House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Thank You, God, for giving us another day. Please bless the Members of the people's House and the men and women of the Senate in these waning days of funding for the government.

May their efforts to find a workable solution to difficult issues result in legislation that will redound to the benefit of our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. MURPHY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING THE HEROISM OF PORT AUTHORITY OFFICER SEAN GALLAGHER

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and recognize the heroism of a constituent of New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District.

This past December, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey came under attack by a terrorist set on the destruction of American lives. One of the officers responsible for thwarting the terrorist's plot was Port Authority Officer Sean Gallagher. Many lives were saved that day as a direct result of the quick and decisive actions of Officer Gallagher of Hunterdon County, New Jersey.

Those who know Sean Gallagher personally were not surprised when they learned that he had played a decisive role in foiling the attack and apprehending the Port Authority bomber. In the aftermath of the attack, many of Officer Gallagher's friends and acquaintances were asked what character traits Officer Gallagher possessed, and a common theme emerged: a strong work ethic and a patriotic desire to protect his community and Nation.

Mr. Gallagher will receive the Port Authority PBA's Cop of the Year award this Friday. I cannot think of an officer more deserving than Officer Sean Gallagher, and I congratulate him for his heroism.

CELEBRATING THE 325TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY

(Mrs. MURPHY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Speaker, as a member of the class of 2000, I rise to celebrate the 325th anniversary of the College of William & Mary.

William & Mary may be the second oldest college in America, but it is first in the hearts of its students and alumni. The college educated many of our Nation's Founding Fathers and continues to take pride in producing graduates who enter public service, including four current Members of Congress.

Like it has for so many others, William & Mary changed my life. As the daughter of refugees from Vietnam who became residents of Virginia, I was the first woman in my family to attend college. I arrived on campus feeling a little alone and more than a little nervous. Yet, from the moment I walked through Wren Portico as a freshman to the moment I rang the Wren bell after my last class as a senior, William & Mary always made me feel that I was part of a close-knit community, a tribe, if you will, bound together by pride and tradition.

I learned so much during my 4 years on campus, creating friendships and making memories that have lasted a lifetime. So, to William & Mary the institution and to those whose efforts have made it such a special place, I say, “Thank you, and happy birthday.”
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 80,000 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 as America’s deficit topped $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 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 Paper Company has done 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 the dam from 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 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—

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

Mr. HENSARLING. There was no objection.

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 deregulation. 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 of my friends that the Financial Services Committee favorably reported this bill to the House with a strong bipartisan vote of 46–33, which means almost half of the Democrats on our committee supported this bill in the House.

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 a responsible 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 deterrent, 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 calculated 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.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS. 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 Americans 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 period.

The last thing Congress should do is to open the door to 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 bill. 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 loophole, 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 as 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 fact, 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 like 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. Lenders approved 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 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, recent actions by 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 standards 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 protection by 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 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. KILDER 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 Investment.

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; and the so-called Mortgage Choice Act 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, essentially 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 I would assume that Americans from 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?

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time.

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 that 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 112th. 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 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 promote 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 the law 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 a 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, side-steps 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 among title industry experts, with the ranking member voted for previously. In fact, she was so supportive that, 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.

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. The Senate has had a 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 at the 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 an affiliated lender or not. It also clarifies that funds held in escrow for the payment of property insurance 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 insurer 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 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 exclusionable “points and fees.”

Sincerely,

David Scott; Maxine Waters; Emanuel Cleaver; Henry Cuellar; Daniel T. Kildee; Jim McDermott; Patrick Murphy; Gerald E. Connolly; Michael P. 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. HENSAARLING. 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 colleagues, Rep. Gregory 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 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 it. RESPA prohibits affiliated title insurance fees in the QM definitions points and fees caps, provides important market pressure to control costs for consumers, and supports access to credits.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, 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. LUETKEMEYER. 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.

In addition, H.R. 1153 does not prohibit payments to affiliated title firms.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the chair of the Committee on Armed Services and the Consumer Credit 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 in the QM, 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 but lower income 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 home owner?

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, the home owners, they wouldn’t 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 go 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 rise today to express my support for H.R. 1153, the Mortgage Choice Act. As a co-sponsor of the bill and the vice chairman of the Financial Institutions Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit.

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 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 mortgages 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 also allow 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 burden-some 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 car 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 with 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 theQM rule and does not erode vital consumer protections. It simply helps ensure that consumers have choices to reduce their mortgages in any 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 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 encourage all of my colleagues to join in supporting this bipartisan solution.
confused in the 118th 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 that have made as a reaction to the Wall Street bailout of 2008 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, while 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 kinds of all 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.

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 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.


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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 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 receive increased amount of money that 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, 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
Man of justice. That the Samaritan saved, but he was a
trans were not friends to the person
to again to welcome strangers. Samaritans
one that has been used over and over
the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"
any extra expense you may have. Which of
and when I return, I will reimburse you for
them
The next day, he took out two Denarii and
then he put the man on his own donkey,
damaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine. And
took pity on him. He went to him and ban-
side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came
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by asking Jesus: "And who is my neighbor?"
with all your strength, with all your mind,
inherit eternal life?"
up to test Jesus.
The expert of the law replied: "The man
The Republican moral cowardice
must end. Members of Congress are
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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?"
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plied, "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 cor-
rectly. 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 at-
tacked 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 ban-
daged the 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 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. Strangers, acquaintances, and
neighbors 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
and the land of the American Dream, which,
for decades and centuries, real-
ly, has attracted people to our shores,
to make the future better for their
families. In doing so, they subscribe 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 good it would be 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
Glowes 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 Stat-
ue 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 pov-
erty. Today, he is an agriculture am-

bassador 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 all making plans land, 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 agree-
ment, which will be announced today,
includes many Democratic priorities,
actual, but bipartisan priorities.
But with the disaster recovery pack-
ages and dollar-for-dollar increases in
the defense and nondefense budget,
Democrats have secured hundreds of
billions of dollars to invest in commu-
nities across America. There will be
funds for veterans, first responders,
to strengthen our veterans and the NIH,
to build job-creating rural infrasctruc-
ure and broadband, and to fund access
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 Bi-
bles—were bringing us closer to
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 command my Repub-
lican 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 Na-
tion.
Why are we here if not to protect the
patriotic young people who are deter-
mined 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
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again. Strangers, acquaintances, and
neighbors were not friends to the person
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man of justice.
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 comment—Senator McCONNELL, specifically—where 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.

How would the Speaker bring up the Hurd-Aguilar bill, which is bipartisan, would win if brought to the House, has a sufficient number of Republican co-sponsors, 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’ 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 on support for the package—well, we have to see all the particulars of it yet, but there are good things in it—that does nothing to even advance, even with a commitment we have been 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 in 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.”

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 cloth 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 and 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, but 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, renewal application was caught up in postal delays, Itzel has not yet received her renewal, and her current DACA expired on January 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 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 have the character of 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 unsuspended 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 a significant change from the ability of individuals to immediately expendable, $500. But that is what it takes to sign up to what the President—this sign up that was required by the President after his September announcement—saying 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 master’s 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 ensuring 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 wrote, 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—I refer to the Dream Act gives them a documented sense—of security and opportunity—to go to school—and 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."

"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 the 협의군 members 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 be 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 discrimination. 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. 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. This 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.

As I said before, 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 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 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, headlines, 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 at least some 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 every 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, to contribute to my community, to get a job, to contribute to this country, to 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 for a 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 just action.

"I am the beneficiary of many of our DREAMers here are called DREAMers because they have big dreams. And they are entrepreneurs; they are teachers; they are..."
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. 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 was graduating and 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 work for nonprofits, 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 what they’ve done. These young 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.
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 his 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 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 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 the administration did it did not foresee those 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 timely application. We won’t find another caregiver who is reliable, nurturing, and unshakeable like Brittany.

