

inaccurate ICBM—because they are relatively inaccurate—a nuclear device as powerful as the one that was tested Sunday could devastate its target. Just think about that—7 to 10 times stronger than the one that wiped out Hiroshima. It is important to remember that all of this power is being wielded by an erratic despot, Kim Jong Un.

North Korea's official newspaper relayed the threat of a preemptive strike in April. This is a quote from their newspaper: "[It would] completely and immediately wipe out not only U.S. imperialists' invasion forces in South Korea and its surrounding areas but the U.S. mainland and reduce them to ashes." This is a newspaper that is behind this leader over there, and it has made this threat to the United States. We have never experienced anything like this in this country before. Now that we are getting into the NDAA this year, we have to keep this grave threat foremost in our minds, and we are doing it.

I have had numerous conversations with the chairman of our committee, and we are going to make these commitments. We have serious readiness deficits that are going to have to be addressed right away. Over the last 90 days, a spike in accidents across the military services has occurred. I had the CNO of the Navy and the Secretary of the Navy in my office a few minutes ago, and we talked about how they are addressing this thing. It is hard to correlate these accidents with a readiness decline as a result of numerous continuing resolutions and sequestration. It is just another surprise that we have not had before.

Our forces are now smaller than the days of the hollow force. Some of us remember that was back after the Carter administration. It was when our own forces declared that it was a hollow force of the seventies. Yet we had a hearing just the other day, and we had some of the top people in. In fact, it was the vice chiefs of all of the services, and they agreed that our situation right now is worse than it was in the days of the hollow force.

Our Air Force is short 1,500 pilots, and 1,300 of those are fighter pilots. I believe 50 percent of our Air Force squadrons are trained and ready to conduct all of their assigned missions.

The Navy is the smallest and least ready it has been in years. Currently, it can only meet about 40 percent of the demand from regional combatant commanders. More than half of the Navy's aircraft are grounded because they are awaiting maintenance or lack the necessary spare parts.

The Marine Corps is struggling to keep their aging F/A-18 Hornets airworthy. I think the last I heard is that 62 percent of them were not able to address that readiness.

The Army has said that only about one-third of its brigade combat teams, one-fourth of their combat aviation brigades, and one-half of their division headquarters are currently ready. That

is a sobering assessment, and we are again in the most threatened position we have been in as a nation.

The bill that we have presented out of the Armed Services Committee goes a long way toward closing these readiness gaps. Our bill increases end strength and boosts funding for equipment, operations, maintenance, military construction, and it includes a 2.1-percent pay increase for our troops. It also addresses many requirements for the services and combatant commander's unfunded priority lists.

I am also pleased that the Senate Armed Services Committee's NDAA prohibits a Base Realignment and Closure round this year. It is called a BRAC round, which is when they go through and make an evaluation as to what our capabilities are, what changes should be made, and what bases should be closed—decisions like that. The problem with that is if you do this when we have gone through a period of disarmament, as some have called it—and we are in a position right now when we need every nickel that we can have for the military. One thing that is always a certainty is that when you go through a BRAC round, it always costs money for the first few years, and we cannot afford to do it right now.

Our NDAA also fully funds Missile Defense Agency unfunded priorities, which is important considering that, since 2006, the Missile Defense Agency's budget has fallen more than 23 percent. Every amendment that we consider in our NDAA this year should be equally focused on increasing readiness across the Services.

I will wrap up with a quote from General Milley, the Chief of Staff of the Army. This quote is one that we should keep in mind throughout the NDAA process. By the way, I admire our uniforms for coming forth and talking about the dilemma that we are in because it is very difficult for them to do that.

General Milley said it best when it comes to funding our military:

The only thing more expensive than deterrence is actually fighting a war, and the only thing more expensive than fighting a war is fighting one and losing one. . . . We're expensive. We recognize that. But the bottom line is, it's an investment that is worth every nickel.

It is.

I apologize to my friend.

I suggest that this is probably the most significant bill coming up this year, and I think Senator MCCAIN said that we are going to be starting on it next week. It has been the most important bill of the year for the last 55 years, and it will continue to be this year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, at the outset, I say to the Senator from Oklahoma that I agree with his statements with respect to the threat posed

by North Korea, its nuclear weapons program, both the development of nuclear bombs and the most recent explosion, which was a larger yield than ever before, plus their missile program, including their ICBMs. I think it is important that this Congress do its part and act quickly by further economically squeezing North Korea.

I know that the Presiding Officer and Senator MARKEY have a piece of legislation. I, together with Senator TOOMEY, have a piece of legislation in the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee that would further tighten the economic pressure on North Korea. So I hope that the Congress will move forward quickly.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I thank the Senator. I would say only that this is the one thing that we agree on. We disagree on a lot of things in this Chamber, but this is one that we have to agree on and do what is necessary to do our job.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Yes, indeed. I think that that is exactly right. We have 28,000 American soldiers in South Korea and about 50,000 in Japan.

DACA

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I came here to the floor to talk about the Dreamers, and I do think that it is important to start by making the point that many of those Dreamers are serving in our Armed Forces today. They have put their lives at risk for the only country that they know, which is the United States of America.

It was just shortly after the November election, when then-President-Elect Trump told Time Magazine, when he was talking about Dreamers:

We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud.

He was referring to the Dreamers. He continues:

They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen.

That is what President Trump said right after the election.

Yesterday, he delivered the cruel news about what would happen 6 months from now if this Congress doesn't act, which is that those Dreamers will be at risk of being thrown out of our country. They will be at risk of being deported from the United States of America.

So the very President who said he was going to do something to make people "happy and proud" did something that was sad and shameful in our country. A majority of Americans agree that it is wrong to deport the Dreamers. Not just majorities of Democrats or Independents but also majorities of Republicans recognize that it is the wrong thing to do.

As President Trump has acknowledged, these Dreamers were brought to the United States as young children.

Regardless of the acts of adults or their parents, these children have done nothing wrong. They are our neighbors. They attend schools with our kids. They pledge allegiance to the flag every morning at school. They sing the Star-Spangled Banner. They play on the same sports teams.

In fact, many of these Dreamers didn't even recognize that they did not have full legal status until they reached adulthood. It was the DACA Program that provided these young people with at least the assurance that the rest of the country wanted them to stay and that they would not be deported so long as they played by the rules, so long as they did what this country asked of them. That is what they are doing.

Ninety-five percent of the Dreamers are in school or working at American businesses, large and small. They are contributing to our economy. Once they received that stability under DACA, 54 percent went out and bought their first car at local car dealerships around the country. Twelve percent were able to go out and make a down payment on their first home. When they go out to buy homes and buy cars, they are supporting our economy, which is why deporting these 800,000 Dreamers is not only the wrong thing to do from the perspective of humanity and being a fair country, but it is bad for our economy as well.

As I indicated at the outset, these Dreamers participate in our Armed Forces and help protect the national security of our country. In my State of Maryland, we have 10,000 Dreamers who are contributing in many positive ways to our State.

When I think of Dreamers, I think of a young man now whose name is Steven Acuna. He is a Maryland resident. In 2001, he was 8 years old when his family came to the United States from Colombia after they began receiving death threats. Ever since his family arrived 16 years ago, they have lived and worked in this country as productive and law-abiding citizens.

In 2012, they were denied the political asylum they had sought here. So they were actually at that time yanked from their Germantown, MD, home and locked up in a detention center on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. At that time, they reached out to my congressional office, and we joined with advocacy organizations and immigration lawyers and local leaders to make sure that family was not deported.

Then, thanks to the DACA Program, that made it possible for Dreamers like Steven Acuna to stay in the United States legally. He just graduated with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Maryland. Steve aspires to be an orthopedic surgeon. Here is a picture of Steve Acuna with his family, celebrating his recent graduation from the University of Maryland and aspiring to go on to become a surgeon.

The message President Trump sent to Steve Acuna and his family yester-

day is shameful. The message he sent was this: We don't want you in the United States anymore.

It would be a grave mistake—the wrong thing, morally—and it is also the wrong thing from the perspective of making sure we have a community that works for everybody and a strong local economy.

We have invested in Steve Acuna. He wants to go on to be an orthopedic surgeon. Yet this administration is telling him: If Congress doesn't act in 6 months, you are out of here.

So that brings us to what we are going to do here in the Senate and what we are going to do in the House of Representatives. President Trump did not have to make the decision he made yesterday. It was cruel and it was gratuitous, but he has made that decision. Now it is up to us in the Senate and in the Congress to do the right thing. In fact, President Trump has said to Congress: Go ahead and make sure that Dreamers can stay. So, on the one hand, he took an action he didn't have to. He put them at risk. He lit the fuse on a 6-month detonator, and he handed it to Congress. Now it is up to us to do the right thing, and it is essential that this Senate vote on the Dreamers bill in the coming weeks.

We already have it in front of us. It is a bipartisan piece of legislation. Its primary sponsors are Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, a Republican from South Carolina, and Senator DICK DURBIN, a Democrat from the State of Illinois. We have a bipartisan bill that has been introduced in the Senate. Now this is the question: When are we going to get to vote on it? When are we going to be able to take up this legislation?

Because of the action taken just yesterday by President Trump, it is imperative that we act right now to provide stability and confidence to these young men and women who have already done so much to contribute to our country—and many are serving today in our Armed Forces—and to let them and the country know that we can act on a bipartisan basis to do what the overwhelming majority of the American people—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike—want us to do.

So let's take up the Dreamers bill. Let's take it up now. There is no excuse for delay. People should vote in the light of day. People should let their constituents know where they stand on this issue. This is a question not just of fairness, but it is a question of political accountability and transparency.

