



Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
"Un Pueblo Unido: Be Powerful! Be Heard!"

Contact: Andrea Delgado
Tel: (202) 508-6919
E-mail: adelgado@lclaa.org
WWW.LCLAA.ORG

THE DREAM ACT REJECTED BY SENATE
The senate failed to give thousands of young immigrants a shot at the American Dream

Washington D.C.- Today members of the senate rejected the Dream Act. The bill was an important component of the comprehensive immigration plan that failed in the Senate in June of this year. This portion of the bill would have provided young people the opportunity to legalize their immigration status. The bill required 60 votes to allow debate to begin on the floor of the Senate, but the final vote failed at 52-44.

The Dream Act would grant legal status to young immigrants that came to the United States before the age of 16 and lived here for at least five years. The students must graduate from high school; have a clean record, and either two years of college education or military enrollment.

The numbers of young immigrants the bill would affect are estimated to vary between 100,000 and 500,000. "We need to give these young people hope. We need to give these young people a future. Our leaders need to take responsibility and make this happen. These youngsters were brought to this country seeking the American Dream. We shouldn't blame them because their parents brought them to this country without consultation," stated Milton Rosado, LCLAA National President.

Even though, conservative groups attacked the bill calling it an "amnesty"; senators like Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Patty Murray (D-Washington) defended the measure arguing that the issue was not about immigration but about young people and their American Dream. Others in the Senate, like Richard J. Durbin (D-IL) encouraged the House of Representatives to consider this measure.

LCLAA is very disappointed at the failure of this important opportunity for young immigrants to be allowed to change their status. "What is appalling about all of this is that electoral politics and the fear of an anti-immigrant backlash dictated the decisions of conservatives to oppose this bill," stated Dr. Gabriela D. Lemus, LCLAA Executive Director. "These young people have been left in limbo and at the mercy of those who have none."

The Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, LCLAA, is the home of the Latino Labor Movement. LCLAA is a national Latino organization representing the interests of over 1.7 million Latino trade unionists throughout the country and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. LCLAA was founded in 1973 and is America's premiere national organization for Latino workers and their families. LCLAA advocates for the rights of all workers seeking justice in the workplace and their communities. LCLAA is a constituency group representing Latino workers from both the AFL-CIO and Change to Win federations.

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