engineering, and Jhon in a bio-

medical engineering major from Georgia Tech, and they have 3.6 GPA and 4.0 GPA? Thanks to DACA, they have been working as computer engineers for a Fortune 500 semiconductor company.

Jhon received DACA in 2012, while he was still a student at Georgia Tech. He then worked for 2 years as a researcher in a biomedical engineering lab at Georgia Tech researching glaucoma, a leading cause of blindness. In 2014, Jhon graduated from Georgia Tech with a major in chemical and biological engineering with highest honors—highest honors in chemical and biological engineering from Georgia Tech. He is now working as a process engineer with a Fortune 500 company, too.

Both have written letters. Nelson wrote: "To me, DACA means an opportunity to be able to live my dreams and contribute to society in ways that I could not have imagined. DACA means that one of my life goals, owning my own company, could be a possibility in the future. DACA means a chance. DACA means the American Dream."

Jhon wrote: "I consider an American to be someone who loves and wholeheartedly dedicates themselves to the development of this country. From age 9, I have made the United States my home, and it has made me the man I am today. I proudly call myself an American."

As I read some of these stories, you hear a recurring theme. Again, it is a theme about honoring the vows of our Founders for a new order for the ages that every generation would take the responsibility to make the future better for future generations. That is exactly what the families of these DREAMers did.

Family members took risks, had courage, hope, optimism, and determination to make the future better for their families. Doing that for their families, they were doing that for America, too.

You see such a similarity to previous generations. I see it as an Italian American—education, education, education, the key to upward mobility. Talent, talent, talent, but not underutilized; educated to reach its full potential to reach the aspirations of these young people to do so in a way that is about giving back.

What you see here is what our families were all about that had come before, that idealism and hope springs in optimism and aspirations of immigrants coming to our country. That is why I always say that we are a great country because we are constantly reinvigorated by immigrants coming to our country. Their courage and commitment to the American Dream which drew them here in the first place strengthens the American Dream.

These newcomers with all of that hope and aspiration make America more American when they come here. That is why our country will not stagnate. That is why our country will continue to blossom, to respect our traditions, our past, and our sense of community.

In every one of these letters there is gratitude back to the United States for what it has done for these people. There is no sense of entitlement. It is all about working hard and paying back. That is why if we can just do this piece which has urgency to it because it has a timetable that the President has put forth, just doing this piece would be the smart thing to do, to find a solution that then builds trust in a bipartisan way with transparency and openness as to what it actually is about. That is why we want people to know this is who these people are. That is why they are called DREAMers. That is why the name has persisted.

We have been the country of the American Dream forever. Yes, I agree with the President. We are all DREAMers in America. This is part of the future. Of course, I think of my grandchildren as the future. They didn't have to face the struggles that these young people are facing. God bless them for their courage to make the struggle, but it is, again, faith, family, faith in the future, faith in America, faith in themselves, faith which gives people hope, hope because they have faith in the kindness of others. Faith, hope, charity, and hope is right there in the middle.

I think that people who have hope, much of it springs from their faith, and these clearly are people of great faith. That is why the Conference of Catholic Bishops welcomes them. That is why the evangelical community speaks so clearly and passionately about the need to protect them.

These are precious gems. They are absolutely outstanding, and they write their stories so eloquently that nothing any of us can say about the subject is to even compare to the power of their stories.

For example, Johana was brought to the United States from Venezuela when she was a child. She grew up in Boulder, Colorado. She played in her high school softball team, played viola in the orchestra, and dreamed of becoming a doctor.

Here is what Johana said about her childhood: "I've become a Boulderite in all aspects of that word. That town, with those beautiful mountains, is truly my home." In 2011, Johana graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a double major in molecular, cellular, and developmental biology and psychology neuroscience.

They are so talented. But after graduating from college, Johana was unable to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor because she was undocumented. Then in 2012, with DACA, she heard that Loyola University in Chicago would accept students who had received DACA into its medical schools. I thank Loyola University and the University of Chicago.

Like many States across the country, Illinois faces a shortage of physicians in some communities. The Loyola University DACA program sees this as an opportunity to address the problem. The State of Illinois has created a

DACA loan program. Under this program, Loyola DACA med students can receive loans to help cover the cost of their medical education. For every year of loans, the DACA student must work a year in a medically underserved area in Illinois—again giving back.

□ 1630

Last fall, Johana went to med school at Loyola. After graduating, she will stay in Illinois and help serve parts of Illinois that have a shortage of doctors.

This is, of course, one of Senator DURBIN's constituents.

Here is what Johana had to say: "When the year 2012 came along, my life changed. My dreams of becoming a doctor became a possibility again because of DACA. I am now able to apply to medical internship programs, take the medical school entrance exam, and apply to medical school, all because of my DACA status. DACA has defined my path. DACA has relit a fire within to succeed and to continue to pursue my dreams."

Will America be a stronger country if we deport Johana? I don't think so.

This is Everardo Arias. Everardo was brought to the United States from Mexico in 1997 when he was 7 years old.

Just imagine these adorable children.

He grew up in Costa Mesa, California, and was an excellent student. He dreamed of becoming a doctor.

A doctor, again.

It was not until he applied to college that Everardo learned that he was undocumented. He was accepted at the University of California, Riverside, but because of his immigration status, however, Everardo didn't qualify for any Federal assistance.

When Everardo was a sophomore, he met with a counselor, who told him he had no chance of becoming a doctor because he was undocumented. But Everardo didn't give up on his dream. In 2012, he graduated from the University of California, Riverside with a chemistry major and research honors.

Shortly after he graduated, DACA was established. He received DACA. He worked for a year as a mentor for at-risk students in his hometown of Costa Mesa. The following year, through AmeriCorps, he worked as a health educator with several local clinics. He gave classes to hundreds of people in both English and Spanish on topics ranging from diabetes to family nutrition to depression.

During his year as a health educator, he applied and was accepted in medical school. He is currently in his first year at the Loyola University Chicago School of Medicine. In his free time, he volunteers at a local clinic. He takes time to teach medical Spanish to some of his classmates.

Here is what he had to say about DACA:

"DACA changed my life. It opened the door to the future ahead of me. If it weren't for DACA, I would not be here and I probably would not have pursued medicine. I'm blessed to have

the opportunity to do what I love to do and to give back to the country that has given me so much."

Will America be a stronger country if we deport Everardo Arias and others like him? Of course not.

This is from Congresswoman DIANA DEGETTE, who is with us. This is her story from Colorado:

Marco Dorado was born in Mexico and moved to Denver's Globeville neighborhood at the age of 3. After attending Thornton High School as a student in the International Baccalaureate program, Marco attended the University of Colorado Boulder and graduated as student body president with a degree in finance.

During his time at University of Colorado, Marco received DACA, which has allowed him to begin his professional career while contributing back to his community. Currently, Marco is the program coordinator for the Latino Leadership Institute at the University of Denver.

It is a beautiful story, once again demonstrating not only a commitment to education, but a commitment to give back, become doctors, whatever, but leadership. Every one of these has leadership, whether it is leadership in the student government, leadership in community activity, leadership on the sports field, leadership in every possible way in extracurricular activities and the rest. Certainly, Marco has demonstrated that trait typical of our DREAMers.

We have been joined by TED LIEU from California and Ms. BORDALLO from Guam. I think we have acknowledged so many Members who have come and gone. I thank them all for their ongoing support of our DREAMers.

This is from an unknown DREAMer to BRAD SHERMAN. It says: "I am writing this letter to you because I am fearful of what might happen next. I am a Canadian who was brought here when I was 11 years old. I am 28 now and DACA has allowed me to come out of the shadows."

You hear that expression, "come out of the shadows."

"I have worked hard my whole life. I am a senior at UCLA majoring in civil engineering. I am an engineering intern at the City of Stanton, and I also work at an animal emergency hospital on weekends. I often time go weeks where I do not have a day off."

I love this recurring animal assistance, too, that we hear.

"All I ask for is a fair shake, and with this new administration, I fear I won't be given that. I am not a criminal. I am not a danger to my community, nor am I someone trying to take advantage of public benefits. I am a victim to a situation I had no say over. I want to do my share: pay taxes, inspire others, and any other help I can provide.

"Congressman, thank you for your time and for listening."

I thank BRAD for submitting this enthusiastic statement from an unknown

DREAMer from his district, a Canadian.

This is from TED LIEU. I thank him for being here.

To TED LIEU, a testimonial from Representative LIEU's district:

My name is Nicole, and I am a student at UCLA. My parents brought me to the United States when I was 3 years old.

For the 16 years that I have lived in the United States, I grew up like any other U.S. citizen. I finished my K-12 schooling, and I volunteered around my community.

For my first year of college, I was fortunate enough to receive a substantial amount of financial aid from both UCLA and the California Dream Act. This aid alleviated my parents from the fiscal burden of paying for college.

Although my tuition was covered, my parents still had to pay out of pocket to cover the expense of living on campus. The scholarship money I received for my sophomore year was steadily decreased, which means there was more pressure on my parents to keep up with the growing cost.

To lighten this load, I acquired a full-time summer job. I have become dependent on my job and my paycheck to pay off my school, but how do I remain debt free if DACA is rescinded?

Terminating DACA would turn my world upside down, it will undo the progress I have made at UCLA and challenge my access to higher education.

Nicole goes on to say:

Although I am grateful for the opportunities I have been given under DACA, like a Social Security number and relief from deportation, I cannot reconcile that the very government I one day hope to work for continues to exclude me from living the American Dream.

