

Senator Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Office
Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Scott Tipton
218 Cannon House Office
Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Mike
Coffman
Rayburn House Office
Building, Room 2443
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Cory Gardner
354 Russell Senate Office
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Washington, D.C. 20510

Congressman Ken Buck
1130 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Ed
Perlmutter
1410 Longworth House
Office Building
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Congresswoman Diana
DeGette
2111 Rayburn House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Doug
Lamborn
2402 Rayburn House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Jared Polis
1727 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

October 4, 2017

Dear members of the Colorado Congressional delegation:

The undersigned organizations in Colorado are writing to express our strong support for the immediate passage of the bipartisan and a clean [Dream Act of 2017](#) (S.1615/H.R. 3440), which would provide lawful status and a clear path to citizenship to certain immigrant youth and young adults who came to the United States as children, including recipients of the [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#) (DACA) program. We also want to be clear that supporting a clean Dream Act does **not** mean we support any compromises that threaten the remaining immigrants without documentation population that is being discussed currently. As organizations concerned with the emotional, psychological, physical, educational, and economic wellbeing of Coloradans, we are united in our commitment to ensuring that all children in the United States as well as in Colorado have opportunities for educational and economic success. We also are united in our concern for the remaining immigrant population that live and work in Colorado and are an essential part of our state's cultural and economic fabric.

Swift Congressional action on the Dream Act is imperative following President Trump's decision to terminate DACA, an action that will uproot the lives of more than [800,000](#) Dreamers in the country, and roughly 17,000 in Colorado, who have been able to access work authorization and protection from deportation through the program. DACA has proven to be smart policy—not only for DACA recipients but also for their families and communities. A large [survey](#) of DACA recipients found that 45 percent of DACA youth are enrolled in school and more than 90 percent are employed.

The decision to end DACA already has had negative consequences for children and youth across the United States. It immediately caused upheaval for almost a million young immigrants, who are once again worried about their safety and security in the only country they call home. Dreamers had [reported](#) that receiving DACA gave them hope for the future, instilled a greater sense of belonging and value, and reduced their fear of authorities. Being forced back into the shadows will significantly [undermine their mental health](#) and well-being. Furthermore, Dreamers are forced to worry about how they will continue to support their families and fund their education without the ability to work. Additionally, over 40% of [accredited medical schools](#)

currently accept students with DACA status, but may not be able to going forward; this could have long-lasting effects on our health care workforce.

Ending the program also undercuts the well-being of families who depend on DACA recipients, including U.S. citizen children. Roughly a quarter of DACA recipients are parents to U.S. citizen children. Decades of developmental research tells us that children markedly benefit when their parents are mentally and physically healthy and have access to higher education and quality jobs. Moreover, an emerging body of research exposes the developmental harm that children experience when parents lack [status](#). In addition to the negative effects of financial hardship during childhood, children experience tremendous [fear and stress](#) at the prospect of being separated from their parents.

Finally, the termination of DACA dashes the hopes of approximately [200,000 little Dreamers](#) who have been waiting to turn 15 to meet the program's age requirements. Like citizen children, they have and will continue to spend the majority of their young lives learning and growing in our schools and communities. Without Congressional action, their dreams of becoming our nation's future lawyers, doctors, teachers, soldiers, scientists, and policymakers will be cut short.

As organizations dedicated to the health and well-being of Coloradans, we submit that the bipartisan Dream Act is common-sense legislation to provide a permanent solution for DACA recipients as well as other eligible immigrant youth. The bill reflects the diverse talents and passions of the Dreamer population, including those who are parents. Advancing educational and employment opportunities for millions of children and youth supports their wellbeing and future success as well as that of our country. **We urge members of Congress to act quickly and pass a clean Dream Act, without putting at risk remaining immigrants without documentation.**

Signed,

The following individuals and organizations

American Academy of Pediatrics – Colorado Chapter

ACLU Colorado

Center for Health Progress

Clinica Tepeyac

Colorado Center on Law and Policy

Colorado Children's Campaign

Colorado's Community Safety Net Clinics

Colorado Consumer Health Initiative

Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition

Colorado Fiscal Institute

Doctors Care

Dr. Jamaluddin Moloo, MD, MPH

Inner City Health Center

Kids First Health Care

Oral Health Colorado

Padres y Jovenes Unidos

Rocky Mountain Youth Clinics

Rose Community Foundation

Tri-County Health Network