

June 20, 2018

Dear Members of Congress,

We, the below signed organizations, write to express our grave concerns with Speaker Ryan's Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2018 and to urge all Members of Congress to vote against this bill. The Border Security and Immigration Reform Act, or Speaker Ryan's bill, slashes our family-based immigration system, guts our asylum laws, waives laws that protect communities within 100 miles of the borders and wastes \$23 billion taxpayer dollars to build a wall and militarize border communities. It does provide limited protections for DACA-eligible individuals, but these protections are less robust than even what the President has proposed and the bill harms immigrant youth and their families more than it actually protects them. Nothing in this bill prevents the U.S. government from taking children from their parents and in fact, this bill actually puts children in more danger by keeping them in jail for longer periods of time with fewer standards for their wellbeing. We call on all Members of Congress to reject this bill and adopt a truly bipartisan compromise that provides a permanent solution for Dreamers without harming immigrant families, like the Dream Act or other similar legislation.

Under Speaker Ryan's bill, Dreamers are at the mercy of an untested point system that creates a confusing, convoluted path to citizenship that could take more than 20 years. Some Dreamers who don't have enough "points" would never get a path to citizenship. Furthermore, the bill would hold Dreamers ransom to border money; if DHS uses the border money for other purposes, the path to citizenship for Dreamers will be eliminated. Tying the future of the youngest and newest Americans to \$23 billion dollars in border spending and a more than 30 percent increase in Border Patrol agents is wasteful spending and it's wrong, especially given recent reports of CBP abuses. Recently, Border Patrol agents killed 20-year-old Claudia Gómez González, a Guatemalan woman crossing the border, by shooting her in the head. We reject the massive increased funding to the agencies included in the bill--funding that will be used to continue to expand the cruel and un-American separation of families. We urge Members of Congress to adopt border security grounded in accountability, strict Congressional oversight and the needs of local communities and to cut funding for border militarization, detention, and deportations. We further urge all Members of Congress to reject any approach that uses Dreamers as bargaining chips to enact an anti-immigrant agenda.

This bill keeps families apart and blocks American citizens from reuniting with their married adult children and siblings abroad. U.S. citizen family members who

have been in line for over a decade would lose their place in line for a green card and be left with no alternative path to reunification. In addition, the bill terminates the Diversity Visa program, specifically targeting Black immigrants from African countries, which would make our immigration system less equitable and less diverse. We cannot stand for any compromises to our immigration system that refuse to value our families. Nothing in this bill prevents the Trump administration from taking children from their parents - despite claims to the contrary. The current mass separations are a matter of policy - not law - and this bill does not compel the administration to change its policy. Not only does it not solve this abhorrent, manufactured crisis, it actually puts children in more danger by stripping away decades of bipartisan protections. With this bill, children will be deported more quickly to some of the most dangerous countries on Earth and if they aren't deported quickly, they will languish for longer periods of time in immigration jails in even worse conditions than currently sanctioned under the law. These provisions directed at children are part of a broader assault on the asylum system in this bill, including significant narrowing of the grounds to apply for asylum and unilaterally declaring any country, including Mexico, a safe third country. The result would be a dramatic reduction in the number of people who are able to obtain humanitarian protection in the U.S.

This bill fails to live up to the ideals enshrined in the Statue of Liberty and to the best of what this nation can be. At this critical juncture in our nation's history when our moral credibility is at stake, we must stand for what is right. We urge Members of Congress to vote "no" on Speaker Ryan's bill, the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2018.

Signed,

*National Organizations*