Carlos is from the Bronx. Carlos lives in the Bronx and is the only undocumented member of his family to file in a date of expiration. When he received notice of the error, he fixed it and sent the application back immediately, but, by then, the arbitrary October deadline had passed.

The other 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 8 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 to fail to file in time. When he arrived, DCA and work authorization expired February 18, 2017. It expired already.

So the list goes on and on.

Saul 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 are not served, 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, she will not accept 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. The male came to the U.S. 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, the family fell on hard times. Hugo found out from one text message from a friend on September 6 that he needed to reapply by 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 that 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 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 6 year-old reach his dream 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 that recognize his gifts and talents 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 DeBakey 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 PIELC, an immigrants' rights organization.

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. "Just 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 an America 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 and prevent 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 and your doctors, and they need you to come to their side and help. Can Congress, here, be convinced of the values, the 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 a country as a country. 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 an example of that. They are 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 us, for DREAMers, and it is not just for 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."
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 flown 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 I encouraged thousands of DACA recipients 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 I was incapacitated 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 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 is going to be 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 for DREAMers."

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 a set path, 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 experienced 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.

On 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 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, 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, my parents have changed my life. Learning English and doing well in school was a battle since everyone in my family only spoke Spanish and had
Mr. Speaker, 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 all here, when we 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 put ourselves above 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 consistent 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 mark 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 could demonstrate 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 appropriate and important act 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, and from the other 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 and 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 in American history that bestowed upon me the gift of 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. DREAMers 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 have to stay. Luis Roberto Usera Brinsano.

Sofia de la Varga, an EMT student:

I was 5 years old when my mother told me we were going to go on vacation. At the time, I had no idea what that meant 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 mother to risk her own life. I was just another child, but she was a heroine.

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, believe, and want to live as an American. Yet, I have 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 am not proud to 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 jobs in the United States 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. I knew 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 a fighter, 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 had considered being a paramedic when I was younger. In my home county, you can forget that police and an ambulance will arrive or even bother to come if you call. My only hope for survival is / do not expect people to come and try to save my life for another person.

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, and I will be deported and basically 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 them, 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, DACA has been a viable option in my 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 order 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 accomplishments nor to ask for special treatment. I am just here to thank anyone and everyone who made DACA not only possible, but DREAMers’ dreams come true. I am 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 resided in the Midwest, there to thank anyone and everyone who made DACA not only possible, but DREAMers’ dreams come true. I am 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.

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. For 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 truly can 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 virtues to back me up, 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 parables of the Good Samaritan 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 the future frontier, that is the dream 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,’ putting 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. And these young people now are 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 again 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. We 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 us, we say: In most cases, this is about how 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 praying 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.” Yes, 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.”

This is what St. Augustine said 17 centuries ago. Yes, 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.

This 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 everyone.

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 every person. He 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 Rincón, 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, my son, 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 parents 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, I was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. For months she struggled trying to find treatment at 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 undocumented people. During this time, DACA was put into place and it officially opened the door for me.”

“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 the 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 we 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.”

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, there it is not just about the DREAMers. It is also about our DREAMers.

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. 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 was 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 without being 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, “undocumented” with out papers. That is 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—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 always respected. 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 was one of my best days. 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 was one of my best days. But in every community, it has made a difference, constantly reinvigorating America.

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 very prayerful, and so I will use the language of the Rosary. But, nonetheless, I want 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, etc 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’s 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 this issue presents.

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 not, rated 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 the future. 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, 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 for good reasons. 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
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.

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

Lissette 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 Lissette's view. I hope that we have a better understanding of where the President may be on this. We don't want Lissette 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 world of difference to me. It has opened 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 just had a conversation 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 our 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 aid 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 Ph.D. 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 1999, 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.
Denise 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, Denise’s dream 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.

Denise 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 Denise’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 grade school, English, however, 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 of our country is all-American, and that has many versions.

Kok-Leong Seow said: “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. I was 2 when my parents 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 to college financially or drive or travel. I get used to doors slamming in my face.”

Glady’s 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 House Union. Perhaps you remember America’s dream. She was the guest of David Price from North Carolina, and she spoke at our press event with the Dreamers.

Africa 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 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.

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 Mexico. 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, kindergarten, elementary, intermediate school, and high school in the State of California. I always loved school. I remembered being a little girl and getting home from school, and the first thing I did was start my homework. I remembered 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 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 greatest 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 referred to them as ‘aliens’ and not truly part of the country. I believe in the core values all Americans share as a nation: liberty, justice, and prosperity. 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.”

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 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. Some are even from other places that are not necessarily ethnically diverse.”

Many of the stories of the things we 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. 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.”

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?

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. I was a dreamer, 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. DREAMers, to me, were the 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—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.”

I hope at least the RECORD will show the printed word may not convey. But they convey is really something that many of them value more 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 and 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 and the Senate couldn’t build it to 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 flowed forth 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 discuss legislation that is on the 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 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. I 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.

And 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 of the 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
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 immediately and 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, Rev. 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 close to his heart and his vision is not just 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 the 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 embrace 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 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.

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 transformed 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 not. 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 the United States and 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.

Mithi also 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 bullying, 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. As a result of DACA, Mithi was able to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

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. In 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.

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 fortune 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 Newlatthivongskorn. 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. New said: “I worked for 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 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 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 about 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 bi-partisan and 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 and walk in the great 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 through 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 Okeere 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 graduated from 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. Novi 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. He attended Evanston Township High School near Tacoma, Washington. He was an active volunteer in his community.

In college, he was the chair of the Jewish Student Union/Hiillel 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 also love with cooking. When I was 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 him 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 go, in 1992, Minnac Khan’s parents brought him to the United States from Bangladesh. Minnac 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 neurosciences.

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, to save lives, 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, Minnac lives in Palo Alto, California, with his wife, who is an American citizen. Minnac 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 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."

Here is his statement, Minnac 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 he 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 impoverished 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 worked as farmers. 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 happened 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 was a struggle 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, protects 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 know that for 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 filled 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. In 2011, she was awarded the 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. My friends and I fight for 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 they are given a chance, 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. Just named the Nigerian ones.

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 an earlier day.

Ola K. 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 and AP exam 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.

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 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..."

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 introduction of the Dream Act, there 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—very valuable, mentoring. He is giving 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. In high school, Yannick was also a member of the student council and treasurer of the National Honor Society. He also volunteered at a health clinic.

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which allows Maryland residents who are undocumented to pay in-state 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 show what I am capable of, not only as 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.

Yannick: 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 DREAMer recipients with these critical skills have joined our service 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 cannot 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 love.

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 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 what was going on with my family. I was not born in this country. I remember being so confused about who I was. I was 13 years old.”

DACA has been more than a blessing for America. I was placed in San Antonio, Texas. I was an undocumented immigrant in the country I have lived in for 15 years. I was placed in San Antonio, Texas, when my family couldn’t find anywhere else.

DREAMers have skills that our military couldn’t find anywhere else.

Harminder and hundreds of other immigrants with these critical skills have joined our service through MAVNI.

Vital to the National Interest program, 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 our service through MAVNI.

In August 2015, I started teaching. 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.

I graduated college the following May, cum laude, with a double major in English and journalism.

“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.”

“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.”

“ICA 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 the last 5 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, who were new immigrants from Ecuador, had just arrived 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 head, 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 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 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 preschool, 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 focused on working, got a second job, and moved out of my mom’s home. Soon after, I met my husband who has been an American citizen; we have a 5-year-old child.