President Trump has told Congress that we should act. In this case, we have an obligation at least to take a vote on this issue. I am absolutely confident that, when this body takes that vote, we will do the right thing. We will vote to protect the Dreamers and, in doing so, protect the commitments we as a country have made to people who have done nothing wrong. As a country, I hope we stand for the principle that people should not be punished when they have done nothing

wrong, and when, in fact, they have done everything our country has asked of them.

So let's take up the Dreamers bill with dispatch, and let's pass it and let's have the House pass it. It wasn't absolutely clear, but President Trump, in his most recent tweet, seemed to say that he is ready to sign what we send to him. So let's get it done.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, our country is in trouble. America—and this government right here in Washington—works great for people at the top, works great for corporations that can hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers, but for everyone else, America isn't working so well. For decades, expenses have gone up while wages have been flat. Economic opportunity is slipping away from too many Americans.

We know how to fix what is happening—by kicking the lobbyists and the lawyers and the rich donors and the giant companies out of the room and putting working families first. The President of the United States isn't interested in doing that. His first major legislative initiative was to try to boot tens of millions of people off their health insurance. His second major legislative initiative is to try to give giant tax breaks to rich folks and enormous corporations while working people pay for them.

I suppose it is not surprising that the President has no intention of helping working families. After all, he is a rich donor, and he personally profits every single day from a giant company he named after himself.

Here is Donald Trump, a man who promised over and over during the Presidential campaign that he would be on the side of working people. Here is Donald Trump doing the exact opposite of what he told the American people he would do. It is the exact opposite of what the American people need him to do. Sooner or later, it is going to catch up with him. President Trump wants to delay that reckoning for as long as possible. From the day he first announced his Presidential campaign, it has been obvious how he plans to do it—by turning us against each other, by telling everyone that the real problem in America is the neighbor who doesn't look like you, the coworker who doesn't worship like you, the guy in the grocery store who doesn't sound like you.

Nowhere has this been more obvious than on the politics of race. In November, President Trump named Jeff Sessions—a man considered too racist to

be a Federal judge—as our Nation's Attorney General. In January, President Trump rolled out an unconstitutional Muslim ban. In August, after White supremacists marched in the streets, President Trump defended hate. Also in August, he used his first Presidential pardon to shield a racist former sheriff who broke the law.

Yesterday morning, the President continued his campaign to turn us against each other when he decided to end the DACA Program. DACA gives 800,000 young people who were brought to the United States as children the chance to live, work, get an education, and become valuable members of our society. The President said he would end the program. That means over 800,000 young people who have been here their entire lives, who came out of the shadows to contribute to our economy, could be deported to countries they barely know.

Divide and conquer is an old story in America. It is a cold, political calculation. Those with money and power have used it time and time again to keep us fighting with each other—fighting over religion, fighting over race, fighting over anything that keeps us from coming together to fight back against a rigged system.

President Trump wants us to turn our backs on 800,000 Dreamers, including nearly 8,000 Dreamers in Massachusetts. He doesn't want us to look at these young people and see them for who they are; he just wants us to see them as threats. After all, he launched his campaign by calling immigrants rapists and criminals, and that is exactly what he wants everyone else to see. I would like to introduce three Dreamers from Massachusetts and let the American people decide if that is true.

Reina Guevara fled from El Salvador when she was only 11 years old. She is a model student. She won a scholarship, and right now she is working on her bachelor's degree at UMass Boston.

Before the DACA Program allowed her to come out of the shadows, Reina worked up to 70 hours a week in a restaurant for a boss who sexually harassed her. On multiple occasions, he propositioned her to have a sexual relationship with him, threatening to call immigration on her if she refused his advances. The harassment became so frequent and so bad that Reina decided to quit her job, forgoing critical income. Knowing there was no one for her to tell, her boss refused to pay her for her last 2 weeks of work.

Reina was an easy target. A woman without official immigration status was a woman who couldn't complain to HR when she was assaulted, underpaid, or made to work in dangerous conditions. A woman without immigration status was a woman who knew that speaking up could mean immediate deportation.

When Reina entered the DACA Program, her life changed. It meant she could stand up for herself without

being afraid that she would be kicked out of America.

I asked Reina what DACA means to her. This is what she told me: "DACA to me means the opportunity to be the first one in my family to graduate with a Bachelor's Degree, to work without the fear of being humiliated and exploited due to my status." Donald Trump wants Reina banished from our country.

Bruno Villegas McCubbin was 6 years old when he left his home. Like most parents, Bruno's mother and father wanted to keep their children safe. That wasn't easy when Peru's economy collapsed. Bruno's father, who was a traveling salesman, was forced to travel to more remote and more dangerous places. It got so dangerous that on one trip, Bruno said he was attacked by armed robbers and injured by flying glass from gunshots.

After that, Bruno's parents decided they should escape to America. Bruno's family settled in Garden Grove, CA, where Bruno and his sister and his parents shared one room in his uncle's two-bedroom apartment. Bruno's parents, who had white-collar jobs in Peru, worked 12-hour days in low-wage jobs just to keep food on the table. While his parents were hard at work, Bruno was building dreams. He threw himself into his studies. When he graduated from high school, he was second in his class. Bruno did a lot more than just study; he founded an organization to help struggling students. He served as a tutor. He played the saxophone.

Bruno was in high school when the DACA Program began. Today, he is a junior at Harvard, where he serves as a student coordinator for the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative, which provides financial aid information to promising high school students from low-income families.

I asked Bruno what DACA means to him. He said: "It means the opportunity for many of us to work here legally and achieve the American Dream that this country still boasts, so we can then give back to our families that have sacrificed so much for us, and to the country that helped form us into what we are today." Donald Trump wants Bruno banished from our country.

I could do this all night, but others want a chance to tell their stories as well. So I am just going to do one more: Elias Rosenfeld. Like Bruno, Elias was 6 years old when his parents brought him and his sister to the United States. He remembers hearing stories every day of violence in Venezuela. A gun was pulled on his mother while her car was at a stoplight, and his grandfather was robbed after making a bank withdrawal. To keep her kids safe, Elias' mother transferred to a company in Miami on a visa that allows executives and managers from other countries to work in the United States and then to apply for permanent resident status. But she never got the chance to apply for permanent resident

status because when Elias was 11, his mother died of cancer. When he lost his mother, Elias lost his protected status without even knowing it.

In high school, Elias took tough classes, including 13 advanced placement courses. He worked hard, and he earned nearly straight A's. He served in student government and on the speech and debate teams. He volunteered with the Children's Trust and also with the Homeless Trust. The activities director at Elias' high school called Elias his hero. He said: "I've been teaching here for 20 years and I've never seen a student like this young man."

Elias' commitment to academic excellence earned him a Myra Kraft Transitional Year Program scholarship to attend Brandeis University. Earlier this year, Elias worked as an intern in my office. I asked Elias what DACA meant to him. He said it has been a "source of optimism and a light of protection." He wrote:

For years, before DACA arrived I would sleep in bed at night with a constant fear of deportation, imagining in my head the visual of ICE breaking through my door to deport myself or my sister. When DACA came, this fear stopped. . . .

But Donald Trump wants Elias banished from our country.

America asked people like Elias, Bruno, Reina, and nearly a million young people all across this country to come out of the shadows. We made them a promise: Work hard, play by the rules, contribute to America, get an education, defend our country, help us build an economy that works, and in exchange we won't knock on your door in the middle of the night and rip you from your home and ship you off to a foreign country you barely remember.

President Trump decided to break that promise. He is hiding behind Jeff Sessions and some flimsy lawyer nonsense, but he is breaking that promise, pure and simple. That means he is failing in his basic, moral duty to protect these people, these children of America.

That is not who America is. America is not a place that punishes children for the sins of their fathers. America is not a place that boots out smart, hard-working, decent young people who have spent nearly all their lives here and who are a core part of our Nation's future.

Donald Trump wants to turn us against each other. He wants to banish Reina, Bruno, Elias, and hundreds of thousands of other young people from our country. He says that is how we will build a better America.

Well, Donald Trump is wrong. He wants to build a hateful and frightened America. But we have the chance to turn away from the hate and fear. We have the chance right here in Congress to take an important step toward building a stronger, more vibrant America. We have the chance to make DACA the law so that Donald Trump cannot take away the dreams of 800,000

young people like Reina, Bruno, and Elias. We can and we must pass the Dream Act now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, the Senator from Massachusetts has delivered a powerful message, obviously, one from the heart and a compelling message. I want to thank her for that.

We have a bunch of new pages here. They showed up for duty earlier this week, and they are generally, I think, rising juniors, probably 16 years old or so. Most of the 800,000 people who we are talking about here as Dreamers came here before they were old enough to be a page, and many of them were not even old enough to go to kindergarten or first grade. They didn't come here by their own volition.

They were, for the most part, brought here by their parents. They were brought here to flee horrific conditions in countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, where there is violence, murder, and mayhem that is largely created because of our addiction to drugs in this country. They send us drugs trafficked through those countries from South America, and we send guns and money to places such as Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

When we take into custody bad guys, people who are here illegally and who are also criminals, where do we send them? We send them back to Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. We send them criminals, and we send guns and money to those three countries. The conditions that this toxic mix creates are ones that I wouldn't want to submit my children or my family to, and, frankly, a lot of the people in those three countries feel the same way.

We are complicit in their misery. We are complicit in their misery, and that is why so many folks in those three countries, which are called the Northern Triangle, try to escape.