The President and U.S. legislators need to look beyond their biases and stand up for the children who have continuously pledged allegiance to the only country they have ever called home.

I thank TED LIEU for Nicole's beautiful story.

Mr. LIEU also submitted testimony from Martin. Martin says, Mr. Speaker:

My name is Martin and I grew up in an undocumented household. When I was in grade school, I loved listening to the news with my father. It became a daily routine to tune in to Univision or television after both of our days of work.

It was extremely difficult for me to comprehend many issues discussed on mainstream news, mainly because I generally didn't understand the content. However, one particular word was mentioned almost every day, "deportation."

I had asked my father what it meant, but he refused to answer, and so did my mother. After hearing the cold, hard truth from my teacher in grade school, I felt vulnerable for the first time in my life.

As I grew older, I became more and more concerned. I walked to school every day worried that my parents might unexpectedly be taken away from me.

How many times have we heard that story?

Two hardworking parents that had lived and contributed to this country for more than 30 years might be forcibly removed from the United States. Now, I have never felt more fearful for the future of my family.

That word "fear" is terrifying, tears in the eyes of the Statue of Liberty, fear in the hearts of people who should be able to just make their contribution to our country.

HAKEEM JEFFRIES submits this testimony from Ashelle.

Let me just once again thank my colleagues for being here. I wish you could be reading these stories. I feel very privileged to be reading so many of them, but the rules are that I cannot yield on the special 1 minute.

This is Ashelle King's story: "I came to the United States from St. Lucia in the Caribbean at the age of 7, and I've been living in Brooklyn for 16 years. I currently attend Baruch College, where I pay tuition out of my pocket by working because I am not eligible for certain types of aid for school.

"I am studying computer information systems and political science, and I want to apply my studies to help people. I try to be involved in the community, which is why I interned in Mr. Jeffries' office."

I again thank Mr. JEFFRIES for this testimony.

"I felt like Mr. Jeffries had a real connection with the people, and I wanted to learn how I can assist and give back in that regard. Hopefully, I will be graduating in the spring. I don't want to be fearful of not graduating or of leaving school because DACA ends.

"Fixing DACA is important to me because I would not have been able to work if it weren't for DACA. Because I have a working permit, I am able to pay for school and be exposed to more things in the U.S. You know, I've been here since a very young age, so I don't know much about St. Lucia. I grew up in Brooklyn. I know more about Brooklyn, and I want to stay here."

I know that is music to the ears of HAKEEM JEFFRIES, who is always bragging about Brooklyn. And, by the way, so is the Democratic leader in the Senate. Mr. SCHUMER is always singing the praises of Brooklyn.

This is from Mr. DURBIN. This is Pablo da Silva.

Pablo was brought to the United States from Brazil in 2001, when he was 13 years old. He grew up in New Jersey. Here is what Pablo has to say about his childhood:

"The same as every other kid growing up in the U.S., I attended middle school, pledged allegiance to the American flag, and sang the national anthem. As I grew older, I came to understand that one thing about me differed from my classmates. I was undocumented. However, my parents always taught me to see barriers as a measure of perseverance and an opportunity to thrive."

Pablo was an excellent student. He dreamed of becoming a doctor. During high school and college, Pablo volunteered at a nursing home every week. He also was a member of a group called Doctor Red Nose. Pablo and other members of the group would dress up as clowns and visit hospitals and nursing homes to cheer up patients and healthcare providers.

Pablo was accepted at Rutgers University, but because he was undocumented, he didn't qualify financially.

You have heard that sentence over and over.

And although he grew up in New Jersey, he would have been required to pay out-of-state tuition. As a result, Pablo couldn't afford to attend Rutgers and instead enrolled in community college. Because he had taken college courses when he was in high school, Pablo was able to complete a 2-year associate's degree in only 1 year.

With his associate's degree, Pablo was able to transfer to Kean University in New Jersey. In 2011, Pablo graduated at the top of his class with a major in biology, summa cum laude. He received an award for the highest grade point average in the biology department. He was on the dean's list every semester of college and was a member of the honor society Phi Kappa Phi.

After graduating from college, he was unable to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor. Instead, he worked in a variety of manual labor jobs. Then, in 2012, President Obama established DACA. Pablo heard that Loyola University of Chicago accepts students that receive DACA.

Like many States across the country, Illinois faces a shortage of physicians in some communities. Loyola University's DACA program is an opportunity to address this problem.

I have described this problem again and again, but let me say the State of Illinois has created a DACA loan program. Under this program, Loyola's DACA med students can receive loans to cover the costs of their medical education. For every year of loan, the students must work for a year in a medically underserved area in Illinois.

I said that earlier, but I just want people to know how creative people have become in not only helping educate, alleviate the cost, but serve the community.

As a result, some of the best and brightest students in the country have come to Loyola to get a medical education. They will stay in Illinois to help serve parts of the State that have a shortage of doctors.

□ 1645

And then more on Pablo. Last fall, Pablo da Silva began med school at Loyola. He is pursuing his dream to become a cardiothoracic surgeon. This is what he had to say: "DACA has allowed me to fulfill my long-lasting aspiration to pursue a career in medicine. It has truly changed my future, and for that, I'm truly grateful. I'm eager to contribute my share to the country I call my own."

Thank you, Pablo.

This is Karen Villagomez. Karen was brought to the United States when she was only 2 years old. She grew up in Chicago, Illinois. She is an outstanding student and interested in public service. In May 2012, Karen graduated from the University of Rochester in New York with a major in political science. She is the first person in her family to graduate from a 4-year college.

Just 1 month after she graduated, President Obama announced the DACA program. After she received DACA, Karen found a job as a paralegal in a law firm in Chicago, where she has been working for the last 2 years. This fall, she will begin law school.

How about that?

But if the House of Representatives have—if we could pass this bill, she would be able to attend law school and become an attorney. Instead, she could be deported back to Mexico, a country she hasn't lived in since she was a toddler.

Here is what Karen had to say: "DACA represents the values and heritage of this country of immigrants; it was the right thing to do, and it has changed my life by replacing fear with hope. This executive action gave me an overwhelming sense of relief and hope. It lifted me from the shadows."

I just want to repeat her first sentence: "DACA represents the values and heritage of this country of immigrants; it was the right thing to do, and it has changed my life by replacing fear with hope."

Now, will America be strong if Karen is deported?

No, I don't think so.

This one is from Representative FOSTER. Mr. FOSTER is also from Illinois, and this was his State of the Union guest, Ana Campa Castillo. She is a student at Joliet Junior College in Joliet, Illinois. Ana is a graduate of Bolingbrook High School and is currently pursuing an associate's degree in psychology at Joliet Junior College. She serves as the vice president of Latinos Unidos, one of the largest student organizations.

I had the occasion to meet her when Representative FOSTER brought her to the State of the Union. I wish more Members of Congress could meet more of these DREAMers.

Aren't you impressed by the cumulative effect that they are making on our country, each of them with their individual contribution to the greatness of America?

So exciting. I am so proud of them.

Representative POLIS' State of the Union guest was Anarely, a student at the Colorado State University in Fort Collins. She was a guest of JARED POLIS. Anarely was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, and came to the United States when she was a young child. Her family stayed in Colorado to care for her grandmother, who suffered from breast cancer.

Anarely has flourished in Colorado, graduating high school with a 4.3 GPA, where she participated in Reserve Officers' Training Corps. She went on to thrive at Colorado State University, triple majoring in political science, ethnic studies, and international relations.

I thank Representative POLIS and Representative FOSTER for their very distinguished guests at the State of the Union address.

I did mention to the President, when I welcomed him to the Capitol, that we

had many DREAMers and supporters of DREAMers in the audience here, also supporters of fairness for Mexico. So I hope we are doing better as far as our negotiations go in terms of Puerto Rico.

I see we have been joined by Congressman MARK DESAULNIER from California. Thank you for being here, MARK, as well.

Arisaid Gonzalez Porras was a guest of RAÚL GRIJALVA. Arisaid came to the United States in 2000 from Mexico and currently resides in Arizona. That is the State that RAÚL GRIJALVA represents in Congress.

Arisaid is a freshman at Georgetown University. As a first-generation student, she relied on the help of counselors and teachers to help apply to college. Growing up undocumented, she lived in fear of what would happen to her and her family. In her first semester in college, Arisaid has become more outspoken about her status as a DACA recipient and became an advocate for the rights of the undocumented youth.

As a student with the privilege to go to school right in the center of politics, she plans to continue her advocacy until Congress passes DREAMers legislation.

Hopefully, Arisaid, that will be very soon.

Here are some testimonies from other Members of Congress. Leticia Herrera-Mendez is a student at California State University, San Bernardino she was a guest of Congressman PETE AGUILAR from California at the State of the Union address. Congressman AGUILAR is a co-sponsor with Congressman HURD from Texas of the legislation that has strong bipartisan support in the Congress and one bill that we would hope that the Speaker would give us an opportunity to vote on the floor of the House. I thank Congressman AGUILAR.

Leticia Herrera-Mendez was born in Mexico and arrived in the United States at the age of 8. She is a DREAMer and a student at California State University, San Bernardino.

In June 2019, she will obtain a bachelor's degree in sociology and two certificates, one in Spanish public services and another in social services. She is committed to helping and spreading awareness about the Latino community. She is an immigrant activist and is the vice president of the student organization, Undocumented Advocates at Cal State University, San Bernardino, where she advocates for the rights of undocumented immigrants.