“DACA—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 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 a 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.

“On 2013, 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 allowed us to pursue.”

“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. Citizen 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 staff.”

“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 the lessons 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.

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 oldest of four children. Amy is now 19, but the last time she saw her parents was when she was just 11 years old.

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How sad.
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.背景breaking the law in any other way.

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 Salinasian way to advance the cause of 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 immigration line for what seemed like an eternity, 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 is the country I aspire to as a leader at the University of Washington. 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 immigration line for what seemed like an eternity, 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.”

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 fresh out of high school 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.

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 is the country I aspire to as a leader at the University of Washington. 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 immigration line for what seemed like an eternity, 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.”

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. I was not 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 get their tax refunds so they can fund their job. 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 into the community and help improve the lives of our American citizen neighbors and friends.
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 very much knowing 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 ethnic pride of hard work ethic and education ethic.


“Luckily, 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, and me and 800,000 others live freely. We can contribute. That’s our American Dream. That is why my mother, despite so hard, hands aching, yet a kind smile on her face. That’s why I study economics, to one day enthral 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.

“Trump 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 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 Islanders 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 DREAM.

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 of DREAM–Dreamers, 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 Georgain, 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: “At that 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 I hope 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—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.

Brissa 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.”

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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.

When 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 the Department of Homeland Security 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 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 struggle. A lot has happened since my involvement in the Dreamer 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 fear of being deported from my mind. 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 earn 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-disillusionment, 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 am an expiration date, I am much happier thanks to DACA.

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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, after 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, 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 my 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 New Mexico and graduate was the ability to become the second DREAMer in the country to graduate from the EMERGE America women leaders training program."

"With DACA, I was able to do otherwise."

"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 1 and many others can pursue 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.

"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 taken to the ambulance. 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 curiosity 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 crashed car.

"After a long embrace, he finally spoke. In his voice, he carried fear of the unknown and uncertainty of the future. He needed 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 lose my dad that day, September 18, 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.
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. Representatives, I thank her and the members of the committee for making that victory possible then.

Congresswoman ANNA ESPINO of California, she has been a tremendous force on this issue. A number of the testimonies that we have read have either come 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 Espino 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.

Many of the 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 Espino 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 was undocumented, I was devastated. I wanted to go away because of the uncertainty of my future in 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 amnesty—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 path, after graduating from Alverno College, was 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, I refuse to standstill. 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, and worked 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 hard work 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 passions 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. Instead, I believe that to make a difference, one must 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. What I speak for the many 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 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 CARRAJAL 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 CARRAJAL 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 WATTERS; Congresswoman VELAZQUEZ; Congressman CORREA of California; Congresswoman MATSUI of California; Congressman GOMEZ of California; again, 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 them he was confused about the issue. Congresswoman WATTERS, Congresswoman VELAZQUEZ, Congressman CORREA of California; Congresswoman MATSUI of California; Congressman GOMEZ of California; again, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE; Congressman TAKANO of California; Congresswoman BARBARA Lee. I read the testimony of her DREAMer earlier.
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, thank you, 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 flight to be fair and just to Puerto Rico; Congressman Ellison. I read the testimony of his Dreamer earlier.

Congresswoman Espy, 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 was the National Prayer Breakfast; Congressman Ruiz of California; Congressman McGovern from Massachusetts, who has been with us for a long time; Congresswoman Val Demings, a new member of the Judiciary Committee; and Congressman Castor of Texas, San Antonio. We had testimony from there.

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. 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 at 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 chosen because that hour. 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 hours wisely.

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, 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 called 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 create a 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. There 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 not about the children. The purpose 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 have 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. Hooyer 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 have not 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 legislative program to get work done 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 a word 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.

I remember 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, Senator 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, 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 tranquility.

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 one would 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 were the Senate bill, then that would be the end of it, and that would go to the President. If it is the Goodlatte, that would go to Conference, as would the Hurd-Aguilar, to 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? How can we say the Rosary on the floor? When you can’t debate the issue?

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. Leaders 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 children; 70 percent with tens of thousands 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 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 as I said, 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 Texas, when I was 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.

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“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 have 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, all 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 Fielif-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 Emsaly A. Laney High School, and I now hold a BFA from Minneapolis 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, to reachclosure 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 aware 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.

Juliana Carvahlo-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. It was 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 have been 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
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. 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 had this realization 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 the third grade. This is hard not only to help myself, but help those in undocumented communities."

"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."

"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."
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 youths 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, the least of these, 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 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 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 DACA.

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 in 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, finding 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 care 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 tripe 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 in science.

Cesar is one of the more than 30 DACA recipients at the Stritch School of Medicine. It was his 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 heartbreaking. By the 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 have not 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 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 a starter 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 armed services.

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 William Medeiros: his 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.

GRILALVA, RAUL GRILALVA, 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 VELAZQUEZ, 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.

**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 JROTC 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 school’s 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 Gutierrez. Due to her 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 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 Velásquez—no relation to Congresswoman VELÁZQUEZ.

Today I want to tell you about Cristina Velásquez. When Cristina was 6 years old, her family came to the United States from Caracas, Venezuela. She enrolled in 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. She was the co-chair of the National Honor Society, and she was also 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 University. 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 Hoyas mom and Hoyas wife and Hoyas 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 or the food bank or whatever it is.

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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, their faith in themselves for their children. I can 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 do have, we have to act upon.

We would like to introduce Benita Velma Benita. 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 belt-ed 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. 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 years old. I lived 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.”

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 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.

I thank Terri Sewell for that and thank her for her extraordinary leadership of 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 about a Dreamer. The DREAMers are all over our country.

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 National 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, and 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 is she proudly holding in this picture.

To 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 these people 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 have been 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 biometric have yet to receive any 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. My children are already 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, etcetera. 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 bargain 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 Barney Frank. 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 immigrant, 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, she was 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 any 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 help other people 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 Future Middle School. She recorded a story about her life, and it 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 the thousands of 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, Acel. He was a 5-year-old boy. His family brought him to the United States from Mexico when he was a newborn. He grew up on the north side of Chicago. We have got a lot of Chicago, a lot of New Jersey here. Acel 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 Acel explained it. "DACA meant I had a future worth fighting for and, because of that, I returned 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, was active in the community, joined the school orchestra, 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 people who asked 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 a vote 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 overtire 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 given by a promise given by the majority leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, that we would—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 that the Speaker has for Mrs. LOWEY for her leadership. Congresswoman ROYBAL-ALLARD, as I mentioned earlier, was the original— she called 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 and Congressman Gonzalez from Texas who knows firsthand the border, the challenges that we face; Congressman Joe Kennedy from Massachusetts, again, a strong supporter, mentioned this morning 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.” 

“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. 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 humanitarians 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 of a better life and to not let paper limit potential. 

Jimmy Panetta has sent us a story from Katherine from Salinas. I mentioned 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?”

“Get 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 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, go on 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 Bortolotto. 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 get a scholarship to Woodbury Community College, 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 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?

Thom REESE (R-N.C.). Mr. Speaker, it appears now that the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RICE of Connecticut) is rising."

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 the 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.

Chirayu says: "The President's decision to rescind DACA, which I believe is a consequential day for me."

"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 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.

Valentina: She became my parents' right hand. 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, I was given the opportunity to give back to this country that has given me so much. This is my country, and 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, away from President Obama's 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."

Because of his outstanding academic achievements, he was admitted to Dartmouth. He is the first member of
honor roll and was a member of the National 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. She graduated from Marquette University in May 2016.

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 same feeling for 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, Wisconsin. Maricela worked hard, and she excelled in school.

During high school, she was on the honor roll and was a member of the Next Generation Pioneer Award.