These kids didn't come here on their own. They came here with their parents. Many of them, frankly, don't have any memories of where they were born. We are not looking for them to become American citizens. What DACA attempts to do is to give them some time—to give us some time—to be able to make their stays here legal—something short of citizenship.

If your hearts aren't touched by the stories that Senator WARREN just told us about these three young people, I want to take a little different approach and express why we should care. I came here to the Senate some years ago as a recovering Governor. I was privileged to be Governor of Delaware from 1993 to 2001, and people say that I am still a recovering Governor.

I have focused much of my life on public service and on creating a nurturing environment for job creation and job preservation. Presidents, Governors, Senators, and mayors like to talk about the jobs they created and,

in truth, we don't create jobs. People in our positions try to create a more nurturing environment for job creation, and that includes a quality workforce with the skills that are needed by employers. It includes transportation infrastructure that works. It includes public safety. It includes access to capital to finance the projects. It includes a lot of things: energy, a reasonable tax burden, and common-sense regulations. Those are some of the elements that create a nurturing environment.

One of the top items on that list is always workforce—people who have the skills that employers are looking for, people who have the willingness to come to work and to work hard, to be trained, and to be promoted, in many cases, and people who are honest.

I have not met 800 Dreamers. But at Delaware State University, which is a historically Black college and university in Dover, DE—they have been around for 125 years—there are about 40 Dreamers who are undergraduates there, either freshmen or sophomores, and I have met most of them. They are some of the most remarkable college students I have ever met. These are students who aren't just getting by with a 2.0 average or 3.0 average. These are students who are on the dean's list, who come to school on time, who don't cut classes, who make excellent grades, who work in many cases part-time jobs to help support their time in school, and who are anxious to be able to make real contributions to our community, to our State, and to our country.

One young man, who was from El Salvador, at a public event we had 2 days ago on Tuesday at Delaware State University, said this to us—to the president of the university, Harry Williams, and their new provost, Tony Allen. He stood up, he held his hand over his heart, and he said: Every day since I was the age of 5 in kindergarten, in the school I held my hand over my heart and pledged allegiance to that flag. He said: I don't have any other flag. I don't have any other country. This is my country.

We need young men and young women like him.

I learned early this month, from the Department of Labor jobs report for the month of August, that one of the things it shared with us was that there are millions of jobs in this country that are going unfilled. There are millions of jobs in this country that are going unfilled. We have thousands of them in Delaware. Michigan probably has tens of thousands. I was told by one of the Ohio Senators that there are jobs in Ohio that are not being filled because the people who are applying for them don't have the skills, the work ethic, or the record. In some cases, they can't pass a drug test. Yet these employers in all of our States need workers. In a day and age when we need workers with the academic skills and the work skills—we need them probably more than ever—we are

ready to pack up 800,000 of them and send them back to where their parents came from, where they were born.

It is in America's naked self-interest to ensure that these young people are given a shot to make the kind of contributions that they are capable of to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of employers in this country. Given that opportunity, they will make their parents proud, and they will make us proud. They will make our Nation stronger and more economically vibrant. It is in our interest to let them stay and to welcome them here.

I will close with the words of Matthew 25: When I was a stranger in your land, did you welcome me? Think about that. When I was a stranger in your land, did you welcome me?

Let's welcome these young people. Let's put them to work.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, we are here to stand this afternoon for close to 800,000 young men and women—10,000 of them are living in Connecticut—who have relied on a promise, not just any old promise but a promise from the United States of America.

The promise to them was that they could come forward, share information about their cell phones, their addresses, their relatives, their workplaces, their tax information, and they would be permitted to live here, study here, work here, and give back to their communities.

Now America is breaking that promise and betraying its values in the decision by the President of the United States to end the DACA Program. This decision is repugnant to the basic ideals of America. It is repulsive to the values that underlie the rule of law.

I heard a commentator last night saying: You know, these DACA people, when they came here, they broke the law. Think of it for a moment. A 2-year old, a 3-year old brought by their parents, maybe by a stranger, maybe by other relatives, is breaking the law because that relative then failed to go through the steps necessary for documentation. Or there may have been a variety of other circumstances, such as persecution, threatened death and injury in the country where that young man or woman was born.

But we know—because it is part of the DACA Program—that they were minors when they came here. They made no decision to break the law. They have been here for their entire lives, except for a few months or years.

We know also that, for almost all of them, this country is the only one they know, and English is usually the only language they speak. Their lives are here. Their friends are here and families as well. But most important for the United States of America that made that promise, their futures are here. They are, as the President of the United States said, terrific people. We love them, as he also said.

The announcement that he would end their legal status here, that they would be deported, that they would be ejected from this country is the height of hypocrisy and inhumanity. It is cruel and irrational, it will deprive our economy of hundreds of billions of dollars over the next 10 years, it will mean disruption in workplaces, and that is why employers are protesting the decision. It will mean schools will be uncertain about how many students there will be, and that is why university presidents and administrators are condemning it, but, most importantly, it will betray who we are as Americans—a nation of immigrants, a nation that keeps its promise.

Now, let's be very clear. When the Attorney General of the United States says there will be an orderly wind down—I think those are the terms he used. There is no such thing as an orderly wind down of DACA. There is disruption and destruction, already chaos and confusion, terror among the young people who are living their lives now seemingly on borrowed time. It is borrowed time because the President of the United States has thrown a ticking timebomb into this body, in effect playing chicken with their lives. They are the ones whose lives will be blown up if that timebomb explodes. They are, indeed, voices and faces who have come to us in the last day or so, two of them from Connecticut I met with or saw.

The first is Mirka Dominguez-Salinas. She has been in the United States for 16 years. She is pursuing her dream at Southern Connecticut State University of becoming a teacher. She was student teaching last week, but her future career in education has suddenly been jeopardized.

Jonathan Gonzales, too, is a student at Southern. He has a double major in economics and applied mathematics. He also mentors other students at public schools in New Haven. He has the freedom basically to live as anyone else in this country, to drive to work, and his freedom, too, is in jeopardy.

They have come to Washington, DC, today not only to share their stories but to raise their voices and represent those 10,000 others in Connecticut, like Vania, who was born in Mexico and brought to Willimantic at age 3. She thinks of Connecticut as her home. It is the only home she knows, where she went to school and made her friends. Would she be sent back to Mexico, where she knows no one, has no job or connection? Will she go by plane or will she be forced to walk to the border or maybe by car? We are talking about deportation—physical ejection from the country—not a vague concept of maybe in a few years. We are talking about deportation of 800,000 people, beginning in 6 months, on a scale, a magnitude, and scope that is unprecedented in the history of the United States of America—the same country that welcomed my father at the age of 17, when he fled Germany to escape persecution

and knew virtually no one, had not much more than the shirt on his back and spoke almost no English. Just as many of them came to this country at a much younger age, and this country gave them, as it did my father, a chance to succeed.

There is no orderly way to wind down this program. There is only grief, pain and suffering for those 800,000 Dreamers but also for the rest of us, for our economy, for our sense of self and morality.

As far as the rule of law is concerned, these young people are not the lawbreakers. It is the Attorney General of the United States who is wrong about the law but, more importantly, wrong to decline to defend the law and prejudging, instead, what the result would be if this case went to court, if those 10 attorneys general went to court on DACA to prove their case, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

Where does Attorney General Jeff Sessions have the power to prejudge what the Supreme Court of the United States would do?

So we have a decision ahead of us, which is to rise to the challenge, to diffuse that timebomb, to pass the Dream Act, to enable these young people who are faced with terror and anxiety to have a chance to continue productive and important lives and to avoid the economic nightmare for employers and job creators who depend on them.

We have the opportunity and obligation now to make sure these young people are protected, not punished, because their futures are at stake, our future as a nation is at stake, and I am here to say to Jonathan, to Vania, to all of the Dreamers that we will fight as long and hard as possible to make sure the American dream is alive and well for you. That dream was promised to you by a great country, and great countries keep their promises.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, I thank my friend and colleague from Connecticut for his thoughtful words and thank all of my other colleagues who come to the floor to speak up for young people who need our voices right now.

“Through no fault of their own” has been repeated over and over again. These young people, oftentimes babies, were brought to this country without documentation, but they were brought here. They didn't know what was happening to them, a 1-year-old, 2-year-old, 5-year-old, 7- or 8-year-old. It wasn't their choice and yet they are paying the price for what happened.

There is no question, we need immigration reform—no question at all. I was very proud and pleased to support a major effort a few years ago, a bipartisan effort in the Senate to do comprehensive immigration reform. It is something we need because our system is broken. There is no question. It hurts families, workers, businesses,

and farmers in Michigan every single day, but targeting these almost 800,000 young people does nothing to solve that problem.

I am anxious to work with colleagues across the aisle to address comprehensive reform so we have a legal system that works, but we have, again, about 800,000 young people right now who stepped forward and are covered by something called the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or DACA, who were told, if they would step forward, provide the government all of their personal information, information about their families, that they—as long as they were following the rules, they were going to school, they were going to college, they were serving in the military, they were doing the right thing—would be allowed to stay and be successful in our country.

In Michigan alone, 10,000 young people have been approved for DACA. Those are some of the numbers, but we are not talking about numbers, as we know. We are talking about people's lives.

We are talking about 10,000 young people in Michigan who are attending college, who are working as nurses or doctors and buying homes and building their own businesses. Maybe they are reaching out in some other way to be successful in the economy. They are serving in our military right now. Somebody serving in our military right this minute could lose their life for our country, the country they love, at the same time the President—and his administration—has turned his back on them. These are people raising American children of their own, with American family members around them. These children aren't numbers. Frankly, they are our neighbors.