Her work and dedication to her community has granted her the opportunity to serve as the California delegate for Fuerza Migrante National Political Group and student assistant of the Undocumented Student Success Center at CSUSB.

Again, leadership, leadership, leadership. Education, leadership, how beautiful.

Leslie Martinez is a student at UC Irvine, and she was a guest of Congress-

man LOU CORREA at the State of the Union. Leslie Martinez is a freshman in college who is passionate about her studies. She was brought to the United States at the age of 2. Growing up, she was alone most of the time due to her parents always working, but this allowed her to become independent at a very young age.

She found out she was undocumented during middle school, when she was trying to apply for a scholarship but needed a Social Security number. Luckily, DACA came around during her high school years, opening several opportunities for her, such as an internship at UCI Medical Center, where she—that would be University of California, Irvine—where she was able to shadow medical professionals, and it opened up her love for the medical field.

DACA also made her college application a smooth process. Now she is a freshman in college and is passionate about, again, her studies. She attends the University of California, Irvine, and is majoring in chemistry. Leslie hopes to attend medical school after college in hopes of becoming a general surgeon or a pediatrician.

Again, doctors, doctors, doctors. Maybe she could find out about Loyola University School of Medicine. Maybe she will have many more options by then, hopefully, when we pass this legislation.

Karen Bahena was a State of the Union guest of Congressman SCOTT PETERS. Karen lived in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico, for 8 years, until 2001, when her family migrated to San Diego. Thanks to DACA, Karen has been able to graduate college with a degree in public health and nutrition at San Diego State University, find work as a research coordinator at the University of California, San Diego, and pursue her dreams in the field of medicine. She hopes to one day help underprivileged communities with healthcare needs.

God bless you, Karen.

Again, another example, universally, giving back, giving back, giving back.

State of the Union guest of JUDY CHU, Jung Bin Cho and his family immigrated to the United States when he was 7 years old from South Korea. Thanks to DACA, Jung Bin Cho was able to work and save money that allowed him to graduate from Virginia Tech with a bachelor's degree in business information technology. Currently, he is an Immigrant Rights Fellow at the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium—this is quite an acronym, NAKASEC, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium—organizing and advocating for economic, social, and racial justice for all, with a focus on Asian American and Pacific Coast Islander communities. His dream is to attend law school in order to help his community in Virginia.

Thank you, Jung.

The guest of GERRY CONNOLLY, Nicolle Uria, she spoke at our press

conference that we had before the State of the Union. I made a joke with GERRY CONNOLLY because somebody there referenced him as Congressman Cannoli. So I welcomed him with great pride of being an Italian American, but he is Connolly.

Nicolle moved to the United States from La Paz, Bolivia, at the age of 1 with both of her parents and her sisters. For her entire life, she has lived here. The United States is her home. Nicolle grew up living the American Dream just like any other American citizen. She celebrated the same traditions, ate the same food, enjoyed from the same activities as any of my other friends. Throughout her education, she has always been a good student and always very active with not just school activities, but also with the community. She has been a Girl Scout since the age of 4, she has played both soccer and volleyball for many years, and now as a high school student. Nicolle spent many hours volunteering in the community and getting involved with organizations such as the DREAM Project, LULAC, UnidosUS, and many more. After finding out that she was undocumented, she thought all her hard work and effort was for nothing. But then, thanks to President Obama, she was able to apply for DACA.

And she told her story very brilliantly at our press conference before the State of the Union.

Really, if you could hear them tell their own stories, there is a great humility about conveying their stories to you. Because when you see them and they tell their stories and the passion and the pride and just the patriotism—passion, pride, patriotism—that they demonstrate, you will see why anyone, who has had the wonderful experience of being in conversation or observing our DREAMers, understands why they have had such a high reputation among the American people: some of them who have met them, some of them who have heard about them, some of them who have just caught the spark, recognize, again, the hard work ethic, the commitment to education, to community service, to faith, to family, to the United States of America. It is a beautiful thing. It just isn't, let's take a small number of people and try to do something with it. This is something very, very special, and it says a lot about our country to be able to give protection in a way that has some certainty to our DREAMers.

Itayu Torres is a student at Pasadena City College. She was a guest at the State of the Union of Congressman JIMMY GOMEZ.

Itayu Torres came to the United States from Mexico as a 6-month-old baby.

She was completely carried into this country.

She learned she was undocumented when she was 14 years old and, in 2014, became eligible to apply for DACA. Earning DACA protections has allowed Itayu to access a government-issued ID

card, work authorization, healthcare and protection from deportation. With DACA, Itayu had the opportunity to travel across the country. She is currently studying political science and business at Pasadena City College and plans to continue her education at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland.

A wonderful school.

Itayu was part of the California Dream Network Steering Committee and one day hopes to run for a seat in the United States Senate.

You go, girl. United States Senate. Why not President? Well, she wasn't born here, so she can't be President of the United States.

Again, Gabriela Hernandez was a State of the Union guest of our great Democratic Whip STENY HOYER.

Gabriela, 19, is a college student at Prince George's Community College. She came here with her mother from El Salvador at the age of 4. Her goal is to transfer to a four-year university in the fall, study to be a social worker, and just have an opportunity to thrive. She has lived her entire life in this country, having attended schools in Prince George's County since kindergarten. Because many family members already live here, she doesn't have a lot of family left in her home country.

The country she came from is El Salvador. And the situation probably has only gotten worse there since she came.

In any event, I thank Mr. HOYER for giving us her story.

□ 1700

Mr. FRANK PALLONE, who spent a lot of time with us, it seems like 6 or 7 hours ago, in the beginning of this, he was with us early in the presentation, and his guest at the State of the Union was Esder Chong, a student at Rutgers University-Newark.

When Esder was 6 years old, she and her family immigrated to the States from South Korea. Unfortunately, after the 2008 economic recession, her mom lost her position working at a hospital and they lost their legal status. Esder first realized the implications of having an undocumented status when her mom got into a bike accident. It was an emergency situation and she needed treatment. However, because they were uninsured, she treated herself through home remedies and prayer. Fast forward one decade, Esder is now a sophomore at Rutgers University-Newark on a full ride thanks to private, external scholarships and donors, including thedream.us and twenty others. She currently serves as the founder/president of RU Dreamers, a Rutgers University-Newark student organization that advocates for undocumented students' rights to higher education. Esder is also a student-athlete competing for the Rutgers University-Newark cross country/track and field team and the news editor for Rutgers University-Newark Newark newspaper, the Observer.

How many hours does Esder have in a day? I would like to know.

I want to talk about my own guest at the State of the Union. I am so proud of her. Melody Kligenfuss. She is a statewide organizer for CHIRLA's California Dream Network. I am so proud of them. And Angelica Salas heads up the organization. They have done so much to protect our DREAMers to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.

Melody was at our press conference. I am proud of her.

Melody was born in Guatemala City, Guatemala. After growing up without pardons, she was reunited with her mother in the heart of Los Angeles when she was 9 years old.

Can you just imagine.

She earned her bachelor's degree in communications and political science at California State University, Los Angeles. She graduated with a master of nonprofit leadership and management from the University of Southern California. She has conducted a research thesis focused on the representation of undocumented students in mass communication. Melody works as CHIRLA's California Dream Network statewide youth organizer as a devoted advocate for human and immigration rights. She is a DACA recipient since 2015. Her life goal is to continue bending the arc of the moral universe towards justice.

I just got word that the House Historian confirmed: "You have now set the record for the longest continuous speech in the House since at least 1909." I wonder what that was.

This is Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, who spent so much time with us here today. I want to read from her testimony. Parthiv Patel from Mount Laurel, New Jersey.

Parthiv is a DREAMer who has been in the DACA program since 2012 and graduated from Drexel University's Thomas R. Kline School of Law in May 2016.

Parthiv was brought to the United States when he was 5 years old and has lived in the United States continuously since then.

He was admitted to the New Jersey State Bar on January 24, 2018.

Congratulations, Parthiv.

He was previously admitted to the Pennsylvania State Bar on December 18, 2017. He is the first DREAMer admitted to the New Jersey and Pennsylvania bars.

When Parthiv's DACA status expires on August 9, 2018, he could be deported from the only country he knows and ripped away from his family. Even if he is not picked up for deportation, without work authorization or legal status, his employment options and his ability to put his law degree to use serving the community will also be substantially limited.

Parthiv wants to make sure White House Chief of Staff Kelly knows that he is far from lazy—he should just look at his college and law school records.

Thank you, Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN.

This is from Congresswoman SUSAN DAVIS from California. This is the story of her constituent, Itso. Itso says:

I just graduated from high school 3 days before Deferred Action on DACA arrivals was announced, and already been accepted to San Diego State University. I wasn't sure if I would be able to afford going to college. But there is some uncertainty in applying for DACA, but it was a risk worth taking.

After DACA, I was very enthusiastic to be able to work, serve my community, and attend San Diego State University. I graduated this year with a political science degree.

As a border resident, I have seen the toll that harsh immigration enforcement has taken in my community. Many times, in the midst of the rhetoric, we lose sight of the real impact that harsh enforcement has on the lives of hardworking families. My work with the community is deeply rewarding. I have been part of helping thousands of San Diegans, and I have also seen the suffering that many families have to go through because there are failed and inhumane immigration policies.

I remain fully committed to continuing to serve my community and ensure that we continue to build a movement that affords immigrants, refugees, and citizens alike the right to live with dignity in the United States.

How beautiful. These statements themselves are so beautiful.