When she graduated in May 2016, she was elected vice president of the student government.

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 can do. 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 acknowledge you and your District, would like me to read a statement from a constituent, former intern, and a DREAMer:

My name is name Jacqueline Olivares. I was born in 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 Representative 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 were granted DACA, my family living in the best country in the world, a place I would call my home, and yet I didn’t even know it.

“Past-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.”

“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, but 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, probably because I have 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 reconstitute 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 Samarians—there we are with great Samarian- tian again—‘pay and paid our taxes, contributed to the 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. DREAMers are here to be 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 lifeline, 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 was in chemical engineering, she was still a student at Georgia Tech. She was just a student at Georgia Tech. He then worked for 2 years as a researcher 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 contributes 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. Italian-Americans, who in the 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 immigration. 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 draws them here will continue to strengthen the American Dream.

These newcomers with all of that hope and aspiration make America more America 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 we can just do this work. This is not about guilt. 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 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, but we 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, 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 they 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.

Johana is so talented in 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 accepted 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 rekindled a fire within me to succeed and to continue to pursue my dreams.”

Will America be a stronger country if we deport Everardo Arias and others like him? Of course not.

This is from Congresswoman Degette, who is with us. This is her story from Colorado:

Marco Dorado was born in Mexico and moved to Denver’s Gloveville neighborhood at the age of 10. He later attended 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 also 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, this is an 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. I am 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. 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.

My first year of college 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 once 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. I 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?

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.

The 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 time. Indeed, by the way, 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 just 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. "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 all of my life, but 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, my parents didn't have the money to put me on track to pursue a career in medicine. They will stay in Illinois to help serve parts of the State that have a shortage of doctors."

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-standing 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 Chicago with a major in political science. She is the first person in her family to graduate from a 4-year college.

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. He has 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 recipients are able to 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 the United States to get a medical education. They will stay in Illinois to help serve parts of the State that have a shortage of doctors.

Fixing DACA is important to me because if America is 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 offices. In my opinion, more Members of Congress could meet more of these DREAMers. Aren't you impressed by the cumulative effect that they are making on this 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 University of Colorado, 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 of California. Thank you for being here, MARK, as well.

Arisaid Gonzalez Porras was a guest of RAÚL GRIJALVA. Arisaid came to the State of the Union address for Fuerza Migrante National Popular Movement—organizing and advocating for economic, social, and racial justice for all, with a focus on Asian American and Pacific Coast Islander communities. Her dream is to attend law school in order to help her community.

Thank you, Jung.

The guest of 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 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. And 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 people a path in a way that has some certainty to our DREAMers.

Ityau Torres is a student at Pasadena City College. She was a guest at the State of the Union of Congressman Jimmy Gomez.

Ityau Torres came to the United States from Mexico as a 6-month-old baby.

She was completely carried into this country. It you learned she was undocumented when she was 14 years old and, in 2014, became eligible to apply for DACA. Earning DACA protections has allowed Ityau 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 her education at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland.

A wonderful school.

Itayu was part of the California Dream Network Steering Committee and a 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 and 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 only gotten worse there since 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 theses focused on the circulation 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 started this 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 going to 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 gone through because there are failed and inhumane immigration policies.

I remain fully committed to continuing to serve my community and help 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 1969, or other speeches competed for the longest in the meantime, that was 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 when they talk about when I was hungry, you fed me, and the second, when I was thirsty, you gave me a drink, when I was a stranger, you welcomed 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 one of 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, ‘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 cloth you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whenever you did whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it 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 cloth 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, whenever you did whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did 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 God’s children created 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 I did not 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.

“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. 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.’

Daniela has earned two associates’ degrees in engineering and business administration from Rowan College in New Jersey. She worked towards 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 online version at home.”

Alex is away from the world 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.”

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 her testimony. It is about Hugo’s story. Hugo 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, hyper-inflation, and a coup d’état, my mother began making plans to move to the United States.”

In 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 family’s experience, 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 immediately reentered 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, Hugo de la Vega.

From Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE, another proud Brooklyn Representative. She was here before, but I think Congressman GLADSTONE CHAVEZ, another proud Brooklyn Representative.

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, 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 review, Joel is 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.

The most 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 CARDEÑAS, 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 is also an issue that destroys people’s lives—undocumented students. I want for them to be able to be able to achieve their 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 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 ALFREDO 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 actuarial science. Her main motivation is her mother, a DREAMer. 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.

She graduated from 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 she says: “My mother is the rock. 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 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.

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.

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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, help make them smile.”

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 day, I met Marco. Remember what the Lord said in the Gospel of Matthew: When I was in prison, you visited me.

Thank you for doing that.

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 Students 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 Self-Help Children’s Trust to lobby 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 TYF 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 with DREAMers and 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 California 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 undocumented 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 Latino Aiming for Achievement, LAFA, a group that recruits 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 have 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 a letter 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 hardworking. 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, 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.

Pete Welch from Vermont.

Congressional 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 post-doc media at the University of Vermont, all of that.

I am telling you, this rug is killing me. Standing up is nothing, being human 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 bipartisan 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. 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 go forward in completing 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 long argued 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 only an open and inclusive process that allows the House to work its will.

“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 such a 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. If the Senate passes it, 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 and 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 status. 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 academic achievements, 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 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 DREAMer Center on a college campus in Texas. Because of her leadership, Andrea has been given the opportunity to visit President Obama, the Chamber of Commerce, 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 may happen, she is more worried 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.

Okay. How lovely, Andrea. A little bit of my Golden State Warriors coming in here 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 hardworking 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. I want 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 want 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.

Okay. That was then. This is now. That was 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.

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 end 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 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 DeLauro, 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 constituents, 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 are majors in public administration and minors in Spanish.

Diana has aspirations to continue her education and enroll in a master’s program 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 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 our 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 had to worry and fear what would happen if someone she trusted outed them to immigration authorities.

Unless we take immediate action to help Dreamers, Esther’s future is uncertain. I urge Congresswoman 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 Caucus and was able to spend this evening 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 Dreamers 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 Velez, a DREAMer. David was born in Germany and moved to the United States at age 13. He grew up in Elko 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 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. 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 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 Valez-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 plane to transport transport model using charpary shrub species to test drought resistance in collaboration with Drs. Michael Tobin, Brandon Pratt, and Anna Jacobson of California State University, Bakersfield. This is very important research.

In May 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 Fellow, 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 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 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: Keyla 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 is such a rich talent? This achievement, this determination, this faith in the future, this patriotism for America? I don’t think so.

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 and my siblings came here when we were young. I was 4 when my mother and I came to the US. I 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 educations, 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 safety today. They 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, I am not sure we have comprehensively answered their questions, and I believe that we could do better.

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 speaks for and with 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 today.

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 on the floor of this 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 in a way that 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 and DACA students, 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 education and life chances 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 challenges, 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 back is Congresswoman CAROL SHEA-PETERSON; Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY; Congresswoman 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 CLARK—I read your testimony earlier as well.

All the others I think I have acknowledged. Yes, HANK JOHNSON from Georgia and JOSHUA JORDAN; 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 testimonies 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 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 Republican Congress every day. We learn about another effort to weaken guardrails, protecting consumers from predatory actors, or another Trump appointee refusing to hold bad actors accountable. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Securities and Exchange Commission have basically stopped enforcing our Nation’s consumer and security laws.

