

through better testing and analysis, but today, many of these tests are not covered by insurance providers.

Our bill will have the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Academy of Medicine study the effects and cost savings of precision medicine and offer suggestions for ways to cover the costs of genetic and genomic tests for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Mr. Speaker, the Increasing Access to Precision Medicine Act will increase the quality of care while finding ways to lower costs for patients.

WE NEED A BUDGET THAT INCLUDES THE DREAM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, on September 5 of last year, the day after Labor Day, the temperature was 86 degrees in Washington, D.C., so that was a long time ago. On that date, President Trump and his henchmen announced that they were killing the DACA program.

The next day, meeting with my Democratic colleagues, I said I would not support any spending or budget bills that didn't include a Dream Act or some other serious attempt to put Dreamers with DACA in a safe place. That was 6 months ago, and we are right back where we started.

The Republicans have a bill to cut legal immigration and abandon the Dreamers in some semilegal limbo, and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee had a press conference about it yesterday and is touting his bill as the last chance to get something done about DACA.

No, this will not resolve DACA. We will not support it in exchange for it.

What the chairman did not mention is that his bill is actually about something else: it is about changing the racial makeup of America's immigrants so that more of them are White and fewer of them are from countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

Analysis by the Center for Global Development of Goodlatte's proposal states the following: "Hispanic and Black immigrants would be roughly twice as likely to be barred by the immigration cuts as white immigrants."

The legal immigration cuts would bar the majority of Muslim and Catholic immigrants from coming legally to the United States of America.

While the President keeps saying that he wants a better class of immigrants coming to America, the cuts would actually substantially reduce the number of university graduate immigrants.

The Goodlatte bill would expand some work visas, but we would only add one university graduate for every seven workers removed by eliminating the family visas and diversity visas.

Now, tell me, how does cutting out hardworking immigrants and guaran-

teeing that the only available avenue to come and work in America is an illegal one, how does that protect Dreamers? It doesn't.

We are once again chasing bad policies down a rabbit hole, because the real agenda on the other side of the aisle is to leverage the national concern over the plight of Dreamers into a radical reordering of legal immigration to make it whiter.

Sorry. That is not the agenda of my party and, frankly, not the agenda of my fellow Americans. So, with more than 80 of my colleagues, we will release a letter today at a press conference we wrote to the leaders of both parties in the House and the House appropriators. It echos what I started saying 6 months ago: we need a budget or spending measure that includes the Dream Act, a clean Dream Act, and that is it.

This week or next week, we all know we need to pass a budget to keep the government open, and Democrats are clear: our country, our Congress, and our leaders need to figure out how Dreamers get to live in the country they grew up in, the country they love, the country that has invested so much in them and received so much from them.

Don't be lulled into a false sense of security. The Federal courts didn't settle this or give us a permanent solution. They just gave a lot of lawmakers a convenient excuse for inaction.

I am not buying it and neither should you, because also in the spending bill there are likely to be billions of dollars for deportation, detention, breaking up families, and breaking down doors in neighborhoods across the country. That is why our letter says we do not only want a clean Dream Act included in the omnibus, but we want to reduce funding appropriated to DHS' detention and deportation machine, specifically funding for detention beds, deportation agents operating under ICE or CBP, and an end to border militarization.

We oppose any funding that expands the construction of walls or fencing at the southern border. We should, instead, allocate border security resources to modernize the infrastructure and technology at our ports of entry, which would actually benefit our country and our economy.

Mr. Speaker, 6 months after Donald Trump and Jeff Sessions instigated this crisis by proclaiming their desire to deport Dreamers and kicking their safety and security in our Nation to this do-nothing Congress, we now have what could be the last opportunity to actually take permanent legislative action.

Do not be distracted by the President's nativist agenda or the bills in Congress that seek to implement his nationalist view. Do not give up on taking action that is serious and will actually protect Dreamers and the communities that they live in, and do not allow the deportation and family

destruction machine to thrive and grow on our watch.