I don't know who made that speech in 1909, or other speeches competed for the longest in the meantime, that was not my goal today.

But we have so many testimonies, real testimony in the words of the DREAMers, as I say, the most eloquent of all.

I did ask my staff to say that when I came to the floor earlier, I wanted to make sure that we were filling our 40 hours between 8 this morning and tomorrow night with the words to convince or the prayers to inspire. So I thought when I came to the floor, I would be like reading the Bible, because the Bible is so fraught with so many passages that take us to a higher place to have a conversation about human beings, all of God's children, at a higher place.

Again, referencing the 40 days in the Old Testament, the 40 years in the desert in the New Testament, the 40 days, the Gospel of Matthew, which is so, so beautiful in terms of its inspiration.

But I know that many people quote the Gospel of Matthew many times. But they always just quote the first part where they talk about when I was hungry. In the Gospel of Matthew, most people know when a person comes before the Lord, he says: We have a place for you in Heaven, for when I was hungry, you fed me, when I was thirsty, you gave me a drink, when I was naked, you clothed me, when I was in prison, you visited me. That whole list of corporal works of mercy.

And then the person says: When did I do this, Lord, I didn't see you? And then the Lord says: When you did this for the least of my brethren, you did it for me.

Okay, I am just going to read it right from the Bible here. So that was the

first part. But the very first part of it is:

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on His right, the goats on His left.

“Then the King will say to those on His right”—the King being the Lord, the Son of Man—“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the Kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Then the righteous will answer Him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?” The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

This is the part that I really find challenging and we should all pay attention to.

“Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ They will also answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

So it is not just what we do to take the opportunity to help and feed and clothe, it is what we do not do that the judgment was made about. Opportunities missed.

As I said earlier, to minister to the needs of God’s creation—and we are all God’s creation—is an act of worship. To ignore those needs is to dishonor the God who made us. Very clear in the Gospel of Matthew.

As people of faith, as we all profess to be, and we believe—I mean, a faith is a gift, but we do believe that we are all God’s children—whatever we are, we are all, whatever it is. We are all God’s children, we are all created in the image and likeness of God, we all carry a spark of divinity. When Christ came down from Heaven to participate in our

humanity, He enabled us to participate in His divinity, that spark. So we respect it in people, but we have to also recognize it in ourselves and the responsibility it carries with us.

So I choose to go back to a place where we had a much better reception all over Washington, D.C., for loving the DREAMers and wanting to get the job done for them. Because in addressing their needs, we are talking about who we are as a nation.

I have another statement from BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN. It was her birthday yesterday, so she will have about two or three statements today. She talks about the Velez sisters from Burlington, New Jersey.

The Velez sisters came to the United States at 4 and 9 years old, respectively, with their father fleeing the Chavez regime in Venezuela.

Daniela has earned two associates’ degrees in engineering and business administration from Rowan College in New Jersey. She is now pursuing an undergraduate degree in business administration at Rutgers Business School while she works full time for the New Jersey Business and Industry Association.

Daniela also cofounded a business that sells take-home kits for physics labs in Rowan College.

How many of us could do that?

The kits allow students who can’t attend college lab courses to take an on-line version at home.

Alex is awaiting word this spring on college acceptance at Camden County College, with her dreams to be a vet-tech. But without valid DACA status, Alex won’t be able to legally drive, attend the vet-tech program, or work. Alex said in an article with CNN: “In all honesty, it is scary to think about leaving,” she said. “My mom cried for the first time since we talked about our situation. She’s a positive person and is hoping that something good will happen for us.”

□ 1715

Unfortunately, if the President doesn’t extend DACA protections, they said they will be forced to leave. Daniela recently told CNN: “If DACA ends, I will leave with Alex. I will close my business, leave work and school.”

That is why we have to pass a bill, and that is why I would hope that the Speaker of the House would honor the House he is Speaker of by giving us a chance to vote on a DREAMer bill, a bipartisan DREAMer bill on the floor of the House.

CAROLYN MALONEY is with us. I thank her for this testimony. It is about Diego de la Vega. Diego is a DREAMer who is an intern in Congresswoman MALONEY’s office and was the Congresswoman’s guest at the State of the Union. Here is his story.

“Our family history traces generations of Ecuadorians since the early decades of the republic. Immigration was not common for us, and my parents and grandparents endured great

periods of political instability and bleak futures. In 1999, at the age of 6, following an economic crash, hyperinflation, and a coup d’etat, my mother began making plans to move to the United States.

“By August 2001, I arrived in New York City, and we settled in Queens. I was quickly enrolled in public school. I learned English within a year, and I blended in with the rest of the children. But I was always aware of my status, and I quickly learned how long and how extremely difficult any real immigration reform in Congress would be. By 2011, at 17 and after another fresh defeat of the DREAM Act, I faced the devastating feeling of being denied the opportunity of accepting scholarships and student loans that effectively denied my shot at the colleges of my choice. Yet I continued, attended Hunter College where all I wanted to do was study government and politics.

“Shortly afterwards, President Obama’s announcement of DACA was almost miraculous. I thought I could finally step out of the shadows, no longer with fear but with excitement. I then entered the workforce immediately and found myself employment in one of the leader wine retailers in the country, where I still work today. I also entered an internship with the district office of Congresswoman Maloney, which further cemented my belief that good government is one that helps people. The high cost of living in New York and the strains of paying tuition out-of-pocket still brought great challenges, but with DACA I felt that anything was possible.

“Now that DACA is on its last breaths, I have no doubt that the courage and hope it has given us will carry us on until we all take our oath of allegiance.”

So beautiful. Thank you, Diego de la Vega.

From Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE, another proud Brooklyn Representative. She was here before, but I thank Congresswoman CLARKE.

Joel Perez Hernandez is a New York public school graduate and proud New Yorker whose parents brought him to Brooklyn as a young child. In September 2015, his Deferred Action was expiring. He set an appointment to renew his status and was beginning to save his money to pay for the associated fees.

Around this time, a small family emergency arose among his mother and her family in Mexico. With a fatal misunderstanding of the protections afforded by DACA, he and his family decided he was in the best position to travel to Mexico and still be allowed to return to the United States.

Unfortunately, he and his family did not have a strong understanding of how our immigration system currently works. As a result, 2 years after the Senate voted to protect DREAMers, Joel is now stuck in Mexico, a country that he does not know, with his girlfriend and life partner, Ambien, an American citizen.

Joel had no intention to break our immigration laws and would never have been in this position if this body had simply done its job back in 2013. Joel's story illustrates the cost of our decisions and reminds us why we must take action now to protect DREAMers.

This is not an unusual thing where there are family emergencies or a death in the family across the border or something and people don't fully understand that just going for that just destroys—under current law, makes it very hard for them to come back.

This is from Representative CÁRDENAS, who was with us earlier. I thank him for being with us earlier. This is a letter to him from a graduate student:

"I am a current graduate student at the University of Southern California School of Social Work. As part of my curriculum, I am taking a class on policy and advocacy where I am doing a project on a piece of legislation. My focus for this project is on immigration, particularly on the newly introduced bill known as the BRIDGE Act, which will expand DACA for 3 years.

"As an undocumented student, I am worried about my future here in the United States. I came to the United States at age 9, in 2001. I graduated with a B.A."—bachelor of arts—"in sociology, with a minor in Women's Studies from Cal State Northridge in 2015. Thanks to DACA, I have been able to achieve my dreams of obtaining higher education as well as to be able to work here legally."

That is so important, to get an education, to work legally to serve in the military.

"Having lived and attended public school all my life here, I don't know any other country I can call home.

"I had a very supportive system during my high school years. I graduated from San Fernando High School with honors. I volunteered. I served in the community, student body, and to this day, I am working for the betterment of my community working for the Los Angeles Family Housing.

"Now that Donald Trump is President, I am concerned about my future and that of my community. I want for others to have the same opportunities that I have had so far.

"I hope that you can allocate some of your time for me to talk to you about the importance of this bill and why it matters, not only to me, but to the entire community.

"Alejandro Castro, Master's of Social Work Candidate."

And this is from GRACE NAPOLITANO. Are you still with us? Thank you, GRACE.

I see we have been joined by ALBIO SIREs from New Jersey. We have had many DREAMers from New Jersey's testimony.

And DONALD PAYNE, I read your testimony earlier, DONALD. Thank you for being with us.

Congresswoman, I have been referring to you as the godmother of all of

this all day. Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD.

I acknowledged Congressman GARAMENDI who was here before and came back again, thank you.

Mr. GREEN, I acknowledged him before when he was here, thank you.

They are coming and going.

Congresswoman NAPOLITANO of California's constituents have said this: Diego Garcia Ramirez, 31-year old man from El Monte, provider for his wife and three kids. He just had DACA approved at the end of July and considers the opportunity of DACA a blessing from God. He has been able to provide a stable living for his family. He was brought to the U.S. at age 3.

A real statement of it can work.

Cynthia Lopez Lopez, 26-year-old woman from El Monte also, waiting for her work authorization document to renew and fears she would lose her job at Wells Fargo. She is the caregiver for her mom, who is awaiting a lung transplant. She is the only source of income and pays for rent, medical bills, and essentials.

Imagine that, to have all of that challenged. But it is, again, it is the strength, the commitment to family that all of these people have that strengthens America, and that is what argues for family unification in our immigration policy. That is a subject for another day. For today, we are talking about the DREAMers.

Again, from MIKE THOMPSON, whom I acknowledged earlier, he has another testimony, MIKE THOMPSON of California.