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 forced arbitration: Wall Street lobbed 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 the House Republicans’ attack on consumers. Vote “no” on H.R. 1153 and support Leader PELOSI and the message that she brought to this Congress, I remind you, that the 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 Chamber, the people’s House, in order to make law. The President didn’t offer legaliziation. 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, firm referrals, 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, and, instead, the minority leader slapped his hand and called it insulating, 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 legaliziation. He offered a pathway to citizenship. He didn’t offer this for 700,000. He offered it for 1.8 million. He said:

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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 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 post-poned.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause (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.
The SPEAKER pro tem. Messrs. RICHMOND and GARAMENDI changed their vote from "nay" to "yea.

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The result of the vote was announced asYEAS—404

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tem. 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 SPEAKER pro tem. The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tem. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

RECORDED VOTE
Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I submit a record vote. A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tem. The bill was taken up by electronic vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device.

Not voting—23
The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 210, noes 185, answered “present” 3, not voting 23, as follows:

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<th>Ayes</th>
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So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2271) to require the Administrator of the Western Area Power Administration to establish a pilot project to provide increased transparency for customers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill. The question was taken and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.
GATEWAY ARCH NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (S. 1438) to redesignate the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in the State of Missouri as the “Gateway Arch National Park.”

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Gosar) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

USDA FUNDING WILL HELP ERADICATE SPOTTED LANTERNFLY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue announced $17.5 million in emergency funding to stop the spread of the spotted lanternfly in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The spotted lanternfly is beautiful, with its distinctive and colorful wings, but it is an invasive and threatening pest and its spread must be stopped.

The spotted lanternfly is originally native to parts of China, India, Vietnam, and Eastern Asia. It was first discovered in Berks County, Pennsylvania, but now has spread to 13 counties. It is a threat to apples and grapes and peaches, stone fruits, and various tree species throughout Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania’s Agriculture Secretary Russell Reading has been working to combat its spread, and this Federal funding will only increase the Commonwealth’s ability to fight this pest.

As vice chair of the House Agriculture Committee, I have been working with Congressman Ryan Costello and Congressman Lloyd Smucker and all members of the Pennsylvania delegation to ensure that we have the resources necessary to eradicate the spotted lanternfly.

I applaud Secretary Perdue’s swift prevention efforts before the planter falls starts to remerge this spring.

PROTECT TREES

Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have a letter here from one of my grandkids, 7-year-old Olivia.

“January 28th.
Dear Congressman Poe,

“I am writing to tell you that the environment is very important to me.

“We need to make sure that enough money is spent on keeping the world clean.

“I love seeing all the beauty in the world.

“I know that you agree with me that trees, flowers and lakes are worth protecting.

“I planted broccoli last year and I want every kid to have that opportunity at their school too.

“Please do your best!

“Sincerely,

Olivia. #8, Dallas, Texas.”

Mr. Speaker, No. 8 is my granddaughter Olivia. I call my 12 grandkids by their birth number.

Well, Olivia, Mr. Cicilline and I are introducing legislation to protect trees on government easements of interstate highways.

Sometimes trees are cleared at taxpayer expense so that billboards on adjacent property can be seen.

Olivia is right, “Trees are worth protecting.” We should preserve the trees on the interstate because, as No. 8 says, “The environment is important.” And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING OLYMPIC ATHLETES FROM THE CENTRAL COAST OF CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievement of Elon Musk and SpaceX for the spectacular and historic launch of its giant Falcon Heavy rocket, now the world’s most powerful operational rocket, from Cape Canaveral on Tuesday, February 6, 2018.

Besides the launch itself, which carried Mr. Musk’s personal Tesla Roadster into space, SpaceX also achieved a second amazing feat by guiding two of the Falcon Heavy’s rocket boosters back to Earth for an upright landing. This rocket launch has paved the way for faster, cheaper launches of satellites and cargo.

So, as the representative of California’s 43rd Congressional District, this milestone is especially meaningful to me. SpaceX is headquartered in my district in the city of Hawthorne, California, and employs thousands of talented men and women in our community.

I congratulate Elon Musk and SpaceX for continuing the great tradition of achievement by aerospace companies in the South Bay.

OLIVIA, 7 YEARS OLD, WANTS TO PROTECT TREES

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a couple of Olympic athletes from my district on the central coast of California.

Brita Sigourney and Nick Cunningham will be representing Team USA at the Olympics in South Korea.

Brita attended the same schools I went to, Carmel High and UC Davis. She is a freestyle skier, and she is the first woman to land a 1080 in competition at the halfpipe run, and she is one of the top female freestyle skiers in the world.

Nick is a bobsledier. He also went to one of the schools I went to: Monterey Peninsula College. He is a sergeant in the Army National Guard and a member of the Army’s World Class Athlete Program.

Starting this Friday, Brita and Nick will compete on the world stage under the stars and stripes of our flag.

As we know, the Olympics is an event when many different people from different places come together and compete with one another for the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, and in doing so, they provide their opponents with dignity and respect.

Hopefully we here in Washington will not only watch the Olympics, but we will learn from Olympians like Brita and Nick, because it is our hometown athletes who not only understand what it takes to win, they know what it takes to represent the best team at the Olympics and the best country in the world.

NANCY PELOSI STANDS ON HER FEET WITH COMPASSION AND PASSION

Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think most of the world today saw the leader of the Democratic Caucus, Nancy Pelosi, stand on her feet with compassion and passion for the 800,000 DREAMers, those who are desperately in need of a solution, and 140,000 in the State of Texas. We pray that her standing and reading those stories will move this body to do what is right.

FEMA NEEDS TO BE COMPLETELY REORGANIZED

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I also want to do what is right for my constituents. FEMA needs to be completely reorganized. As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, we are seeking to divide FEMA into the emergency component and the long-term recovery. So many of my constituents have received FEMA denial letters. They don’t know what to do with those letters even though we have advocated for them to appeal. It is important for FEMA to address the question of these letters throughout the hurricane-devastated areas, including throughout Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Florida, and beyond.

People are hurting. FEMA must assess these denials. They must reach out.
again for review, and they must stand up for a long-term recovery of an amazing, devastating flood like Hurricane Harvey that had 51.22 inches, 21 trillion gallons of water, and Houston underwater for a period of days. We must help the American people and Texans.

HONORING THE LIFE OF THOMAS DAY, JR.

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

Mr. KIHoEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of Thomas Day, Jr.

Thomas loved spending time with his four kids, Whitney, Candice, Kelsey, and Nolan, and his two grandkids. He loved boating with his family, cheering for the Pittsburgh Steelers, and coaching Little League baseball. He worked as an estimator for Portrait Construction for more than 20 years and was very personable and friendly with everyone he met. His children’s friends called him ‘Daddy Day’.

Thomas will be remembered by all those who knew him as a fun-loving and amazing family man.

I would like to extend my condolences to Thomas Day’s family and friends, and please note that the city of Las Vegas, the State of Nevada, and the whole country grieve with you.

BRINGING JUSTICE TO DREAMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, once again I am honored to stand in the well of the House of Representatives.

I have been blessed and fortunate enough to stand here and to have the opportunity to vote on some of the great issues of our time. I am proud to say that I was here to vote on the Affordable Care Act, and I am proud to say that I still stand behind the Affordable Care Act.

I was here to vote on the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay legislation. I still stand behind what we did on that great occasion.

I was here to vote on a good many pieces of legislation, but I must tell you, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to have been here today to see the Honorable NANCY PELOSI as she took a stand for those who cannot be here to stand for themselves. She took a stand for the DREAMers, and not only did she speak for them and stand up for them, she also literally took a stand on her feet for more than 8 hours in heels.

Mr. Speaker, that is a part of history that I will forever remember, and I am proud to have been here, not in the room for the entirety of the time, I must tell you. A good many of us were afforded the opportunity to go in and out, but she stood there for the entirety of the 8 hours and spoke eloquently about the needs of the DREAMers, spoke eloquently about the things that we have done to make our country a better place, spoke eloquently about how America the Beautiful is a more beautiful America because they are here.