In Michigan, we care about our neighbors. One of our neighbors is named Wilfredo. He is a Dreamer who was brought to the United States when he was only 9 years old. Wilfredo works hard. He is a restaurant supply salesman. He owns a home. He is crazy about soccer, and he says he is crazy about his girlfriend. He told Michigan Bridge Magazine that they hope to get married one day, but a future that seemed so bright just a few days ago now has a dark cloud hanging over it. Wilfredo is scared. His girlfriend is scared. His family is scared. Will he be sent back to a country he barely remembers? What will happen to his sister who is an American citizen? Will he ever see her again?

Another one of our neighbors in Michigan, Juan, shares that fear. He was only 1 year old, just a baby, when his parents brought him to the United States. For many years, Juan lived in the shadows, but that changed in 2012 when our country made a promise to Juan and to others to suddenly step forward and change their future. He was able to get a job, go back to school, drive, even buy a house. Juan told the Detroit Free Press: “I know of

no other place.” He was brought here when he was 1 year old. It is not about sending him back somewhere. There is no going back. He doesn’t know any other country. He said: “We love this country and want to make this country a better place.”

Wilfredo, Juan, and so many other young people are great examples of why we need comprehensive immigration reform to happen in the House and Senate, with the White House—not using them in a way that certainly does not show the best about America.

Right now, though, until we can get comprehensive immigration reform, we need to pass the bipartisan Dream Act to protect the young people who have been hurt by this administration’s actions. I know we have colleagues on both sides of the aisle who want to work together to do something, to prove that America does keep its promises.

These Dreamers have done nothing wrong. They have done everything right. We need to show them we do care about them and make sure our country keeps its promises to them.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today, along with so many of my colleagues—and Ms. STABENOW, who just spoke—with regard to DACA. We are here to oppose President Trump’s unnecessary, political, and damaging decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, the DACA Program.

To close the door on the American dream for nearly 800,000 people who are American in every way but on paper goes against every measure of sound public policy, productive economics, and basic decency. Today, I join my colleagues in Congress, hundreds of American business executives, thousands of higher education officials and faith leaders, and a majority of the American people who have made their voices heard over the past few days to denounce President Trump’s elimination of DACA, and call for legislative action to protect Dreamers and provide them a realistic and responsible pathway to citizenship.

We must be absolutely clear about what President Trump has done, on his own, without any need or, in my view, legal requirement to do so. By his choice, in less than 6 months, the administration will begin forcing hundreds of thousands of Dreamers, many in their twenties and thirties, out of their jobs, out of our military, out of our schools, and out of the United States—the only country that most of them have ever really known.

It is true that Dreamers were brought here as children outside the appropriate processes, but this was through no fault or decision of their own. Since then, they have pursued higher education, started families, worked hard, paid taxes, and stayed out of serious trouble with the law.

Some have served honorably with our Armed Forces and put their lives on the line to keep us all safe. We gain nothing and lose a great deal by separating these young people from their jobs, their homes, their spouses, and children and sending them to countries they hardly know.

At no point in our debates over immigration have we found a good reason to spend our limited immigration enforcement resources on Dreamers. The premise of DACA was, and continues to be, that we need permanent, comprehensive immigration reform—but until then, Dreamers who contribute to our society should be allowed to come out of the shadows and lead healthy, productive lives.

Rather than pursuing these young Americans, our immigration enforcement resources should focus on practical measures that make us safe, not wasteful and symbolic projects like a border wall. We should improve surveillance of the border and the apprehension of more illegal entrants. We should incentivize legal immigration and make it feasible for people to come here and pursue better opportunities. I am eager to work with my colleagues to craft a tough but fair, and comprehensive immigration reform package that incorporates good ideas from both sides of the aisle. Until then, however, we accomplish nothing by forcing hundreds of thousands of families to live in fear, and regret ever trusting our country enough to register for DACA in the first place.

Too much of this debate is driven by President Trump’s apparent refusal to accept basic truths about who his actions affect and what his decisions mean for our country. His administration’s rhetoric suggests that deporting Dreamers will make us safer and somehow restore the rule of “law and order,” but these are the facts of the matter: first, today, unauthorized immigration continues to decline, as it has every year, since its peak in 2007. Second—and not without controversy—President Obama’s administration deported a record 5 million undocumented immigrants, particularly violent felons. These were important steps, but we have learned that enforcement alone does not solve practical problems for people like Dreamers, and their families and employers.

Moreover, deporting Dreamers does nothing to make us safer. Dreamers qualify for DACA precisely because they have not committed serious crimes, and conflating them with criminals only feeds the false premise that immigrants are prone to criminality when all of the evidence shows that the opposite is true. In fact, studies from the National Bureau of Economic Research and the conservative Cato Institute have concluded that immigrants tend to commit fewer crimes than do people born in the United States, and U.S. Census data shows that, among adult males, immigrants are one-half to one-fifth as likely to be incarcerated here.

Just as insidious is the persistent myth that Dreamers are somehow harming our economy or taking jobs from American citizens. We can and should debate what kind of immigration reform would best support our economy, but there is no credible support for the argument that Dreamers harm our economy or that deporting them would create jobs for anyone. The fact is that, according to the Center for American Progress, ending DACA would result in an estimated loss of over \$460 billion from our GDP over the next decade, including an annual loss of over \$60 million per year in my home State of Rhode Island.

We know from experience that deporting employed immigrants does not raise wages. In fact, many jobs lost tend to go unfilled. And, because of President Trump’s actions, families of Dreamers will sit at their kitchen tables in the coming months and struggle needlessly with questions of how to feed their children and keep roofs over their heads now that the administration has forced mom or dad out of work, or out of the country. These are American families, and doing this to them is the opposite of putting America first.

It is our responsibility to protect our country from economic harm and to uphold our ideals and commitments, and that means keeping faith with Dreamers and their families. We should put ourselves in their shoes and remember how each of our families came to this Nation and worked to achieve the American dream for themselves, their children, and their children’s children.

I applaud Senators GRAHAM and DURBIN for introducing the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important legislation on our way to a meaningful debate on comprehensive immigration reform. I hope that we can find the will to come together and swiftly pass this legislation to strengthen our Nation, keep our economy growing, and keep faith with our best ideals.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here to speak about President Trump’s decision to shut down the DACA Program, the so-called Dream program that allows children who were brought here by their parents, often at a very young age, and who grew up here and are now, as far as they know, full Americans—this is their home—to not be thrown out of their adopted country and sent home to a place that they do not know, all because of what

their parents did when they were still children. We don't even hold children accountable for contracts they enter into. You have to be an adult to be held accountable for a contract you enter into. Yet, apparently, this President is willing to take these children, break up their families, and send them to a country they do not know, all because of a decision that was made by their parents, in some cases when these kids were infants.

I have spoken to these kids, who are generally called Dreamers, who have no memory of living anywhere other than this country. I don't know about the Presiding Officer, but it is hard for me to scroll back and come up with any concrete memories of when I was 1 or 2 or 3 years old. These are kids who grew up in American schools. They grew up in American families. They grew up playing American sports. They grew up as a part of our culture. But now, for reasons that really defy humane explanation, the President wants to cast a cloud over about 800,000 children—now turned into young adults in many cases and many more who are right behind them in the program—who were looking forward to this as something they could do when they came of age to get their full-on DACA permit.

We have over 1,000 people who are approved under the DACA Program in Rhode Island. We are pretty proud of them. They have served in the military. They have had jobs around the country.

Ninety-one percent of DACA recipients are employed, pay taxes, and contribute to Social Security. When we had the immigration debate, that is what we said we wanted people to do: Pay your taxes, get a job, pay into Social Security, support yourself, and support the system around you. Well, they have done that. But because of a decision they did not even make—a decision that under American law they would be incapable of making because they were not adults—this shadow of punishment and family disruption has been put over them by perhaps the least humane person ever to hold the office of President of the United States. And if this doesn't prove that proposition, there are plenty more that do.

I understand that our leader has urged Speaker RYAN and Majority Leader MCCONNELL to get Senator DURBIN's and Senator GRAHAM's Dream Act up for a vote. I think it will pass. I think it will pass with more than 60 votes. I think we, at least—the decent Members of the Senate—can lift that cloud of fear, threat, and anxiety. I think we should. I think we should do it soon. And if Majority Leader MCCONNELL is not interested in bringing this to the floor, I understand that Senator SCHUMER has made it pretty clear that he is going to insist on attaching this bill to some other measure as we move forward this year. I completely support him.

This President said that he loves these kids and wants to approach this

issue with a big heart. Huh. The White House, which, the last I heard, the President of the United States runs, put out talking points telling these kids to get ready to depart. Get ready for departure from this country. Really? That is the big heart—to threaten 800,000 kids who have played by the rules, who have done what the Government of the United States asked them to do, to get ready to depart? Because of what—some crime they committed? No. They committed no crime, but because their parents brought them here as kids.

Jean came here from Peru. He was brought to the United States by his parents when he was a few months old. He is 23 now. If he were to go back to Peru, he would have to move to a village where he has never lived, that is not in a safe area, that he does not know because he has been here for over 20 years—22 and change if he is 23 now.

Rodrigo Pimental came here from Portugal at 10 months old. Rhode Island has a very vibrant Portuguese community, of which we are really proud. His parents came to join that community, pursue a better life, start a small business, and succeed. Rodrigo doesn't even remember Portugal. He has a computer science degree—a college computer science degree. He says the United States is his home. What is the gain for our country in telling Rodrigo Pimental, with his computer science degree from college, that he needs to go back to Portugal because at 10 months old his parents brought him here in search of a better life? Where the heck is the justice or the decency in that?