Denia Candela was born in Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico. Today she lives in Sonoma Valley, California, and is his constituent. Denia is a 2011 alumni of 10,000 Degrees, an organization that serves low-income and first-generation students.

10,000 Degrees, that means degrees from college, not temperature.

She graduated from Sonoma State University in 2016 with a B.A. in applied statistics and a concentration in the actuarial field.

She is currently involved in several different organizations and serves as a board member of the Sonoma Valley Education Foundation in the Sonoma Valley Unified School District. She is also involved as a commissioner for Sonoma County Regional Parks.

Her current position as the enrollment and outreach manager for a non-profit has allowed her to serve families who need early education services through State-funded preschools. Denia is now in her second year as a board member for Los Cien Sonoma County. Above everything else, she is a mother to a wonderful 7-year-old.

She received DACA in 2012. DACA opened doors for her, allowing her to provide for her son and give back to the community that has seen her grow. Denia is a DREAMer.

Thank you for dreaming, and thank you for inspiring us to dream as well.

TED LIEU, testimony from TED LIEU's district, who was with us until a few minutes ago.

Josefina is an undocumented Californian who is originally from Colima, Mexico. Her testimony has been presented by Representative TED LIEU from California.

Josefina migrated to the United States when she was 3 years old. Well, her family immigrated to the United States when she was 3 years old, and she was with them. Although she became aware of her immigration at an early age, her status had never defined her. She had transformed uncertainty into determination.

When she graduated high school, she became hyperaware of the financial constraints faced by immigrant youth. Josefina was able to afford her undergraduate education at UCLA by working multiple jobs and by applying to many scholarships. She would commute 2 hours every day, each way, to UCLA on a daily basis because she could not afford to dorm.

Her main motivation is her mother, who is also an immigrant. Her persistent determination to provide for her family convinces Josefina of her ability to surmount the barriers she faces as an undocumented student.

Today, she is earning her Ph.D. at UCLA.

Her Ph.D. at UCLA.

Her research interests include the health and aging of the undocumented population. Her scholarly work has been supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Institute for Humane Studies. She believes research is a way to rewrite the narratives of the undocumented community in the United States: Undocumented people are the backbone of U.S. society, she writes, yet we are dehumanized, tokenized, and invisibilized.

That is a good word.

This prompts the need for a solution to immigration, which is long overdue.

You are so right, Josefina.

MARK DESAULNIER, whom I acknowledged earlier, is here with us. MARK is there. I thank MARK.

This is from Marco of Contra Costa County, represented by Congressman MARK DESAULNIER. He is with us and has been with us for a long time today. It is from Marco, who says:

"Thanks to DACA, I have been able to give back to the community in more profound ways. Because I was granted employment authorization, I was able to work for 2 years as a case manager in reentry services. I helped members of my community find their way back into society after being in prison. I assisted them in managing their sobriety and finding stable employment and housing."

God bless you, Marco.

"Currently, I am working in a non-profit that provides free psychosocial services to cancer patients. My only dream in life is to be able to give back to my community, to help make them safer. I am also working on my master's in counseling and am on a licensure track as a marriage and family therapist.

“I plan to use my license to continue working with the chemically dependent and criminal populations. I want to help make our communities safer. DACA allows me to continue working on my dream.”

That is beautiful, Marco. Remember what the Lord said in the Gospel of Matthew: When I was in prison, you visited me.

Thank you for doing that.

□ 1730

Elias Rosenfeld, Boston, Massachusetts. I met Elias at the Faith Leaders Event. I had the privilege to meet Elias this month, when he came to the Capitol with DREAMers and faith leaders so he could share his story.

Born in Venezuela, Elias came to the United States as a young child. Shortly after his mother passed away, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services filed a letter notifying him that he was now an undocumented individual, unable to receive healthcare, work and provide for his family, or obtain a driver's license to commute to and from school. Elias, however, fought to find a solution. He founded United Student Immigrants, USI, a student-led community-based organization that helped over 300 undocumented students be able to afford a college education.

Elias has also partnered with the Florida High School Young Democrats and The Children's Trust, and lobbied over 200 State legislators in support of State-sponsored immigrant child healthcare, which resulted in the passing of the Senate and House bills protecting healthcare for over 22,000 children in Florida. Elias has spearheaded student demonstrations at over 20 State and Federal congressional offices in support of the Dream Act.

He received a 6-year full-merit scholarship to Brandeis University under the TYP social justice scholarship program.

Recently, Elias worked in campaigns in Florida and New Hampshire as a campaign fellow and intern for the immigration department for Senator ELIZABETH WARREN.

He also shared with us his religious beliefs that day. He made a very, very impressive presentation.

Thank you, Elias.

I had the privilege to meet Andrea Ortiz this month, when she came to the Capitol to share her story with Members, faith leaders, and the American people. Andrea Carolina Ortiz Duran is a God-driven, passionate, creative leader.

Born in Leon, Mexico, Andrea migrated to the United States at the age of 6 with her parents and four siblings. She was able to successfully apply for the DACA program.

Having successfully navigated the education system as a first-generation undocumented student, she became a role model for her siblings and community members.

She graduated with honors in business administration from the Cali-

fornia State Polytechnic University, Pomona, with a focus in management, human resources, and entrepreneurship. Andrea seeks to use her experience, education, and skills to support in uplifting Latino/Hispanic communities and underrepresented students. Faith and family, together, is what drives Andrea to keep pushing forward in life.

Again, from some other Members, from ALMA ADAMS, who was with us earlier, from North Carolina. She tells the story of Brenda Montanez.

Brenda Montanez was born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, and came to Charlotte, North Carolina, as a child with her parents. Brenda always knew she wanted to attend college, and because of DACA, she was able to. At 18, Brenda enrolled at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, where she is a student leader.

She is a founding member of the Latinos Aiming for Achievement, LAFA, a group founded to give Latino students on campus a voice in the community and a place to meet and discuss issues impacting them. To date, there are 32 members of the organization.

Brenda is one of many students nationwide who has been able to achieve her goals of earning a secondary degree thanks to DACA.

Thank you, ALMA ADAMS, for submitting Brenda's story.

This is from Representative JARED HUFFMAN from California: Alex DeLeon is a talented young woman who interned in Representative HUFFMAN's office. He recently invited her to speak at a townhall on the future of DACA, and here is what she said:

“I'm smart. I'm resilient. I'm hard-working. I'm a DREAMer. I'm going to make something out of myself one day, but only if programs like DACA live on. And I'm not the only one: your classmate is a DREAMer, your lawyer is a DREAMer, and your boss is a DREAMer. We're worth protecting and we're here to stay. That's why I'm getting out there and urging Congress to save the DACA program to allow nearly 800,000 young Americans, like me, to keep working towards their aspirations and contributing to the only country that they call home.”

I have had the occasion to have a conversation with Alex DeLeon. She is a remarkable young woman in doing so much in the community to give back. I am so glad that JARED HUFFMAN has called her testimony to our attention.

PETER WELCH from Vermont and RICK LARSEN from the State of Washington are here.

Congressman WELCH calls to our attention the story about a DREAMer that he knows, and it is a letter from Juan Conde. I will preface this by saying Juan Conde, bachelor's of science, master's of science, Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology, current medical student at the University of Vermont, all of that.

I am telling you, this rug is killing me. Standing up is nothing, being hun-

gry is nothing, being thirsty is nothing. It is the rug that is getting to me.

Juan Conde writes: “Dear Congressman Welch, I am writing to tell you my story about DACA in the hope that you and your colleagues will come up with a legislative solution to this issue. I am one of the ‘DREAMer kids.’ I have lived most of my life in the U.S. and consider it my home.

“Throughout my life, I have been driven to understand cancer and have dedicated my studies to obtain the training needed to help cancer patients. My mother passed away from cancer, and this tragedy made me realize that I wanted to dedicate my life to fighting this disease. This is why I spent a decade of my life in research, first in apoptosis during my M.S., and then DNA repair of tobacco and smoke carcinogenesis for my doctorate studies.

“I chose science because, at the time, it was impossible for undocumented students to attend medical school, and I wanted to have an impact on a disease that had affected my family. It was difficult to obtain my degree as an undocumented student, but I persisted because I believed in the promise of the American Dream.

“When DACA was announced, it transformed my life. Suddenly I could be paid for the research I was doing. I could drive, I could be free from the fear of deportation, knowing that all my hard work and dedication would not be meaningless, and that the idea of America and her promise were alive and strong. It also meant that medical schools, including my current school, UVM's Larner College of Medicine, changed their policies and gave DACA students a chance to enroll.

“I understand that legislation takes time, but if there is anything you can do to help DACA students, including a discharge petition, please do so. If you do, you will have the gratitude of a group of dedicated individuals who wish nothing more than to give back to the only country they have ever known.”

Okay. So now this one says: Today, the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus wrote to Speaker PAUL RYAN to request a “Queen of the Hill” rule to govern debate on competing DACA and border security proposals to establish the official position of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Last week, the 48-member Problem Solvers Caucus announced a bipartisan set of principles that lay the groundwork for a deal on DACA and border security.

The letter was led in the Problem Solvers Caucus by FRED UPTON, Republican from Michigan; and PETER WELCH.

The text of the letter can be found below and here:

“Dear Mr. Speaker, the President challenged us last fall to legislate the DACA program rather than relying on executive orders to determine its fate. The President has also asked us to address border security.