I would like to associate myself with her comments. I believe that she is a part of that avant garde that will ultimately bring justice to those young people who came here, not of their own volition, but who came here with someone, some parent, some significant other, someone who loved, cared, and in maintaining his life, he did what matters is that I am committed to stay with that constituent, just as I have a constituent who is currently in Syria being detained.

We are going to fight to bring that constituent back. That constituent will be my constituent as long as I am in the Congress of the United States of America and that constituent is detained in Syria. It is so that we will get our constituent back sooner rather than later, but it doesn’t matter about the time. What matters is that I am committed to stay with that constituent and make sure that his mother and father believe that we are working with them to bring him home.

So it is, Mr. Speaker, with Mr. Escobar. He is my constituent. He has been deported to El Salvador in El Salvador. Notwithstanding the fact that he has been deported, he is still someone that I am going to work to bring back to this country.

Mr. Escobar came to this country at the age of 15. He was brought here. He came here right around the time the earthquakes took place in January of 2001. While he was here, there was another earthquake that took place on February 13, 2001. These earthquakes devastated El Salvador. There were people who died. Hundreds of people died.

As we do in this country, we offered TPS, temporary protected status, to those persons who came here from El Salvador who were here in this country. We didn’t want to send them back to devastation. We didn’t want to put them in harm’s way. We are a caring Nation. We showed how much we care by giving them the opportunity to have temporary protected status.

His mother sought temporary protected status for herself and her son. His mother believed that she and her son had temporary protected status. However, Mr. Speaker, later on when Mr. Escobar sought to get his renewal of the temporary protected status, he discovered that a mistake had been made. It is difficult to know what happened, but it wasn’t done with any kind of malice aforethought. There was a mistake that was made that could have been corrected, I believe, but it wasn’t.

Mr. Escobar did not run and hide. He presented himself. Mr. Escobar went to the authorities. He tried his best to correct this mistake, and in the process of doing this, he maintained a life, and in maintaining his life, he did what ordinary people do, what people do who are young: he married. He married Rose Escobar.

While they were married, they had two beautiful children. He now has a daughter who is 4 years of age. He has a son who is 8 years of age.

His son and his daughter are here in the United States of America, but I regret to inform you, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Escobar is no longer in the United States of America because on March 7, 2006, he was married, but on March 7, 2006, he was removed from this country. And it was done in such a way as to create great sorrow, great pain, within his family.

At the time of his removal, he was working. At the time of his removal, he was doing all of the things that we expect a man with a family to do. He was taking care of his children. He was a father to his children. He was taking care of his wife, and she was taking care of him. He was a good husband to his wife. He was, by all counts, by all standards, by any acid test, a good American, saving the fact that he was not born in the United States.

But he went in for what he thought would be another visit because he had a work permit, and when he went in to visit the government by and through his agents and immigration, these authorities decided and did what I believe they were ordered to do. I hold no grudge against them. I think they were doing what was required of them. They were doing what they perceived to be their jobs.

And in doing, they detained him. And in detaining him, his wife left with their baby in her arms. She came believing they would all return home together, but she was separated from her husband, children separated from their mother. And she went home and she cried.

But she is strong. She did more than simply cry. She decided that she was
going to fight and she was going to get her husband returned home lawfully. It was a sad day, however, in her life to know that her children would not see their father for some time and did not have the opportunity to say good-bye.

Mr. Speaker, where is my father? And she had to give an explanation to her son, an explanation that did not meet with the circumstance, but he was young and she did not choose to tell him that agents of the government had taken their father away from them, the son and the daughter.

So she told him that he was away. She allowed him to have the hope that he would return. She was hurt. He was sad. The father was taken away with $20 in his pocket and the clothes on his back, taken to a country that he had not been in for some 16 years. He had lived longer in this country than he lived in El Salvador. Dropped off at the airport in El Salvador with $20 in his pocket, his only belongings on his back in a country where the ganges are, by definition, terrorists. Legal definition, they are classified as terrorists, where they extort, where they do harm, such harm and such extortion that many people leave to save their children and prevent them from becoming a part of the terrorist gangs that roam the streets.

He knew that he had to leave that airport before it was dark; hence, he decided to collaborate with others who were similarly situated. They put their money together and they acquired the services of a taxi to get out of the heart of the city, to get them out into an area where they thought that they might have some degree of security.

It cost him the entire $20, but there was someone that he was able to call who met him and took him to a place of safety. Even to this day he does not traverse certain areas. To this day, he does not have a sense of security that you and I have, Mr. Speaker.

So he is still my constituent. He went to El Salvador, not by choice, dropped off at an airport, $20 in his pocket, and the clothes on his back.

His wife came to our office and has asked for our help, and we are going to help, and we are helping. Just this last weekend, I went to El Salvador to see my constituent. I was there to assure him that we are still with him, that we are still working to bring him back to this country, to this land.

He was married, had children. His wife is an American citizen. His children are American citizens. He came here, thought he had TPS—temporary protected status—did not, but did not hide.

He thought that the President was sincere when he said he was going to go after the bad guys; he was going to go after the criminals. He did not believe that when the President said “criminals,” he meant Jose Escobar who only had a speeding ticket. He didn’t think that that would apply to him, the notion that the President would go after criminals, those who had committed serious offenses, a traffic offense never thought to be the kind of offense that would get him deported, extradited, evicted from this country after having been here longer than he had lived in El Salvador.

Yes, he came without inspection is the proper terminology, as I understand it. But he came without proper documents, he did. While here, he behaved, compiled, thought that he was going to fight and insist on the position that he was still going to have his job and stay with his family. This is what he thought.

So I went to see him, and his wife was with him. I stayed with him for approximately 3 hours. We found out that he is still living in a state of insecurity. We found out that he is not able to have the kind of employment that he needs so that he can send money and assist his family. We found out that he still has hope, that he still has dreams, that he still believes that he should be united with his family. He believes that this country will still live up to the ideals that we have expressed. We still believe that those who say that they believe in family values will value the family that he has and will want to see him reunited with his family.

The law says it can be done. We are going to pursue this. I am going to file legislation to ask that my colleagues here in Congress join us in not only helping this Escobar, but all of the Jose Escobars who are similarly situated, torn apart from their families. We are a country of family values. We have at least one party, and I believe both, but one party that prides itself on family values. How can we allow this kind of atrocity to continue and persist if we are the party that believes in family values? We must do what we can to make it clear to those who don’t understand that we will change this circumstance.

There are some who will say that you can’t get the job done. I differ. But let’s assume for a moment that it can’t be. I don’t believe this. I believe that we can get Mr. Escobar reunited with his family, but let’s assume for a moment that we can’t.

Then when you can’t, and you know it is a righteous cause, you have got a duty to do all that you can. We must do all that we can to prevent families from being torn apart. This is why I went to El Salvador, to assure Mr. Escobar that we are on the floor of the House tonight, because I want my colleagues to know that we will file legislation to aid, assist, and protect the Escobars of the world.

We are at very difficult times. We are living in times now such that people will negotiate with the lives of people, negotiate with the lives of the Jose Escobars. You give me a wall, and I will give you freedom for Mr. Escobar or the Escobars of the world, the DREAMers of the world.

Let’s negotiate. Let’s put their freedom, their liberty, their sense of dignity on the line. You want their dignity? You want them to have a sense of security? Give me a wall. I will trade you a wall for their security and their dignity. These are difficult times.

Voltaire, the great French philosopher, has an adage that reminds us that those who can make you believe absurdities can cause you to commit atrocities.