We must take a stand right here, right now, and stand up for what is right and what is beneficial for our Nation. I am proud to stand with the majority of Americans and 83 colleagues who have joined me on this letter. The time is now.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from 83 Members to House leadership and appropriators.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2018.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. NITA LOWEY,
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, LEADER PELOSI, CHAIRMAN FRELINGHUYSEN, AND RANKING MEMBER LOWEY: With the newest government funding deadline on March 23, 2018 looming, tens of thousands of Dreamers continue to lose their protection from deportation since President Trump rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program on September 5, 2017. And while numerous stopgap measures to fund the government have been enacted since September of last year, zero legislative action has been taken to protect Dreamers permanently. Congress is long overdue in acting on this issue, and the failure to pass the Dream Act has resulted in countless lives put in peril. Meanwhile the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) tears families apart by targeting Dreamers, long-term residents, asylum-seekers, families and children for detention and deportation. As the negotiations for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill are ongoing, we urge you to:

- (1) include the bipartisan Dream Act;
- (2) reduce funding appropriated to DHS's detention and deportation machine, specifically funding for detention beds, deportation agents operating under Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and border militarization; and

- (3) oppose any funding that expands the construction of walls or fencing at the southern border, and to instead allocate border security resources to modernize the infrastructure and technology at our ports of entry.

The appropriations for ICE and CBP have come at significant, detrimental cost to our communities throughout the country because all immigrants are in the crosshairs of the Trump Administration's mass deportation agenda. When agents for both ICE and CBP operate without any discretion or regard to length of residence in the U.S. and deep ties in our communities, the fear and mistrust in our neighborhoods is heightened. It is an abuse of ICE and CBP funds to rip fathers from U.S. citizen children and tear severely ill children or young infants from their parents' arms. Now more than ever, we cannot fund the detention and deportation of valued members of our communities on the border and in the interior and vulnerable individuals and families seeking refuge in our country, especially when the key components of DHS that enforce our nation's immigration laws operate with negligible oversight.

As Congressional leaders, we must exercise our powers responsibly to protect the

Dreamers through legislative action and to wield our power of the purse to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security does not make immigrant families and communities casualties of a reckless, indiscriminate detention and deportation machine.

Sincerely,

Luis V. Gutiérrez; Adriano Espaillat; Raúl M. Grijalva; Jerrold Nadler; Zoe Lofgren; Michelle Lujan Grisham; Judy Chu; Joe Crowley; Jan Schakowsky; José E. Serrano; Steve Cohen; Eliot L. Engel; Ted Deutch; Dina Titus; Nydia M. Velázquez; Lloyd Doggett; Carolyn B. Maloney; Linda T. Sánchez; Gene Green; Paul D. Tonko; Alcee L. Hastings.

Al Green; Albio Sires; Peter Welch; Barbara Lee; Adam Smith; Keith Ellison; Gwen Moore; Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.; Ben Ray Lujan; Maxine Waters; Bobby L. Rush; Elijah Cummings; Danny K. Davis; Eleanor Holmes Norton; Yvette D. Clarke; Robert A. Brady; Hakeem S. Jeffries; Grace F. Napolitano; Jared Polis; Norma J. Torres; Juan Vargas; Bonnie Watson Coleman.

Donald Norcross; Tony Cardenas; Kathleen M. Rice; Mark Pocan; Mark Takano; Darren Soto; Michael E. Capuano; Ed Perlmutter; Nanette Diaz Barragan; Grace Meng; Robin L. Kelly; Jimmy Gomez; Bill Foster; Joaquin Castro; Ruben Gallego; Brenda L. Lawrence; Robert C. "Bobby" Scott; Brendan F. Boyle; Donald S. Beyer, Jr.; Earl Blumenauer; Dwight Evans.

J. Luis Correa; Pramila Jayapal; Ro Khanna; Suzanne Bonamici; James P. McGovern; Joseph P. Kennedy, III; Jamie Raskin; Colleen Hanabusa; Jacky Rosen; John Lewis; Mark DeSaulnier; Val Butler Demings; Frank Pallone, Jr.; Ted W. Lieu; Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.; Salud O. Carbajal; Donald M. Payne, Jr.; John Yarmuth; Alan Lowenthal.

CELEBRATING PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week our Nation celebrates Public Schools Week. It is a time when we acknowledge the diversity and success of our public schools and the sound education that they provide.

Strengthening America's public schools is the best way to ensure our children's future success and our country's prosperity. Ninety percent of American children attend public schools.