“DACA is an important issue in all of our States. And, as we know, the program’s original intent was to protect from deportation eligible children and young adults who were brought to this country through no fault of their own. We have learned through multiple reports that the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has moved to deport many who have been here for years, including some who are now married with children. Many have paid their taxes and have no serious criminal record. Many know no other way of life.

“There are a number of worthy Member proposals that should be properly debated and voted on by the House. Some are bipartisan and would end the uncertainty and distress that some 800,000 DACA recipients are enduring. Others would also address the issue of border security and broader immigration reform issues.

“Mr. Speaker, we seek your commitment that the House will address the uncertainty of the DACA-eligible population in a timely fashion, either separately or as part of a broader package, using an open and inclusive process that allows the House to work its will.

“Specifically, we seek your commitment that the House will debate and vote on all serious and substantive proposals, particularly those offered on a bipartisan basis, as well as any bill approved by the full Senate. A ‘Queen of the Hill’ rule should be employed that establishes the proposal receiving the most votes as the position of the House.

“We accept the responsibility to reach consensus on a legislative solution to DACA and are determined to resolve this issue. We believe immigration reform should be bipartisan and that only an open process allowing for the best ideas from both sides will demonstrate to the American people that we can find common ground.”

That was a letter from the Problem Solvers Caucus, led by Representative FRED UPTON, Republican from Michigan; and PETER WELCH, Democrat from Vermont.

This is very important because we are talking about Queen of the Hill. As you know, my colleagues, there are several options to come to the floor. One is Queen of the Hill; one is King of the Hill.

Queen of the Hill means the bill that gets the most votes is the bill that prevails. It would go to conference with the Senate; or if it is the Senate bill, would go to the President’s desk.

King of the Hill, which we are not advocating, is the one that wins last.

We want the one that gets the most votes, the one that wins the most votes. This time, the queen should prevail.

I appreciate the letter from FRED UPTON and PETER WELCH because it talks about some very important things: a bipartisan, open process.

That brings people together: bipartisanship, transparency, unity. I thank the caucus for this.

Okay. We have another story from Houston, from SHEILA JACKSON LEE. Andrea Ramos Fernandez is a local San Antonio DREAMer, who adores San Antonio, as any true San Antonian would. In 2005, Andrea was 8 years old when she moved to the United States.

She was too young to realize the spring break vacation her mother had planned was a permanent move—that that vacation was a permanent move. This move was influenced by economic instability, paired with her father’s stabbing in a taxi cab in Mexico City.

Once Andrea and her mother made it to the U.S., Andrea’s grandparents, who are U.S. citizens, began the process to legalize Andrea’s mother.

What Andrea’s grandparents didn’t realize was that the broken immigration system made it difficult to grant Andrea’s mother a green card, that immigration process being over 23 years, leaving Andrea out of the possibility to adjust her status.

“Chain migration”—we call it family unification—has been a broken issue within the government, and in this case, Andrea’s grandparents could do nothing to change her status. That is why we want to improve it.

So Andrea grew up undocumented. She grew up pledging allegiance to the American flag, watching American cartoons on Saturday mornings, and getting good grades. Andrea’s academic performance was so great that her first academic award was the President’s Award, which was signed by then-President Obama. Andrea continued her education with academic excellence, achieving high marks, eventually graduating Churchill High School with honors.

Her grades then led her to get a full ride at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, where she pursued a career in healthcare for 2 years. Eventually, Andrea decided to transfer to the University of Texas in San Antonio, where she is now currently studying public policy while being a student leader on her campus.

Andrea has been involved in various projects around the city of San Antonio, working as the lead immigration fellow for MOVE San Antonio. She has also pushed for educational initiatives on her campus, leading to the creation of the first onsite DREAMer Center on a college campus in Texas.

Because of her leadership, Andrea has been given the opportunity to visit D.C. to lobby for the Dream Act and is now asking the Congress and Senate to act on bipartisan legislation. Andrea graduates in December of 2018, 4 months after her DACA expires. While Andrea is worried about what that may mean to her, she worries more about her community, whom she sees as a community full of promise. Andrea is an American who adores and believes in the American promise.

Andrea cheered when the Spurs won their fourth championship in 2007, and once more in 2014.

Okay. That was then. This is now. Okay.

She also mourned with our country in some of our worst tragedies, as this country’s pain was also her own. Therefore, she asks to be given the opportunity to prove she is already an American.

How lovely. How lovely, Andrea. A little bit of my Golden State Warriors coming in there when she was talking about the Spurs, but anyway.

From Congresswoman ROYBAL-ALLARD, who is with us, the godmother of it all, we have this testimony from one of her student DREAMers: “I am a student of East Los Angeles College and part of your congressional district. I am very concerned about the initiative President Donald Trump took towards the DACA program. He gave Congress 6 months to find a solution. As of today, there has been no progress and many are losing the protection they had with DACA. I am asking to fight for a clean Dream Act for all. The immigrant community is a hard-working group of individuals that are in this country for a better life, meaning that they want to work, educate themselves, be in the Army, and have all the benefits this country provides to make it an even better place to live in.

“Sincerely, Luvia Navarrete, DACA recipient.”

To Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, this letter begins: “Hi, Mrs. Lucille. I am Ana Garay from District 40. I am a DACA student from East Los Angeles College and I wanted to tell you my concerns about the DACA problem that is going on right now. I wanted to tell you I am really scared of what could happen in the next months, because, as other students, I want to accomplish my dreams and be a proud Latina, as you are. I hope that we fight together for what we want for our future as a community, because we are known as the one that fights together.” Signed, Ms. Ana Garay.

In the previous letter that I was reading from, the one from San Antonio, she talks about how many years it would take for the grandparents to help the daughter to become legal and to get a green card. The other day, there was an article in the paper, a big, long article, about how backed up the green card applications are; years, years. So even the people who want to be doing things on schedule, many people are here not because they came illegally, but because the process took so long that their opportunity expired.

□ 1745

This is from Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO, who has joined us. Thank you, Congresswoman DELAURO.

“Dear Representative DeLauro: I was honored to intern in your Washington office and learn more about the government of the United States and, more specifically, responding to constituents’ concerns.

“Walking through the long tunnels that connect the congressional buildings to the Capitol, I began to envision

myself working in the District of Columbia upon graduation. But like for many people, the election results have forced me to take a different path.

“After the Presidential election, all the stability that had allowed my family and me to become part of the American life was turned into fear and doubt about our future.

“Not only has the President-elect vowed to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, but he also promised to remove the DACA program. For this reason, I had to return to New Haven and assist my family as we figure out which decisions are best to take moving forward. Thus, I am sorry to inform you I will no longer be able to continue my internship in your Washington, D.C., office.

“I want to express that, while I am in constant fear questioning whether I’ll be able to complete my undergraduate degree, or if my U.S.-citizen sister will be separated from us, I am not giving in.

“My best memory working in your office was running into an old employer who came to the office for a Capitol tour. Reflecting on the aspirations I had working as a busser to get myself through high school, I remember your persona always providing me with hope.

“That hope has grown exponentially as I reminisce on the times you walked into the office and greeted all your interns with such gratitude and enthusiasm.

“With infinite gratitude.”

Thank you, Congresswoman DE LAURO, for submitting this testimony to us and recognizing the difficult decisions that families have to make in the interest of families staying together. Thank you.

NIKI TSONGAS of Massachusetts has joined us. Thank you. Congresswoman GWEN MOORE of Wisconsin has joined us as well. Congresswoman FREDERICA WILSON of Florida has joined us as well. Thank you, Congresswoman WILSON, for joining us.

Again, this is from Representative WATSON COLEMAN: Another constituent, Diana Diaz, who is 22 years old. She came to the United States from Mexico with her mother and two older siblings in 2002 when Diana was 7 years old. They settled in Somerset, New Jersey, where her mother worked long hours to ensure that her children could focus all their attention on school.

Diana graduated from high school in New Brunswick, New Jersey. While still in high school, Diana herself worked a full-time job to help support her family. After high school, she attended Middlesex County Community College, where she got her associate’s degree in education. She then continued her higher education and transferred to Rutgers-Newark in the fall of 2016. There she majors in public administration and minors in Spanish.

Diana has aspirations to continue her education and enroll in a master’s pro-

gram to become a certified legal interpreter. Wow. That is hard.

She hopes to head back to New Brunswick and work in the public school system as an administrator to help students just like her. She also wants to create a nonprofit organization to assist various ethnic groups with gaining access to higher education.

Diana truly believes that the education she received in New Jersey was so valuable to her overall success, and she wants to give back so that others can follow suit.

I just want to dwell on this for a moment because she is talking about education being invaluable to her success, and she wants to give back so that others can follow suit. I hope that the Italian-American, Irish-American, German-American, Dutch-American, all of the ethnic groups that are here in our country take full pride in the example they have set for how the American Dream works in America, because what you see with these DREAMers just follows so closely with what our families did, our ancestors did coming here.

The idea that education was key to upward mobility and to reaching personal aspirations, that faith and family and a work ethic were an important part of how you were regarded in America—and this may be what is in their DNA as they come to the United States, but it is clear they had masterful, great examples to show how to achieve the American Dream in all of the waves of immigration that came before.

Family, faith, community, education, patriotism, love of America. So beautiful. And Diana spells it out so clearly here.

Another one from Representative JAYAPAL of Washington State. We heard from her earlier. She was with us earlier, Representative JAYAPAL. She is on the Judiciary Committee, a leader on immigration. She is an immigrant herself.