It is absurd to conclude that we are doing a righteous thing when we separate a father from his wife and children to surrender the criminal. Mr. Escobar suffers under, circumstances that he, quite frankly, didn’t create himself. He came here as a child—circumstances that we ought to acknowledge and we ought to want to do something about, circumstances that ought to say to us we ought not negotiate with the lives of human beings.

This is a difficult time for our country. This is an absurdity. And remember, people who can convince you that an absurdity is the right thing can convince you to do things that are going to be harmful to good, decent people, harmful to the Jose Escobars of the world.

So I am here tonight on behalf of Mr. Escobar and the many Escobars of the world because I don’t want an absurdity to become an atrocity, a greater atrocity than it is. And I would hope that my colleagues would reconsider this notion of negotiating with the lives of people.

When history looks back upon this, when those who look back upon us through the vista of time, through the window of the years, they are going to see that at this time, in 2018, there were people negotiating with the lives of people and they thought that it was a legitimate thing to do.

I am not going to fight about a wall that really is a false fence of security. I am not going to fight you about that. I am going to believe that when there were other people suffering and needed help, there were people who were willing to come forward and make sacrifices for them.

So, with that thought in mind, I want you to know, I may have to make concessions for the lives of people, but I don’t want to negotiate. If there is something that I will vote on, then I will vote, but I don’t want to negotiate when it comes to the lives of people.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this is a great moment for us, a great moment for us to do something that is more than right, a great moment to do something that is right, a great moment for us to demonstrate that we will stand for something so as to cause the world to know that we won’t fall for anything.

We are not going to fall for the notion that you can just play with the world. You can just play with the world to know that we won’t fall for the notion that lives are going to be measured in walls. Lives are going to be measured in how we will impact
family reunification. Lives are going to be measured in how we are going to deal with diversity in the visa program. We are not going to measure lives that way.

I don’t think it is a good deal. I think it is a terrible deal. I think it is an atrocity when you offer me the lives of people, but in exchange, I have got to give you $25 billion, and I have got to change family reunification such that it is not as we know it today, and I have got to give you that you are not going to have to worry about diversity as it relates to persons coming into the country.

I don’t think it is a good deal. Someone today said that the President offered a good deal and we ought to accept it. It is not a good deal for me, not a good deal for the people that I represent. I don’t like it. I wouldn’t negotiate it.

The fact of the matter is, it is not a negotiation. They are asking for a capitulation: either take it or leave it. That is not negotiation. But I still say that we ought not negotiate with the lives of people.

Mr. Speaker, I close with this.

We, who have been charged with the awesome responsibility of representing the many in our society, have got to remember that the greatness of our country is not going to be measured by how we treat those who live in the suites of life, how we treat those who have millions, how we treat those who can buy their way into the country, how we treat those who have done well. It is not going to be measured by how we treat the well-off, the well-heeled, and the well-to-do.

The greatness of our votes and what we do will be measured by how we treat those that Speaker Pelosi—currently minority leader, Speaker Pelosi—spoke of in the Book of Matthew, how we treat the least among us—the least, the last, and the lost. That is really how the greatness of a country is going to be measured. The greatness of America will be measured this way.

And we can play all the games that we want, but in the final analysis, when we have to give that final judgment and receive that judgment, it won’t be about how well we treated the millions and how many tax breaks we gave them. It is going to be: What did you do for those who are not in a position to do for themselves?

Mr. Speaker, I pray that we will live up to the expectations that we pledge allegiance to in the flag: liberty and justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEGAL IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Faso). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Rice) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the minority leader, Ms. PELOSI, for her plea on behalf of the DACA recipients. She certainly showed great passion and stamina.

I do wonder, however, why she is so concerned now. This is not a new problem. I would like to clarify for the folks who are concerned about DACA today had to be here by the year 2007. They were here illegally in the United States during those 2 years when Ms. PELOSI served as Speaker of the House and Harry Reid was the leader of a supermajority of Democrats in the Senate and President Obama was still President, yet she took no action then.

They could have passed a law, rather than having President Obama sign an illegal executive order, and given the DACA kids a pathway to citizenship, but I guess it wasn’t a priority then.

Last month, my home county, Horry County, South Carolina, settled a claim brought by the United States Department of Justice. It seems the Department determined that Horry County Schools spoke English as a second language only. That is 13 percent of the student body in Horry County, South Carolina.

So the school system agreed to pay a claim by paying $600,000 to accommodate those students who couldn’t speak English.

One would think that wouldn’t be much of a problem in South Carolina. We are a long way from our southern border, but according to the Horry County Independent newspapers, 5,511 out of the 44,700 students in Horry County Schools spoke English as a second language only. That is 13 percent of the student body in Horry County, South Carolina.

So the school system agreed to pay a claim by paying $600,000 to accommodate those students who couldn’t speak English. My constituents back home certainly have sympathy for all children—including the DACA children—but before they resolve this DACA issue, they have one condition. They want the flow of illegal immigrants stopped first, and so do I.

Thirty years ago, we gave amnesty to millions of illegal aliens on the promise that we would stop the flow of illegal immigration. Yet here we sit again. Well, fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.

I am willing to try to find a solution for the DACA folks, but first we have to stop the flow. President Trump has made an offer to resolve the DACA issue. I think it is quite reasonable. He has laid out a good framework: number one, secure the border; number two, end chain migration; number three, number of legal immigrants per year. If you add on top of that the hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants coming in that number is much higher than this. This is only legal immigration.

Mr. Speaker, at 1.1 million legal immigrants, there are people who stand up here and say that we are hard-hearted if we don’t accept every illegal immigrant who gets across our border. But the numbers don’t lie. We are very open to immigration. We still go by the motto on the Statue of Liberty. We accept over 1 million immigrants a year. And look at this slide, Mr. Speaker. This is a representation of the top 10 countries in the world that accept legal immigrants.

You will notice on the far side, here is the United States. This is as of the year 2015. We accepted 1.051 million legal immigrants. The next closest was Germany at 866,000. We are almost twice as much as the next one. And if you add the next five together, we are still more than they are.

So anybody who tells you that our immigration system is hard-hearted is simply ignoring the facts. It is baloney. We have the most open system of legal immigration in the world, by far. Few countries have an immigration system as open as ours.

Most countries say, look, we want to use or immigration system to become
more competitive, to make our economy thrive, to lift not only the immigrants, but the people who live here. So what they say is, if you have a skill set or an educational background that we need, then you move to the front of the line. It makes perfect sense. It makes sense in the immigrant. It makes sense for the economy of the country. It makes sense for the people who live there.

Ours, on the other hand, is based on chain migration. So does that make us more competitive or less competitive?

Mr. Speaker, look at this slide. The top slide here—this is from the Center on Immigration Studies—shows that immigrants, our legal immigrants, families headed by a legal immigrant in the United States, 51 percent of them get some type of social safety net benefit; 51 percent, as compared to 30 percent for the average family. The head of household is a native-born American. Fifty-one percent of the people that we are bringing into our country under chain migration end up relying on our social safety net.

Mr. Speaker, I have to ask you, it is only common sense. Do you think that makes us more competitive or less competitive? Don’t you think that drives up our deficit, Mr. Speaker? Don’t you think it takes resources away from people in this country already that need it?

The bottom of this slide represents the amount of dollars from our social safety net that are taken by immigrant families versus Native American families. You can see the average immigrant family getting benefits gets an average of $6,200 a year in benefits, while the average family headed by somebody who was born in America gets $4,400 in benefits.

So it is very easy to see, Mr. Speaker. It is common sense that using chain migration in the visa lottery to determine two-thirds, 65 percent of our immigrants, 800,000 people, the result is that we bring in people with a low education, people that end up relying on our social safety net and, in fact, make our country less competitive and take resources away from folks at the bottom end of the scale here in America that need these resources.