These are all Rhode Island kids whom I am talking about. There are hundreds of thousands of stories around the country.

Lesdin Salazar from Guatemala was brought to the United States by her parents at age 7. We are going to break up that family and send her back to Guatemala because why? Because at age 7 she didn't successfully talk her parents out of bringing her here? Or maybe she should have left her parents then: Oh, parents, boy, it would be illegal to go to the United States without the proper paperwork. I can't be a part of that. I am staying in Guatemala. You go.

Is that the expectation we have for a 7-year-old, that we would now punish her with deportation and with breaking up her family? That is the big heart of this President?

I will tell my colleagues about one of her memories. She doesn't remember much of Guatemala, but she does remember sitting in her living room with her parents watching President Obama announce the DACA Program. She says that her family cried tears of joy when that happened—at last, a path forward from the problem that was not of her own making. She does not understand why the United States is giving so many children an education here and then sending them back to other coun-

tries, breaking up their families, and I don't, either. It makes no sense.

Krissia Rivera came to Rhode Island from El Salvador. She came when she was 8. Oh, so maybe that is old enough that she could have broken up with her parents back then or talked them out of coming here. She lived first in Maryland. Interestingly, she went to the same school the President's son now attends. She came to Rhode Island and graduated from college. She is currently in medical school at Brown University—obviously somebody we want to get out of our country. She is scared. She feels exposed.

I would like to have one person come to the Senate floor and tell me what Krissia Rivera did at age 8 that was so wrong that we are willing to take somebody who will have a Brown University medical school degree and throw them out of our country for no reason. Explain that to me.

I will tell my colleagues, there is a lot that is embarrassing about the way our President behaves. This is pretty bad, particularly in the wake of the way he behaved after Nazi flags were paraded through Charlottesville, VA—the city of Thomas Jefferson's great university. He spent the next couple of days winking at White supremacist Nazi types, equating their behavior with the behavior of the protesters who came out. I would hope that if neo-Nazis were walking through Providence, I would go out and protest. Am I as wrong as the Nazis? I don't think so. But President Trump appears to think so—it was just two sides having an evenhanded dispute. I don't think so.

When the President reacted to Charlottesville the way he did, he was winking at the worst impulses in our society: bigotry, hatred, discrimination of people based on color and religion—things that we have fought back against for generations. Fighting back against those evils is part of what makes us Americans. But does President Trump fight back against those evils? No. Just a little wink, a little pat on the head along the way: Keep it up, boys; I don't mind that much. No difference between you and the people who come out because they are outraged to see Nazi flags flying in Charlottesville, VA.

And now this. And now this. Who the hell is President Trump talking to when he does this? Who gets the wink this time? If this isn't another wink to bigotry and hatred and discrimination, I don't know what is. No one can explain to me why an 8-year-old, who is such a good person that she will come to a new country and come all the way to Brown University's medical school, is to be punished for not having broken up with her parents at age 8 when they brought her to this country. It makes no sense.

I see the distinguished senior Senator from Illinois here on the floor. The battle for the DACA Program and for the Dream Act has been a cause of his political life. There is no person in this

Chamber to whom more credit is due for this program than Senator DURBIN. So with great respect, as well as affection, I will yield the floor to him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE for his kind words.

I come to the floor to join in with a dozen or more of my colleagues who were here earlier to talk about the situation we now face. Senator WHITEHOUSE is correct—this is an issue that is very personal to me. It is one that dates back to the year 2001, 16 years ago. It was a time when we received a call in my office in the city of Chicago, and the person on the other end was with a program called the Merit music program. She said: I have a problem with one of my students, and I need your help.

The Merit music program is a special opportunity for young people in Chicago's public schools, particularly from low-income families, to be trained on a musical instrument, free of charge, and some amazing things happen. Every student who is part of the Merit music program goes to college—every single one of them. They learn self-esteem, they learn a musical instrument, and it shows. Their lives are transformed.

She told us the story of one of these students. Her name is Tereza Lee. Tereza Lee was born in Korea and brought to the United States by her mom and dad when she was 2 years old. They came through Brazil before they came to Chicago, but they settled in Chicago. Her mom and dad raised her and her brother and sister. They were not well-off at all. In fact, they were poor.

Mom worked in a dry cleaner establishment, which is fairly common in Chicago; Korean Americans probably work there more than any other group. Her father was an aspiring preacher who wanted to open a church for the Korean population, but it never seemed to materialize. Mom worked extra hard, and the kids went to public schools.

At age 12, Tereza Lee heard about the Merit music program, signed up for it, went in, and fell in love with playing the piano. She turned out to be a prodigy. She was extraordinary.

By the time she was ready to graduate from high school, they said: You have to apply to a music school.

Well, she wasn't sure. Nobody she knew had gone to college. But she started to fill out the application and ran into the question about her Social Security number. She turned to her mother and said: What am I supposed to do about this?

Her mother said: I don't know. After we brought you to the United States at the age of 2, we didn't file any papers.

What could they do? They reached out to the Merit music program, and the Merit music program said: Let's call Durbin's office.

They called my office and contacted my caseworker, whose name is Clarisol

Duque. She is now my chief of staff, but back then she was a caseworker. She looked up the law. She called the INS, and they said: The law is very clear. Tereza Lee from Korea is undocumented. She is in the United States. Although she is now 17 or 18 years old, she never filed the appropriate papers, and under the laws of the United States of America, the recourse is for her to return to the last country she was in—Brazil—to wait 10 years, and apply to come back to the United States—10 years.

I thought to myself, and so did my caseworker: Why would you do this to this young girl? She did nothing wrong. In fact, she is a pretty amazing story of success from a poor family.

I sat down and said: Let's write a law to deal with it, and we wrote the DREAM Act. My original cosponsor of the DREAM Act was ORRIN HATCH of Utah. This goes back, as I said, 16 years ago, so when I stand here today and talk about this issue, it is an issue I have come to know in a lot of different ways. Most importantly, I have come to know the young people whose lives have been affected by our laws as they currently exist.

Over the years, an interesting thing has happened. After I wrote the DREAM Act and would go around Chicago and tell the story of this new bill that I had just introduced, there would be a lot of young people, mainly Hispanic youngsters, who would listen to me and not react very much at all. Then, many times, I would go out to my car to go back home at the end of the night, and in the darkness, standing by my car, would be one or two young people. They would look in both directions to make sure no one could hear them, and they would whisper to me: Senator, I am a Dreamer.

These were undocumented children—teenagers, adolescents—who had been taught early in life to be extremely careful: Never, ever admit that you are undocumented; never, ever get involved with the law because you could be deported tomorrow morning, and your family might be deported with you. So they grew up in fear—fear of what might happen with a knock on the door.

So now comes this politician, this Senator, who says: I am going to change the law. I am going to make it right for you.

Well, many of their parents were skeptical. They didn't believe it. Politicians say a lot of things. But these young people did something very interesting. Their approach to this evolved from standing in the darkness and whispering "I am a Dreamer," listening to their parents tell them "Don't say out loud that you are undocumented"; they, of course, did exactly what their parents didn't want them to do. They started standing up and saying publicly: I am a Dreamer. I want to tell you who I am and my story.

They wore T-shirts and buttons, and they rallied, and there was no question

that they were going to come and tell their stories. As they told their stories to me, I decided the best thing I could do was to tell their stories on the floor of the U.S. Senate. So I started telling them. With their permission and a color photograph, I would tell the stories of these young people. Each one of them, standing at this desk and other places in the Chamber, usually captured the attention of the people who would gather because each one of these stories was so compelling. They were compelling stories because here were young people who had all the odds against them.

I remember when I was a teenager, in my insecurity, wondering what I would ever do and afraid of doing the wrong thing. Then I think of these young people, who have the decks stacked against them. They have been told they are not legal in this country, and there are people who would like to see them gone tomorrow. Yet these young people started emerging and telling the stories, and I started repeating them. Then some amazing stories started emerging about what they were doing with their lives.

You see, if you are undocumented in this country, you don't qualify for a lot of things most Americans take for granted—Pell grants to go to college. Students from low-income families receive up to \$5,000 or more a year to go to college. Undocumented students, Dreamers, receive nothing—nothing—from the Federal Government.

The same thing is true about student loans. For the most part, unless there is a State program, these undocumented students can't qualify for any government student loans. They have to find some other way. They usually have to work their way through college—or whatever their aspirations might be.

Over the years, this bill was heard before committees and was voted on from time to time in the House and in the Senate. Unfortunately, we never could quite find that moment when the bill could pass the Senate and the House in the same year and the same session. It never came together. There was a time when we passed it with a majority vote in the Senate, but under our rules we needed 60 votes. So we fell just short of being able to move the bill forward.

Along the way, I had a colleague in the U.S. Senate named Barack Obama, my junior Senator. He was a cosponsor of my DREAM Act. Of course, he went on to bigger and better things and became the President of the United States. I am very proud of him for his achievement. But I didn't waste any time after he was elected President calling him and saying: Help me. We have to do something to help these young people.

I wrote him a letter, cosigned by Republican Senator Dick Lugar of Indiana, asking him to think of a way he might be able to protect the Dreamers from being deported until we passed the law. I didn't get a response.

A year passed—a year. I sent a second letter, this time with 23 Senators signing it, urging President Obama to do something, and he did. He created the DACA program.

The DACA Program was basically an opportunity for young people to come forward, to register with the government, pay a filing fee, submit to a criminal background check, and then see if they qualified for a 2-year protection from deportation and a 2-year opportunity to legally work in the United States.