Twenty-two-year-old Esther was a hardworking and valued intern in Representative JAYAPAL’s office last year. She is also a DREAMer who came to the United States with her parents and younger sister when she was just 3 years old from South Korea. When they arrived on a visa, Esther’s parents sought help from an immigration lawyer to obtain more permanent legal status in the United States. They filled out applications, paid their dues, and gave the lawyer most of the money they had. And he ran away with all of it. He scammed them and left them with nothing.

Esther’s parents’ visas expired. They had little money. They pushed their kids around in shopping carts because a stroller was too expensive. Then they started over. They built their lives in the United States. They raised a smart, passionate daughter who is now a senior at Harvard.

The DACA status Esther obtained in 2013 helped to give her the freedom to

pursue her own American Dream. Even when Esther’s DACA status was secure, she said that typical safe spaces like hospitals, police stations, and doctor’s offices filled her with fear because DACA doesn’t afford protections to her family. She also hides her status and worries what would happen if someone she trusted outed them to immigration authorities.

Unless we take immediate action to help DREAMers, Esther’s future is even more uncertain. Thank you, Esther, for sharing your story with us. Thank you, Congresswoman JAYAPAL, for sharing it.

We have been joined by CEDRIC RICHMOND, the distinguished chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. Earlier I read statistics from the caucus about how many people were DREAMers from the Caribbean, from Nigeria, et cetera. We read some testimony that was from our press conference by the DREAMer sent by KAMALA HARRIS from Belize and coming from the African-American community now. Thank you for coming, Congressman RICHMOND.

Now we have one from David Vasquez, a DREAMer I have met. David was born in Germany and moved to the United States at age 13. He grew up in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and graduated at the top of his high school class. He earned a full-ride scholarship to Bowdoin College through QuestBridge, an organization that links low-income students with top colleges in the U.S.

David graduated from Bowdoin with a double major in economics and German and was able to spend two summers interning at Goldman Sachs. He later joined AlphaSights, a high-growth startup. At AlphaSights, David established the firm’s San Francisco office and grew it from 8 to 25 employees.

That is an important point because many of these DREAMers have started businesses, created jobs; by creating small businesses and being entrepreneurs, small and larger jobs. That is really an important part of our economy.

Jesper Kim from Fotorama: Jesper is a South Korean-born immigrant brought to the United States when he was 2 years old. He received his associate’s degree and is pursuing a degree in computer science while working at his high school’s photography studio. He continues to volunteer at his church and in his high school’s Key Club.

Evelyn Valdez-Ward from Irvine, California: Graduate student, University of California, Irvine. A first-generation, female, Hispanic, undocumented scientist, Evelyn constantly seeks to dismantle economic, racial, and cultural barriers. She is part of the 1 percent of 800,000 DACA students pursuing postgraduate education.

In addition to studying climate change’s impact on planet productivity and drought tolerance, she is a strong and loud advocate for her undocumented community. I would say “vocal.”

Evelyn received her B.S. in biology from the University of Houston-Downtown in 2016. As an undergraduate, she spent 3 years on a variety of research projects that sparked her passion for ecology. In 2013, she helped to create a planet-water transport model using chaparral shrubs to test drought tolerance in collaboration with Drs. Michael Tobin, Brandon Pratt, and Anna Jacobson of California State University, Bakersfield. This is very important research.

In 2014 and 2015, she worked under the direction of Drs. Scott Mangan, Michael Tobin, and Claudia Stein at Washington University in St. Louis, Tyson Research Center, where she studied phylogenetic relationships and the effects of drought in prairie grasslands.

As a second-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of California, Irvine and Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, she is currently studying the effects of climate change on the interaction between plants and their soil microbes.

She is dedicated to combining her scientific training with mentoring of underrepresented minorities in STEM, especially within the community of undocumented students. Evelyn aims to inspire the next generation of scientists by pushing forward the mission to diversify STEM.

Thank you for that, Evelyn. Again, many of the great discoveries in America came from immigrants coming here. Many of the great academic minds in our country came from another country. But then, at the same time, America produced our own, and that is a pretty exciting combination.

Ana Cueva: Ana Cueva was a young Mexican immigrant who has called Utah and the United States home since 1998 when she was 5 years old. We have a number of DREAMers from Utah, so we thank them for speaking up.

From this young age, she was always taught the importance of education, hard work, and family. Beyond the values her parents instilled in her, her future was also shaped when a year after arriving to this country her mom became very ill. This experience gave her a desire to help others, and she began to forge a path on her journey to find her calling in nursing. In fact, nursing was solidified as her American Dream when she was just 9 years old.

To achieve this dream, she understood how important it was to honor her parents' decisions and dedicated herself to education and community. As a teenager, she quickly became a volunteer at her local hospital and later was elected president of the National Honor Society for her high school chapter. She attended an accelerated high school, earned her associate's degree in science at 17, and graduated in the top 10 percent of her senior class.

She continued her studies a year later with the help of DACA. Now she

prides herself in being able to say she achieved her professional dream of being a registered nurse, BSN, currently working in the shock therapy ICU at a Level I trauma center in Utah. She graduated with high honors from Utah Valley University in December 2016.

Thank you, Ana Cueva, for sharing your story with us.

Keyla Garcia Espino of Wyoming: Kayla Garcia Espino came to the United States when she was 5 years old from Mexico. In 2016 she earned her bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting from Ferris State University.

Keyla is the deputy treasurer for the city of East Grand Rapids and has been working for the city for almost 3 years. Her DACA expires in October of 2018. May I correct the RECORD. She is not from Wyoming—she is from Wyoming, Michigan. Is that a city in Michigan? Wyoming?

This is from COLLEEN HANABUSA, who has been with us for a large part of the day, this testimony. Am I not lucky to be able to become so familiar with so many of these beautiful DREAMers? We want to send these people back? This talent, this rich talent? This achievement, this determination, this faith in the future, this patriotism for America? I don't think so.

□ 1800

We have to make it happen. I have confidence.

Hi, my name is Sisilia Kaufusi. I am a DACA recipient. My parents came to the United States of America seeking the American Dream. I and my siblings came here when we were young. I was 4 when my mother and I came to the USofA. It was not until I was a senior in high school that I found out I had no legal status in this country of opportunities.

Today, I humbly ask that you issue legal resident status to those who have benefited from President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). President John F. Kennedy said: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." Over 700,000 people have benefited from this program. This program had opened the doors for not only myself, but other undocumented children. Thanks to DACA, they have obtained education, employment, and other leadership roles with their community.

Within their community so that they can do something for our country.

President-elect Trump said he will end this program or allow this program to expire. By doing so, he is slamming the door on the face of DACA recipients, which will undoubtedly damage communities and the economy across the country, and perhaps even across the world. DACA recipients feel a sense of danger, which is why I write this letter today. People that have benefited from DACA have no other objective in mind than to become positive members

of the U.S. community. Those with severe criminal backgrounds did not and do not qualify for DACA.

And this is a letter from Sisilia to Congresswoman COLLEEN HANABUSA:

With this in mind, I respectfully ask that you forgive DACA recipients and urge you to pass legislation which allows DACA recipients to become U.S. residents and protect the information they have turned to the Department of Homeland Security, in order to return peace of mind to these families immediately. It is only with your help that we continue working for a better America.

It is interesting, as we read these letters—I am sure my colleagues would agree—to see how many families hesitated to tell their children about their status. I can understand why they would not want to frighten them, but nonetheless, when they do find out, they are very shocked by it. We shouldn't have that kind of fear and shock in our country, especially for our children.

So while these parents took great risk, had great courage and determination to protect their children, unfortunately, we didn't have comprehensive immigration reform soon enough to have avoided some of those sad situations.

Congresswoman VELÁZQUEZ has another testimonial from a DREAMer. Yatziri Tovar is a young New Yorker and, yes, an American, who faces an uncertain future.

Yatziri Tovar came to the United States from Mexico at age 2. She is American in every way—except on paper. Last year, after a lot of hard work, Yatziri graduated from City College in New York. She achieved this goal while holding down a job at the same time she completed her studies. Because she is undocumented, Yatziri was not able to secure financial aid.

Now Yatziri is giving back by working with a community group that stands up for and empowers some of her most vulnerable neighbors, like other immigrants and low-income workers.

Yatziri is exactly the type of person we want contributing to our Nation. Yet, Congress is now contemplating turning its back on young DREAMers like Yatziri. This is shameful. For young, patriotic people like Yatziri and for hundreds of thousands of young Americans—yes, Americans—we need to pass a Dream Act now.

I appreciate this statement from Yatziri Tovar, but I hope that we can be more optimistic about the prospect of not turning our back, but on embracing our DREAMers by having a discussion, a debate on the floor of the House and passing legislation.

I hope the Speaker will give us in this House of Representatives the dignity that we deserve to be able to discuss matters of concern to our constituents on the floor of this House and have the House of Representatives work its will in order to address this issue.

The Senate has gotten that privilege—not privilege—it is really a given, by the leader in the Senate, Mr. MCCONNELL, in consultation with a bipartisan group of Members, we have bipartisan legislation, as has been said over and over. What we do should be bipartisan, should be done openly, and should unify people. That should be a rule of thumb for everything we do. It is especially necessary to do this soon.

Why? We ask the question: Why is the House cut out of this discussion? Why? We need that answer from the Speaker of the House. Why are we not given our constitutional opportunity to discuss this important issue?

Just a few more from Members.