I believe our immigration system is broken. The President believes so too. He has said:

I want a bighearted deal for the DACA kids.

Leader Pelosi is also very concerned about the DACA kids obviously. So we have areas of agreement, and I am glad we are moving forward on an amendment that takes care of the DREAMers, secures our borders, and moves us to a modern, merit-based immigration system like every other developed country has that lifts our economy and at the same time keeps the lift opportunity for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.
Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. COHEN, Ms. SCHA-KOWSKY, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. VISCOSKY, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WOLFGANG, Mr. STEFANIK, Mr. VELA, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. GRIFFIN of South Carolina, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. EVANS, Mr. FALLOONE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. COSTA, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SIRES, Mr. JONES, Mr. CORREA, Mr. CRIST, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. McGUIRE, and Ms. SLAUGHTER:

H. Res. 4961. A bill to provide for the compensation of Federal employees furloughed during a Government shutdown; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia):

H.R. 4962. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a special rule for certain casualty losses of uncut timber; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CRAWFORD (for himself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. UPTON, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. CLAY):

H.R. 4963. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide for assistance for victims of child pornography, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HANABUSA (for herself and Ms. HAMO:

H.R. 4965. A bill to establish best practices for State, tribal, and local governments participating in the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KELLY of Mississippi:

H.R. 4966. A bill to make continuing appropriations for pay for certain training for members of the National Guard and for the reserve components of the Armed Forces in the event of a shutdown of the Federal Government, to prohibit the furnishing of such monies as a shutdown, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself and Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico):

H.R. 4967. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to improve nutrition in tribal areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce:

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico (for himself and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 4968. A bill to permanently reauthorize the Rio Puerco Management Committee and the Rio Puerco Watershed Management Program; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. McCaul:

H.R. 4969. A bill to improve the design and construction of diplomatic posts and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. Meng:

H.R. 4970. A bill to require the creation and maintenance of a MadeInAmerica.gov website; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia (for himself and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 4971. A bill the Securities Act of 1933 to exempt from registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission certain accredited investor securities within transparent secondary markets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. NOORTON:

H.R. 4972. A bill to amend the title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 to require that individuals who perform work for employers as independent contractors be treated as employees; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. ELIL, Mr. BARTLETT of Georgia:

H.R. 4973. A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement a plan to provide chiropractic health care services and benefits for certain new beneficiaries as part of the TRICARE program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MUCKER:

H.R. 4974. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to render overstaying a visa a criminal offense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. ENGL, and Mr. KRATING):

H.R. 4975. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to provide for consultation with State, tribal, and local governments, the consideration of State, tribal, and local concerns, and the approval of post-shutdown decommissioning activities reports by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 4976. A bill to establish a grant program to support landscape-scale restoration and management of the Delaware River Basin; to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. M. L. JUAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 4978. A resolution reaffirming United States support for Israel and condemning the United Nations Human Rights Council for certain resolutions actions; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H. Res. 728. A resolution expressing support for Israel and condemning the United Nations Human Rights Council for certain resolutions actions; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. COHEN of New York, Ms. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HECK, Mr. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Ms. KIM of Minnesota, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Mr. LAWSON, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. LOVE, Mr. LUTTERMILLER, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. POCA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SIMPSON, Ms. SNOW, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. UPTON, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WESTERMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. HANABUSA):

H. Res. 730. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. SOLO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. MCCULLUM, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GHEBA, Mr. BORDALLO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. WASHERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. HARRISON, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. SCHAKOFSKY, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. POCA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. LOWNDETHER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CARWRIGHT, Mr. FREEDMAN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DRUTCH, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. CHRIST, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. ROYBAL-ALLARD, David Scott of Georgia, Ms. SPER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. CAPUANO):

H. Res. 731. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself and Mr. BILIA:

H. Res. 732. A resolution urging Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Ms. MULIC, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PERLMAN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BORDALLO, and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H. Res. 733. A resolution expressing support for health and wellness coaches and “National Health and Wellness Coach Recognition Week”; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. SÁNCHEZ:

H.R. 4957.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8, clause 18: Congress shall have Power—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. BOST:
H.R. 4958.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BUDD:
H.R. 4959.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. HARTZLER:
H.R. 4960.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, "The Congress shall have Power . . . establish Post Offices and Post Roads . . ."

By Mr. REYER:
H.R. 4961.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 7 of section 9 of Article I of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:
H.R. 4962.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:
H.R. 4963.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . ."

By Ms. HANABUSA:
H.R. 4965.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. KELLY of Mississippi:
H.R. 4966.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article 1 of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law . . ." In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have Power to . . . pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . ." Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to raise funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:
H.R. 4967.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico:
H.R. 4968.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. McCaul:
H.R. 4969.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia:
H.R. 4971.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The power of Congress to make laws to provide for the common defense, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 4972.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:
H.R. 4974.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The power of Congress to make laws to provide for the common defense, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. SMUCKER:
H.R. 4974.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. WATERS of California:
H.R. 4975.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Additional Sponsors
Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:
H.R. 60: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 173: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 179: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 346: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 544: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.
H.R. 719: Mr. MENG.
H.R. 846: Mr. CRIST, Mr. HURD, Mr. KHANNA, and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 850: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. BARTON.
H.R. 858: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 878: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana, Mr. BROWN of North Carolina, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. SANFORD, and Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 1022: Mr. SHES and Mr. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 1048: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 1160: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa and Ms. MENG.
H.R. 1296: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1270: Mr. GOMEZ and Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 1276: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 1374: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.
H.R. 1409: Ms. Matsu, Ms. Ross-Lightzen, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 1511: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 1552: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 1575: Mr. ROTHUS.
H.R. 1617: Ms. MING, Mr. FASO, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.
H.R. 1633: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 1783: Mr. SHERR.
H.R. 1820: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1825: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Ms. MENG, and Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 1861: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 1881: Mr. MESSIE, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. LATTA, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. LONG, Mr. WIEBER of Texas, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 1893: Mr. JONES.
H.R. 1955: Mr. O'BRIEN.
H.R. 2242: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2259: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. SHAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2446: Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 2441: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 2670: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 2749: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio and Mr. LAASON of Connecticut.
H.R. 2771: Mr. O'HALLERAN.
H.R. 2850: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 2932: Mr. SANFORD and Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee.
H.R. 2936: Mr. BUDD.
H.R. 2913: Mr. GHJALVA and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2948: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3083: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 3139: Mr. TSONOAS.
H.R. 3226: Mr. MCLAUGHLIN.
H.R. 3269: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 3272: Mr. SHERK and Mr. SOTO.
H.R. 3273: Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, and Ms. SHEA-POTTER.
H.R. 3301: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 3378: Mr. VELA and Mr. O'HALLERAN.
H.R. 3394: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3497: Mr. CORREA, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3596: Mr. BARR.
H.R. 3676: Mr. DUNN.
H.R. 3635: Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 3677: Mr. MAYS.
H.R. 3654: Mr. GABBAR, Mr. BRAIDY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3742: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. LANGVIN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 3761: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 3790: Mr. ROSS and Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 3851: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 3876: Mr. McGOVERN.
H.R. 3891: Mr. TONKO, Mr. KATKO, and Ms. STEPTOE.
H.R. 3956: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 4018: Ms. NORTON, Mr. SOTO, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RASKIN, and Mr. MHTL.
H.R. 4099: Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MACARTHUR,
PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

78. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City Commission of Lauderdale Lakes, FL, relative to Resolution 2018-009, denouncing public expressions and beseeching President Donald Trump to comport himself with the dignity that the office of the Presidency deserves; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.