

# Why Enactment of the DREAM Act Would Aid the Ailing Economy and Generate Tax Revenues

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**T**he Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act is bipartisan legislation that addresses the situation faced by young people who were brought to the United States years ago as undocumented immigrant children and who have since grown up here, stayed in school, and kept out of trouble.

Support for the DREAM Act has grown each year since it was first introduced in 2001. For the first time, the DREAM Act also enjoys the strong backing of the House and Senate leadership, all of the relevant committee chairs, and President Obama.

## ■ Why is the DREAM Act needed?

Each year about 65,000 U.S.-raised students who would qualify for the DREAM Act's benefits graduate from high school. These include honor roll students, star athletes, talented artists, homecoming queens, and aspiring teachers, doctors, and U.S. soldiers. They are young people who have lived in the U.S. for most of their lives and desire only to call this country their home. Even though they were brought to the U.S. years ago as children, they face unique barriers to higher education, are unable to work legally in the U.S., and often live in constant fear of detection by immigration authorities.

## ■ The DREAM Act will prepare the country for a new, global economy.

Today's global economy depends on the creation, acquisition, distribution, and use of knowledge, and this requires an educated and skilled population. Passage of the DREAM Act would add thousands of talented, motivated, multilingual and multicultural people into our workforce.

## ■ Passage of the DREAM Act will increase tax revenues for cash-strapped federal, state, and local governments.

Newly legalized students would earn more and pay more in taxes. A RAND study showed that a 30-year-old

Mexican immigrant woman who graduates from college will pay \$5,300 more in taxes and cost \$3,900 less in government expenses each year than if she had dropped out of high school. This amounts to an annual fiscal benefit of over \$9,000 per person every year, money that can be used to pay for the education of others.

## ■ The DREAM Act is a stimulus policy.

As President Obama said in his address to Congress, creating an educated workforce will stimulate our economy, increase productivity, and help the U.S. compete in the global economy. Students who would benefit from the DREAM Act are our future teachers, doctors, nurses, and lawyers. The DREAM Act will allow thousands of immigrant students to access higher education and maximize their contributions to our economy and communities.

## ■ The DREAM Act is a great return on money we have already invested.

The students who would benefit under the DREAM Act have been raised and educated in the U.S. State and local taxpayers have already invested in the education of these children in elementary and secondary school and deserve to get a return on their investment.

## ■ Legalized immigrant youth would contribute significantly to the Social Security system.

The National Foundation for American Policy calculated that "over the next 50 years, new legal immigrants entering the United States will provide a net benefit of \$407 billion in present value to America's Social Security system."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the DREAM Act, see [www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/DREAM/dream-basicinfo-2009-02-19.pdf](http://www.nilc.org/immlawpolicy/DREAM/dream-basicinfo-2009-02-19.pdf) or contact Adey Fisseha at [fisseha@nilc.org](mailto:fisseha@nilc.org) or 202-216-0261.



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