Well, I was just reminded: August 15, 2012, was the first day to sign up. I joined with my friend and colleague, Congressman LUIS GUTIÉRREZ, of Chicago. We decided we would create a sign-up, an opportunity at Navy Pier, a historic place in the city, and invite young people who qualified for DACA—Dreamers—to come in and sign up. We got volunteer immigration lawyers who wouldn't charge these young people anything, and we sent out the notices to every group we could think of: Come on in if you are eligible to sign up for DACA.

Congressman GUTIÉRREZ and I didn't know how many would show up. We were afraid it might be 200 or 300 people, and we didn't know if we could handle any more than that with the volunteer attorneys we had.

Then something happened. It was amazing. At midnight, the night before, they started queueing up outside of Navy Pier, families—mom, dad, and that young son or daughter who qualified for DACA—and they waited in the dark all night for the chance to sign up. When it was over, it wasn't hundreds, but thousands—thousands—who came to Navy Pier. We couldn't handle them. We had to set up workshops all over the city afterward to give them their chance to sign up.

It was a big risk for them. This was the first time in their lives they were going to trust the Government of the United States with information that they had carefully kept personal, confidential, and secret. They were going to trust this government by signing up for a program because the President of the United States had said: It will protect you. They had the \$500 or \$600 they needed for the filing fee. They were prepared for all the background checks. At the end of the day, after 5 or 6 years of DACA, 780,000 young people have signed up for this protection.

What has happened to these young people is nothing short of amazing. I could go on for a long time about the success stories of the DACA recipients once they got that protection, once they could work.

I love to tell the story about Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. That school decided they were going to open up competition for their medical school to DACA-protected young people—not a special spot for them or a set-aside of quotas or numbers. No, they had to compete with everyone else. But that medical school

said: These young people now deserve a chance.

As a result of that decision, there are 28 medical students at Loyola Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago, and they are there because there was no place else that would accept them. This college of medicine said: If you are DACA protected, we will let you compete to come to our school.

The word spread around the country like lightning. Some of the best and brightest young people finally got their chance, and they were accepted to this medical school. They are impressive.

Remember what I said: They don't qualify for government loans. Medical school is expensive. My State, under Governor Patrick Quinn and now continued under Governor Bruce Rauner, a Democrat and Republican, set up a loan for them—but with a catch. Our State loans them enough money to go to medical school at Loyola, as long as they promise to give 1 year of medical practice for each year that we loan the money—1 year of medical practice in the inner cities in Chicago, in Waukegan, in East St. Louis, or in rural areas where they can't find doctors, and they anxiously do so. They anxiously do so because this is their chance. I tell that story because it is one that is particularly poignant.

When President Trump and Attorney General Sessions yesterday decided to put an end to DACA, they put into question whether these young people will ever finish medical school. You can't go to medical school and be an intern and work if you cannot legally work in the United States. They can legally work because of DACA. When DACA disappears, their right to legally work disappears. Their ability to be interns and work in the medical school disappears as well.

What is going to happen to them? Is that the end of their medical education? Loyola stuck its neck out and gave them a chance. Filling those slots will be impossible. Second- and third-year students—you just can't fill those slots. It will be a real loss—a loss of great talent and great opportunity.

When President Trump made this announcement with Attorney General Sessions yesterday, I was really troubled. I have had only one face-to-face conversation with the President. It was his Inauguration Day. It is no surprise that I didn't support him, but I went up and shook hands with him, congratulated him on being elected President, and I said: I want to thank you for the kind things you have said about Dreamers.

He looked me in the eye and he said: Don't worry about those Dreamers. We are going to take care of the Dreamers.

I listened then and so many times afterward when he publicly said something very similar. He said at one point: We love the Dreamers. We are going to take care of those kids—over and over and over again. And I was convinced—I want to be convinced—it was a genuine sentiment in his heart that he was expressing.

He has said some harsh things when it comes to immigration. I think they are fundamentally unfair things—calling Mexican immigrants murderers, rapists; travel bans against people of the Muslim religion. Those things are, in my mind, inconsistent with the values of this country. But he said them, and many people found them appealing.

Yet he always had a special comment when it came to Dreamers and DACA, and I thought maybe—just maybe—he is going to give them a break.

He did until yesterday. His announcement that he is going to put an end to DACA in 6 months—that is going to cause a lot of problems for a lot of innocent people. The good thing that has happened—if there is any good to come of this—is that all across America now, there is a sensitivity, an understanding, an appreciation of who these young people are. It is almost amazing to me that many folks can miss the whole debate for a decade or more, but when you start talking about removing this protection under law, people wake up, stand up, and speak up.

In my city of Chicago, which I am honored to represent, John Rowe is an executive. He is of the opposite political faith. I know it. I like him. He likes me. He is retired now and a very generous man—he and his wife—and helps a lot of young people. In Chicago, he has been the leader in gathering over 120 Chicago business leaders who support DACA and the DREAM Act. They are gathering thousands like them around the United States, business leaders. If you saw the news accounts this morning, leaders of Google and Facebook and others are coming out against President Trump's decision to end DACA.

They are not alone. In addition to that, there is an extraordinary outpouring of support for DACA and Dreamers from the faith community across the United States. I am proud that the Roman Catholic cardinal in Chicago, Blase Cupich, has been outspoken in supporting immigration and supporting the Dreamers and those protected by DACA. It is not the only religion where the leaders have said that. In faiths—Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, Muslim religions—you find the support coming forward. It is an indication to me of the growing support across America.

When 76 percent of the American people agree on anything, we ought to stand up and take notice. And 76 percent of the American people believe we ought to treat these DACA-protected people and Dreamers fairly, justly. That is what we should do.

Yesterday on the floor, I talked about Jesus Contreras. Jesus Contreras was brought to the United States at the age of 6, and his family settled in Houston, TX. He went to Lone Star College down there. Again, he is undocumented, a Dreamer. He finished a course in paramedics. He became a licensed, certified paramedic because of DACA. He happened to be there, of

course, when Hurricane Harvey hit, and he worked night and day saving lives, trying to help the victims of the hurricane.

There were thousands just like him, but the important part of this story is that this young man is one of those undocumented folks who really care about the people of Houston, the people of Texas, and America. He calls this home, and he wrote me a letter and told me that. I read it on the floor yesterday.

There are others. I want to tell you about one today. I am going to try to pronounce her name correctly. Ximena Magana. I probably missed that, but I am close. At 9 years of age, she came to the United States from Mexico City. She was raised in Houston and lives there today.

In high school, Ximena served in the U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. It is better known as Junior ROTC. She was the battalion commander of her high school Junior ROTC Program. Under her leadership, Ximena's battalion was named the best in the Houston Independent School District.

Ximena was the captain of her high school soccer team and a regular volunteer at the Houston Food Bank. Currently, she is majoring in communications at the University of Houston. She interned with U.S. Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE and Houston City Council Member Robert Gallegos.

Due to Ximena's 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 that board.

Last week, in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Ximena stepped in to help her community, just as she has always done. She volunteered at shelters, helping people with FEMA and Red Cross applications. She was joined by many other DACA recipients.

She wrote me a letter. She asked for only one thing—for President Trump to come and visit Houston and meet the DACA volunteers, to meet those heroes, to look in their eyes, to hear their stories before he made his decision about whether they had a future in the United States.

Ximena and so many others have so much to give to this country. Without DACA, she faces deportation. This President, who said "We love the Dreamers," with his decision yesterday, has said that we are going to deport the Dreamers. Ending the protection of DACA will mean they will be subject to deportation any minute of any day. They would send her back to Mexico, where she hasn't lived since she was 9. If that happened, would America be a stronger country or a better country? The answer is clear.

When we introduced the Dream Act, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, who is my cosponsor and a great ally and friend in this, a Republican from South Carolina, said: "The moment of reckoning

is coming." That moment is here. Republican leaders in Congress have to make a decision about Ximena and thousands just like her. Are we going to be a fair and just society? Are we going to give these young people a chance for a future? Are we going to tell them "No thanks. You are not welcome. Leave"? One of the President's appointees to the voter fraud commission, the secretary of state of the State of Kansas, said that this morning. He said that after the President's decision when it comes to eliminating DACA, it is time for them to leave this country. I think he is wrong.

These people, just like this young lady, deserve a chance to be part of our future. How many times has she stood before that great American flag and pledged allegiance, sang the national anthem—the only one she really knows—and believed this was her country, her flag, her future? And now we are going to tell her "No thanks, Ximena. As good as you are, as much as you have done, America doesn't need you"? I don't think so.

As for this Senator, I am going to do everything in my power to protect those Dreamers and give them a chance to not only live legally in America but to become full-fledged citizens of this country.

To all of the Dreamers who are listening to this debate, don't despair. You had the courage to come out of the shadows and to stop whispering and to stand up and tell the world who you are. Because you did that, we are in a stronger position today to help you realize your dream, to become part of the future of America.

I am joined this evening by a number of visitors in my office. We invited them to come and hear me say a few words on the floor. We really lured them in with pizza. They had a little snack upstairs with me, and they are listening to this speech. They are the Dreamers from Georgetown University, my alma mater.

As we said, we learned of their stories and talked about this. I thought it was a pretty big deal when I transferred from Saint Louis University to come here to Georgetown as a sophomore so many years ago. It was kind of a bold thing. I had never been to Washington. I never visited the campus, and I came to the university. What I did was nothing compared to what they have done. They have fought against much greater odds. They have shown more determination and maturity than I ever had at their age. All they are asking for is a chance to graduate from that great university and become part of this great Nation.