This week, supporters across the country will share stories of the many students, schools, and professionals who make public schools such a vital component of our communities. This includes parents who are working hard to improve educational outcomes for children. Advocates nationwide will share scores of stories about public school students and their successes.

Mr. Speaker, public school teachers truly make a difference in the lives of our students. They prepare them for a bright and successful future. It is their dedication to our students that builds strong public schools and, therefore, strong communities.

As a senior member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and a

product of public schools, I know the incredible role our schools play in communities across the Nation. Public schools today have much good news to share, from increasing graduation rates and reduced dropout rates to improved ratings given by communities on school performance.

In fact, public school graduation rates have risen from 79 percent in 2010–2011 to 83 percent in 2014–2015. This increase of the measured 5 years reflects that four out of five public school students receive a regular high school diploma within 4 years of starting ninth grade.

While the graduation rates varies among States, 34 States have reported graduation rates between 80 and 89 percent, with the highest being 91 percent in Iowa, followed by 90 percent in New Jersey. Based on data from the current population survey, the dropout rate has steadily decreased, from 10.9 percent in 2000 to 7.4 percent in 2010 and 5.9 percent in 2015.

Last year, 69 percent of recent high school graduates enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college.

We are making progress, but we can do more.

In many communities, the school district is the largest employer. Teachers, busdrivers, administrators, cafeteria workers, coaches, and facilities management all depend on the school district, and all of these jobs contribute to the fabric of a community. Communities are stronger and schools are better when we all work together to support public education.

Public schools also make sure our kids receive at least one nutritious meal a day. More than 30 million school lunches are served each day, including 20 million free and 2 million reduced price lunches. For some students, it may be the only meal they receive will be the one at school.

Mr. Speaker, a child's opportunity for success should not be left to chance. Every child needs a quality, well-equipped school right in their neighborhood where they can learn, be inspired, and thrive.

Public education has always been the great equalizer in the United States, and I am grateful for the contributions of our public schools. I know that, together, we will continue to work to strengthen them for our most precious resource: our children.

Happy Public Schools Week.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, today, thousands of students across the Nation are walking out of their schools to demand real action to end the tragedy of gun violence. Young men and women across the country—children, really—from coast to coast and in the heartland of America are standing up and speaking out for change. Members of

Congress will meet some of them on the west front lawn to join them in saying this: Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our distinguished colleague from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for his extraordinary leadership, whether it is with the students, with legislation on the floor, or in the community at large to help make the difference.

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Here we are, community after community, reeling from the horror of gun violence, perpetrated against our children, our families.

Our hearts ache for those in Orlando, San Bernardino, Mother Emanuel Church, Las Vegas, Sutherland Springs, Parkland, Newtown. The list is a very long one, and it is, in addition, on the streets and in the homes across our country.

There has been too much violence and too much pain. This should not be a political issue. The American people overwhelmingly want action. A full 97 percent of Americans support requiring background checks for all gun buys, including 97 percent of gun owners. There is a commonsense, bipartisan path forward in the Congress. We can take action today on comprehensive background checks without the dangerous Concealed Carry Reciprocity bill, allowing the CDC to study gun violence, and gun violence restraining orders that empower law enforcement to intervene when someone is a threat to themselves or others.

We should all be listening to the American people on both sides of the aisle, and we should allow the House to vote on bipartisan gun violence solutions. The families and students suffering from the heartbreak of gun violence deserve real leadership in this body, not a Republican White House and Congress that are saying one thing and doing another. It is deeply disappointing that, just days after embracing the need for commonsense, bipartisan gun violence prevention, still we have nothing coming forward.

House Democrats have filed discharge petitions to force votes on the Thompson-King bipartisan background check bill with 200 cosponsors. Two hundred cosponsors for a background check bill. That is a start. That is remarkable. And also the Background Check Completion Act. Democrats will continue to press for bipartisan progress to reduce the epidemic of gun violence in our Nation.

Let me say, as we go out in a little bit to join the students who are doing their walkout across the country, an enormous thank-you to them. An enormous thank-you to them. While we have sympathy for everyone who has loss of life because of gun violence across the country—they are always in our prayers, in our thoughts, and in our determination to make a difference—the eloquence, the courage, the determination of these young people in Florida to come forward in such