Actually, I could stay here for the full 40 hours and do this, but I know that we have a vote to take, and the rest. So let us just conclude with Carlos Aguilar, same last name as our co-sponsors of the Hurd-Aguilar bill—no relation.

Carlos migrated to the United States from Irapuato, Mexico, at the age of 14 and currently lives in Kerrville, Texas. After graduating from high school, he received his B.A. in psychology from Schreiner University. Carlos has also earned an M.S. in sociology at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Currently, he is attending the Harvard Graduate School of Education where he is pursuing a doctoral degree.

Aware of the obstacles along undocumented students' road, Carlos has devoted his academic and professional endeavors to issues relating to unauthorized migration as well as providing support and guidance for this vulnerable population.

In addition to academic attention to these issues, Carlos has remained active in the immigrant community as the Immigrant Youth Leadership coordinator at UTSA—that is University of Texas at San Antonio—as an associate legal assistant in an immigrant law firm.

He has many accomplishments.

Moreover, together with other undocumented and DACA students, Carlos coordinated students' efforts at UTSA—University of Texas at San Antonio—in mobilizing to defend their rights as undocumented and DACA students. Through the creation of Immigrant Youth Leadership, they advocated and worked to improve the educational experience of this population.

I am just going to one more from California. I have to end on California.

Kimberly came to the United States from Mexico and currently resides in Los Angeles. She is the only person in her family without papers and, in spite of the challenge, has risen to the occasion as an advocate for DREAMers. She implemented a resolution supporting DREAMers at her local community college. She is involved in the advocacy community in Victorville and spent time as an intern in Congressman COOK's office—bipartisan.

She hopes to become a lawyer one day.

We have been joined by Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY. I thank the gentlewoman for being with us; Congresswoman KATHY CASTOR. I acknowledged the gentlewoman earlier. She was here before. And in back is Congresswoman CAROL SHEA-PORTER; Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY; Congressman STEVE COHEN is with us; Congressman JOHN DELANEY.

I am trying to recognize just the ones I hadn't acknowledged before: Congresswoman KATHERINE CLARK, Congresswoman JULIA BROWNLEY, Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER. I acknowledged Congresswoman SUZAN DELBENE, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Congressman BRAD SHERMAN—I read your testimony earlier as I did yours, ALMA—Congressman DAVID CICILLINE, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE—I read your testimony earlier as well.

All the others I think I have acknowledged. Yes, HANK JOHNSON from Georgia, Congressman HANK JOHNSON. I think we have acknowledged all of the Members who are here. Congresswoman GWEN MOORE, I acknowledged earlier when she was sitting over here. I will tell the gentlewoman who she was sitting next to. She was sitting next to Congresswoman NIKI TSONGAS at that time, but anyway, I acknowledge the gentlewoman again and thank her.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 8 hours, I have had the privilege of reading the testimony of so many DREAMers. I still have more, but I thank all of you. It is a privilege to read the eloquent statements of the DREAMers as they express their love of America, their commitment to a better future for our country and their own families' better future.

It was a double honor to do so with the recommendations of the testimony that you all extended, presented, and to have so many of you here in the course of the day, a real tribute to the respect that we have for our DREAMers.

So I accept your applause on behalf of them because it was their story, in their words—by and large—that I told, in addition to the Bible and the Catholic Conference of Bishops and Pope Francis and Pope Benedict and so many other religious groups that we have. But I thank all of you.

Our basic request is: honor the House of Representatives. Give us a chance to have a vote on the floor.

The Republican leader in the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL, has gone forward with the budget proposal with the promise that he will give that opportunity to the floor of the Senate. The Senate will work its will. We will see what they produce.

We will work our will here and see what we produce, but it must be bipartisan, transparent, and unifying. We think that there has been a lot of groundwork. In our case, the Hurd-Aguilar bill is one option. The Senate bill may be another option. There may be other options that are proposed. I

am just telling you about the bipartisan ones.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the staff of the House of Representatives and the various speakers at the House who have been up there with such courtesy—you smiled. You smiled. But most of all, let us thank and acknowledge the DREAMers for their courage, their optimism, and their inspiration to make America more American.

I thank my colleagues.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Allow me to just say that we continue on this most important legislation, H.R. 1153, and we have had the opportunity to yield time to Leader PELOSI, and while she certainly came in to oppose this bill that we have before us, having yielded 1 minute to the leader is the most profound 1 minute probably in the history of this institution, that 1 minute that ended up 8 hours where Leader PELOSI talked about the plight of DACA and the DREAMers.

And I am very proud that in yielding that 1 minute we had the opportunity to listen to Leader PELOSI deal with an issue and demand that we have an opportunity to have a real debate and a real discussion in the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that we had that opportunity, and now let me just say, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, American consumers are under attack by the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress every day. We learn about either another effort to weaken guardrails, protecting consumers from predatory actors, or another Trump appointee refusing to hold bad actors accountable.

Trump supporters at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Securities and Exchange Commission have basically stopped enforcing our Nation's consumer and security laws.

□ 1815

Mr. Speaker, as you know, there is a lot of excitement here because of what took place in the last 8 hours, so I don't feel interrupted at all. I just feel very, very pleased that we had the opportunity to have that speech by our leader.

However, I will just continue. Let me just get to the fact that, again, Mick Mulvaney, whom Trump unlawfully appointed as Acting Director of the Consumer Bureau, is gutting the Consumer Bureau's Office of Fair Lending Equal Opportunity limiting the Consumer Bureau's ability to stop bad actors from discriminating against communities of color.

News reports also suggest that Mulvaney has slowed down the Consumer Bureau's investigation of Wells Fargo, the ultimate example of a recidivist megabank. Wells Fargo has publicly admitted to ripping off millions of Americans with fraudulent checking accounts, credit cards, forced-placed auto insurance, and much, much more.

But the Trump administration has a partner in its efforts to undermine consumer protections. House Republicans have been in lockstep with the President when it comes to rolling back consumer protections. Take the Consumer Bureau's rule on forced arbitration: Wall Street lobbied hard against this rule, and instead of putting consumers first, House Republicans passed a Congressional Review Act resolution to repeal a rule that would have helped consumers who have been wronged by the big banks to join together to hold them accountable.

But that is just one example of how House Republicans have tried to undermine consumer laws. For years now, they have tried to cut the funding of the Consumer Bureau or to change its structure, and having failed in those attempts, they now have their inside man, Mick Mulvaney, who is working to destroy the Bureau from within. We shouldn't be surprised since the chairman of the Financial Services Committee has said he wants to "financially terminate" the Consumer Bureau.

The bill before us today should be viewed as one part of this long line of attempts by my colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle to undermine the fundamental consumer protection. Home buyers should not be gouged or swindled just because they want to own a home. H.R. 1153 would legitimize predatory kickbacks through affiliated firms. Megabanks, including bad actors like Wells Fargo, and other lenders would be incentivized to steer their borrowers into more costly products simply because they can.

H.R. 1153 is a bad bill that will only line the pockets of Wall Street with the hard-earned savings of Main Street. But don't just take my word for it. Civil rights groups and consumer advocates all agree that this is bad for America.

So, despite all of the excitement that we have had here on the floor today with Leader PELOSI and the message that she brought to this Congress, I want all of our Members to simply reject President Trump's and House Republicans' attack on consumers. Vote "no" on H.R. 1153 and support Leader PELOSI in calling for a debate in this House on the issue dealing with DACA and the DREAMers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BERGMAN). The gentleman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we could not be more highly honored that the minority leader would take such an interest in H.R. 1533, the Mortgage Choice Act.

I am reminded that there are Members who come to this great Chamber to make speeches, and there are those who come to make laws. When it comes to speeches, I would note that the Gettysburg Address came in at 2 minutes,

and Americans may think it had greater eloquence.

I would note that as the minority leader quoted the Bible frequently throughout her speech, it reminds me of Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord."

Yet President Trump stood right there in the State of the Union Address with his hand out with an olive branch extending an open hand to work with Members of both parties on an immigration reform package. He offered a fair compromise. He offered a fair compromise, and, instead, the minority leader slapped his hand and called it insulting, Mr. Speaker. She called it lame. She called it dangerous.

This is not someone who has come to this Chamber, the people's House, in order to make law. The President didn't offer legalization. He offered a pathway to citizenship. He didn't offer this for 700,000. He offered it for 1.8 million. He said:

Let's secure our borders, and let's make sure that immigrants who come to this country come legally and come with their sleeves rolled up coming to work and build America.

There are those who want to solve a problem, and there are those who want to exacerbate a problem for the election.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, hard-working Americans need the opportunity to get mortgages to buy their part of the American Dream. Everything that the ranking member said, she ought to share it with her own Democrats because half of them on our committee support H.R. 1533 which is good for America and good for prospective home buyers.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all House Members to adopt it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 725, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1835

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BERGMAN) at 6 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 4 of rule XVI, I move that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow for morning-hour debate and 10 a.m. for legislative business.

The motion was agreed to.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3851, if ordered;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1997, if ordered; and

Agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

WAR CRIMES REWARDS EXPANSION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 3851) to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to provide for rewards for the arrest or conviction of certain foreign nationals who have committed genocide or war crimes, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 407, nays 0, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 61]

YEAS—407

Abraham	Bacon	Beyer
Adams	Banks (IN)	Biggs
Aderholt	Barletta	Bilirakis
Aguilar	Barr	Bishop (GA)
Allen	Barton	Bishop (MI)
Amash	Bass	Bishop (UT)
Amodei	Beatty	Black
Arrington	Bera	Blackburn
Babin	Bergman	Blum