Here is what we need to do. We need to make sure that we don't leave this Senate, this House of Representatives this month or in the next few weeks without passing the Dream Act. All I am asking for—all any of us are asking for—bring it to the floor. Bring it to the floor for a vote. I have confidence that we can find 60 votes in the Senate

to pass it. I think at this moment in history we can.

I open my office door and my heart to those of good faith who want to join us in this effort from the Republican side. From the bottom of my heart, I thank Senator GRAHAM, Senator FLAKE, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator GARDNER—four Republican Senators who have made this, thank goodness, a bipartisan effort in the Senate. We need to do the same thing in the House of Representatives. We need to say once and for all: Your dream of becoming part of the future of America is going to be a reality because we are going to step up today, some day soon, and make it a reality.

Finally, I ask the President of the United States—as disappointed as I was by your announcement yesterday, as disappointed as I was after believing that perhaps it might end differently, we still need your help, Mr. President. If you truly do love these Dreamers, if you do believe these young people deserve a chance, we need you to step up and speak up and join us. Let us pass this measure on a bipartisan basis. Join us in passing this measure. Whatever you are thinking about DACA, whether it was constitutional or illegal, let's put that behind us. Let's pass a real law, and let's have a signing ceremony that says on a bipartisan basis we are going to give these young people across America their day of justice, their day of opportunity, their chance to make this an even greater nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I join with the Senator from Illinois, and I thank him for his great leadership on this issue. He has been doing this for a long time. His partnership with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM is inspiring.

I want to begin by thanking Senator DURBIN and Senator GRAHAM for leading this effort and making it bipartisan and making it possible for us to talk about an issue as Americans and not as Democrats and Republicans and having a discussion about who falls into the category of being an American who is entitled to the benefits of being in this country.

For the last 5 years, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals—or DACA—Program has created security and opportunity for young immigrants across this country. Now, the futures of some 800,000 young people—7,900 of them in Massachusetts—have been needlessly put in jeopardy because President Donald Trump feels the need to keep an ill-considered campaign promise made to his base and to break another one made to the best and brightest of our young people by repealing DACA. And because the House of Representatives has refused to debate and hold a vote on comprehensive immigration reform legislation, our immigration system remains tragically broken.

Yesterday, I met one of these Dreamers, Diana Ortiz. Her mother brought her to the United States nearly 20 years ago. Diana studied history at Pomona College in California, and she recently received a master's degree of divinity from the Harvard Divinity School. She hopes to become a U.S. citizen. Diana literally wants to do God's work here on Earth.

DACA has provided Diana and more than a million other young immigrants safety, security, dignity, respect, and opportunity. These are young people who play, study, work, and live next door to us each and every day.

What will the repeal of DACA mean for the Dreamers and for our country? It will mean bad news for our economy. Many of these Dreamers have started their own businesses and are beginning their careers. Over the course of the past 5 years of the program, 91 percent of the Dreamers have found gainful employment. Removing DACA recipients from the workforce would reduce our gross domestic product by more than \$460 billion over a decade and would cut contributions to Medicare and Social Security by more than \$24 billion over that same 10-year period.

It will mean misplaced criminal justice priorities, with law enforcement focusing not on targeting drug dealers, human traffickers, and the real criminals in our society, but on the Dreamers instead. These young people are not the so-called "bad hombres" that President Trump said would be the focus of his administration.

Most tragically, it will mean unnecessary pain and suffering for countless young people and families across Massachusetts and across the United States whose futures will be uncertain. Instead of going to sleep tonight knowing they will be able to live their lives in peace and plan for the future, they are again left with uncertainty, vulnerable to deportation and unable to work legally.

This is heartbreaking. It is unjust, and it is just plain evil. We should not punish these young people who have no other home than the United States of America. We should not go back on the word we gave when we told these young people to come out of the shadows.

These Dreamers are engineers. They are police officers, teachers, and students, many in our great Massachusetts universities. They serve bravely in our military right now—in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. They are our best and our brightest, and they are making the most of the opportunities that the United States has always provided immigrant communities.

I stand here this evening as a testament to the future that any family can achieve in this country. When I announced for the Senate 4 years ago, I decided—really, for the first time in my life—to go up and ring the doorbell of the house that my father grew up in. You pretty much grow up where your mother tells your father he is going to

live. So my mother was from Malden, and my father was from Lawrence, and we grew up in Malden.

My father always said: Well, Lawrence is just this great city. So I went up to ring the doorbell at 88 Phillips Street in Lawrence, in the shadow of the old south mill. It is a triple decker; that is, a three-family home, stacked one on top of the other. My father grew up on the first floor of 88 Phillips, with five brothers and sisters and a mother and father in this very tiny space.

I rang the doorbell to see who lived there now, and the door opened. It was a Dominican family with their children. The accents were different, but the aspirations are just the same for that family as it existed for the Markeys.

Now, my father graduated from Lawrence High School, from the vocational program, and his son is a U.S. Senator from the State of Massachusetts. That was a dream that my father had or his father and mother had to be here in America and to give opportunities, not so much for themselves but for the next generation.

Well, that is what we are talking about. We are talking about these young people whose parents brought them here to give them a better chance, but the children didn't have a choice in whether or not they would come here. They saw the promise that hard work, education, and opportunity—helped a little bit by the government—worked for the people.

So that is really what we are talking about, and that is why I believe it is a new level of inhumanity for President Trump to betray the foundational values of this Nation by repealing DACA. He is no better than Pontius Pilate by having Attorney General Jeff Sessions make the announcement yesterday. President Trump is providing absolutely no leadership for his party or the American people on an issue that even he says is an important one, and I can only hope that he recognizes and understands the cruelty that repealing DACA will inflict on innocent young families, innocent young people all across this country.

So if President Trump wants to take away these protections, then, Congress must act. The ball is in the court of the Republican leadership in the House and in the Senate. Speaker PAUL RYAN and Leader MITCH MCCONNELL can either listen to a growing chorus of their own colleagues and to the business leaders and CEOs—including Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, General Motors—and to academic leaders and countless college and university presidents who all support DACA, or they can side with the forces of intolerance and injustice.

Congress should pass the Dream Act so that individuals who were brought here at a young age can earn citizenship by serving in the military or pursuing higher education.

Ultimately, the House of Representatives must also debate and vote on

comprehensive immigration reform. I have long supported a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million immigrants who are living here in the shadows.

We are the United States of America. We are a nation of immigrants. We are called on not simply to tolerate but to celebrate our immigrant communities, to understand not only the need but the value of our immigrant communities, to embrace not just the differences but the diversity of our immigrant communities.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said: "Remember, remember always that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants and revolutionists." No one knows that better than the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We have always believed that no matter who you are or where you come from, you can achieve the American dream. We recognize that our economy and our security are stronger because of the immigrant families who have enriched our Nation since its founding.

That is why this decision from the Trump administration cannot stand. We will not let it. With Congress now back in session, Republicans should prepare to have a historic debate—a debate about the fairness that we should extend to all of these young people. There are going to be voices, calls, marches, and protests all demanding protections for these innocent Dreamers.

I pledge my support to the 800,000 Dreamers all across our country, and I will not stop fighting for them. We will not stop fighting for them. Millions of people are going to stand up. I believe that the American dream for all of these young people is achievable, and it must be here in the Senate that the realization of that dream begins.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MR. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I want you to imagine for a moment that you are an 11-year-old child. Your mother tells you to pack some things because you are going on a trip. So you pick out four or five of your favorite toys and you put them into a backpack. You put in a bottle of water and some rosary beads as well.

You walk out through the door of your home into the night with your mom. You don't know what is going on. You are just doing what you were told. You hold your mother's hand, and you walk in silence.

Soon you are walking with 20 others through the Mexican desert. You are tired and hungry and carrying everything that matters to you on your back. The sweat is pouring off. The prickly bushes scrape your body. You are overcome by dehydration, and you faint.

Someone comes to your aid. They give you some water from their canteen. You come to and you keep going. Eventually, on this journey, you make

it into the United States of America, into Arizona.

Then, out of the blue, the years pass and you grow up. Fourteen years pass and now you are 25 years old. You have spent more than half your life in the United States of America. You are studying and going to college to get your degree in economics or working full time at the local bank to save money.

You have made friends and built a life for yourself, and things are going well. Then, all of a sudden, your future—everything you had planned for in life—is thrown into doubt. The President of the United States has just said that he views you as a criminal because of the decision your mother made well more than a decade before. Just remember what you did. You followed what your mom said: Put some things into a backpack, and we are going out into the night.

It doesn't matter to President Trump that you had no choice in that decision. It doesn't matter to him all you have had to overcome. It doesn't matter how you have invested so seriously in being a productive part of your community. In the eyes of the President of the United States, you are a criminal.

It really shouldn't be too hard to imagine that story because the story close to that is the story of some 800,000 people living in the United States—young men and women who came here as children, having nothing to do with the decision themselves.

This particular story that I have read to you is the true story of an Oregonian. It is a story that belongs to Hugo, one of 11,000 Dreamers living in Oregon today. Like the hundreds of thousands of others brought to this country as children through no fault of their own, Hugo's future was thrown into complete chaos by the President—thrown into chaos when Attorney General Sessions, acting on orders from President Trump, announced the cruel and heartless decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, or the DACA Program. We know this program best as a program for Dreamers, those young men and women who are seeking to do everything they can to have productive lives, to contribute to their community, to establish a financial foundation, and to contribute back to America—those young men and women who know no other nation, who speak no other language, who contribute to society, and who are American in every way that matters. But that is not the viewpoint President Trump has, and so we in the Senate have to act.

The United States is and always has been a nation of immigrants. Unless one is a Native American, each of us—every one of us—is either an immigrant or descended from immigrants who were fleeing famine, immigrants who were fleeing political persecution, immigrants who were fleeing religious persecution, immigrants who were simply seeking a better life, greater oppor-

tunity, greater freedom for their family. That is the foundation on which America has been based.

Our Founding Fathers recognized just how vital immigration was to the growth and strength of our budding Nation. After all, it was James Madison, the author of our Constitution and our fourth President, who declared during the Constitutional Convention that “America was indebted to immigration for her settlement and prosperity.” He continued: “That part of America which had encouraged immigration most has advanced most rapidly. . . .”

Now, we have always had debates and discussions about immigration. At times, we have been shortsighted in banning or limiting one group or another in a generation only to turn around and welcome them with open arms in the next generation. Time and again, we have overcome our prejudices. We have remained true to the loving and compassionate Nation we are, a Nation that has welcomed others to our shores.

If we want to know the true nature of our country, we only need to look to the Statute of Liberty, where there, below the feet of Lady Liberty, are inscribed those words: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” I think that line from the poet Emma Lazarus resonates so powerfully because we know that so many of our lives are connected through our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents to that experience of coming to America's shores poor and tired and yearning to breathe free.

Generation after generation of immigrants saw Lady Liberty, this welcoming symbol of freedom and opportunity, as their first glimpse of America. It has inspired hope and given people across the world permission to dream.

But if we end DACA, if we crush the dreams of these young men and women, we might as well take away those words off of the pedestal of Lady Liberty because we will no longer be that compassionate Nation. We will no longer be that welcoming Nation that has played such an instrumental role in each of our histories.

I can't think of anything more damaging to the well-being or the future of our great Nation because we know that when people come here and add their distinctive cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds to the melting pot of America, we become a stronger country and a stronger people.

This is especially true of our Dreamers, the 800,000 men and women for whom America is the only home they know, the 800,000 who came here as young children, the 800,000 who went to school here and made their friends here and grew up here and invested in creating a future here, the young men and women whom we promised, if they came out of the shadows, if they did everything else right, if they obeyed the laws and met the rigorous requirements asked of them, that we would

protect and look after them in this Dreamer Program—people such as Hugo Nicolas, whose story I just shared, and Zaira Flores, another Dreamer who came to America as a child who grew up in this country and is now giving back to our country.

Zaira came when she was just 6 years old. Her younger brother was in need of medical attention, and he couldn't get that medical attention back home in Mexico, but he got it here in America. He underwent years of treatment and surgery, and thereupon Zaira's family decided that this was their home. Two decades have passed. Two decades have passed, and now 26-year-old Zaira Flores works for the State of Oregon. She is a bilingual counselor and volunteer coordinator who assesses social services and disability programs for older adults. Zaira didn't make the decision to come here or to stay here. She didn't have a say in the matter. She doesn't remember her life back in Mexico.

Attorney General Sessions and President Trump may say she is a criminal, but I say she is a contributing member of Oregon who has done everything right to build a solid life, a contributing member to our country, and we need to pass the Dream Act to make sure she can continue to make these substantial contributions. It is the only right thing to do for her, but it is also the right thing to do for our community, for Zaira and Hugo and the hundreds of thousands of talented, driven young men and women just like them who embody the American dream. They have risen up from humble beginnings. They have overcome adversity to thrive. Aren't these exactly the kinds of individuals we want in our Nation? We ought to be celebrating these Dreamers for all they are doing, not punishing them for choices made by their parents.

The eviction of 800,000 Dreamers just doesn't hurt them, it doesn't just punish them, it doesn't just damage their families, it hurts all of us because as punishing as it would be to send Dreamers back to countries they have never known, all of us will pay a price if this is allowed to happen. We will pay the price economically in the estimated \$460 billion the economy would lose over the next 10 years, and we would pay the price morally as our Nation's standing as a beacon of hope and opportunity is tarnished in the eyes of the world.

If President Trump will not do the right thing, if he is willing to turn his back on these 800,000 young men and women, then it is up to all of us in Congress to stand up for them. It is what many of my Republican colleagues, both here in the Senate and over in the House, have said they want to accomplish, including Speaker RYAN and Majority Leader MCCONNELL. It is what President Trump's friends in the business sector have said they want. Just this past weekend, more than 400 industry leaders signed a letter pledging

their support for DACA and urging the President to continue it. It is what nearly three-quarters of the American people say they want to see happen in the most recent polls.

So let's listen to our business leaders, let's listen to our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, let's listen to the American people, let's listen to our hearts and our minds on this issue before us, and let's act expeditiously—not in 6 months, with days to spare before President Trump's clock runs out. Let's act within 6 days. Let's act quickly because for every single day that passes now, these individuals and their extended families are in a whirl of pain and uncertainty. That simply isn't right. Let's protect these Dreamers who are here through no fault of their own, who have contributed an enormous amount to our country, and who are American in every single way that matters.

To paraphrase President Madison, we are a nation that is indebted to immigration for our incredible success. We cannot—we must not renege on that debt by turning our backs on the Dreamers. It would undermine our Nation's moral standing. It would hurt our economy. It is cruel. It is mean. It is absolutely just plain wrong. Let's get that bill on this floor and let's pass it expeditiously.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I think I will shock nobody by telling the Chair that I disagree with almost every policy President Trump has brought forth.

No, I do not believe that we should throw 23 million Americans off of health insurance and give hundreds of billions of dollars in tax breaks to the top 2 percent. No, I happen to believe that at a time of massive income and wealth inequality, it is high time for the wealthiest people in this country and for large, profitable corporations to start paying their fair share of taxes.

No, I do not believe, as President Trump does, that we should cut Pell grants and food stamps and afterschool programs and Medicaid and nutrition programs for pregnant women and heating assistance programs. I believe that in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, we must protect those who are the most vulnerable.

No, I do not believe, as President Trump does, that climate change is a hoax. I believe it is the greatest environmental crisis facing our planet and that it is already causing devastating harm throughout our Nation and throughout the world and on and on it goes.

There is very little in public policy on which I agree with the President, but there is one area in which my disagreement with President Trump goes much deeper than public policy. The truth is, every President in recent history, including conservative Presidents like George W. Bush and liberals like Barack Obama, has understood that one of the prime functions of being President of the United States is to bring the people of our country together, whether you are Black or whether you are White or whether you are Latino or whether you are Asian American or whether you are Native American. Every President has instinctively understood that one of the prime responsibilities of a President is to bring our people together as proud Americans.

Unfortunately and tragically, this is something Donald Trump does not understand. At a time when this country faces so many serious crises, whether it is the high cost of healthcare, whether it is climate change, whether it is the proliferation of low-wage jobs and a starvation minimum wage, whether it is the huge national debt we face, whether it is inadequate educational opportunities, whether it is a broken criminal justice system, instead of bringing our people together to address those important issues and trying to solve them, what this President is doing, uniquely in modern history, is trying to divide us up by the color of our skin, by our sexual orientation, by the country we were born in, by our religion.

Instead of bringing us together to solve the many problems we face as a people, he is trying to divide us up in order to gain political support from a segment of our population. He is trying to divide us up based on the color of our skin, which is what his attacks on affirmative action are all about. He is trying to divide us up based on religion, which is what his Muslim ban is all about. We are not supposed to like Muslims. He is trying to divide us up based on sexual orientation, which is what his attacks on transgender individuals serving in the military is about. We are supposed to hate transgender people and discriminate against them, and he is trying to divide us up based on our country of origin and our immigration status.

In my view, Trump's decision to end the DACA Program for some 800,000 young people is the cruelest and most ugly Presidential act in the modern history of this country. I cannot think of one single act which is uglier and more cruel.

These are 800,000 young people—often exemplary young people—the kind of kids we are proud of. These are kids who know this country—the United States of America—as their only home. In fact, many of these young people know English as their only language. These are young people who today are in college, they are in law school, they are in medical school, and they are proudly serving in the U.S. military.

What this President has done is to take away the legal status by which these young people can work and find jobs, go to school, and live without fear. If they don't have that legal status, it means that anytime they walk down the street, they are frightened they could be arrested and deported from this country and separated from their families.

This act, on the part of Donald Trump, is an abomination, and Congress must reject Trump's action and pass DACA into law.

This is exactly what the American people want us to do. A recent poll—I think it came out yesterday—done by Morning Consult and Politico reports that 76 percent of those who were polled said the government should allow immigrants brought to the United States illegally as children to remain here—76 percent. Eighty-four percent of Democrats support the Dreamers having legal status, while 69 percent of Republicans surveyed also favor such a policy.

In another poll in April of 2017, 73 percent of Trump supporters said Dreamers should be allowed to stay in the United States and become legal residents. In other words—and I say this to the young people who are in DACA—please do not think for one moment that you are being deserted by the people of this country. You are not. You are being attacked by a President of the United States who chooses to divide us up, and you are today's victims. Tomorrow it may well be another minority group.

So this is a pivotal moment in American history, and we need to tell those young people that we will not see their legal status removed. We will not see them thrown out of the only country they have ever known. We need strong, bipartisan support to pass the Dream Act, and I hope we will do that as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER JANICE RYAN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on September 13, 2017, the Vermont Community Foundation will pay tribute to Sister Janice Ryan for the many contributions she has made to our State of Vermont and its residents. The foundation will present Sister Janice with its Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service—just 1 day before she celebrates her 81st birthday, having been born September 14, 1936, on the family dairy farm in Fairfield, VT.