



## High school students' protest supports DREAM Act legislation

by Karen Grace / KENS 5

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If you came to this country before the age of 16, then America is your home, student protesters insisted Tuesday as they demonstrated near McCollum High School in San Antonio.

The local high school students want their voices heard by lawmakers considering the federal DREAM Act legislation.

The students are the new faces of immigration reform. They are too young to vote, but not too young to be heard.

"It's going to target our family members -- our kids -- in the future," one McCollum High School student said Tuesday.

The measure would allow undocumented immigrants brought to the United States before the age of 16 to become U.S. citizens.

It's estimated that 65,000 high school students graduate without citizenship in the United States.

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# US Senate fails to pass the DREAM act

## **US Senate: The Grinch that Stole Christmas 2010.**

Saturday, December 18, 2010  
Kent Patterson

By a margin of five votes, the DREAM Act failed today to achieve the 60 votes necessary to ensure its passage in the US Senate. First introduced in 2001, the Dream Act would have provided a pathway to legalization for hundreds of thousands of undocumented young people who enroll in college or join the US military.

The vote fell on December 18, which is celebrated around the world as International Migrants Day.

Approved by a slim majority of 216-198 in the US House last December 8, the Dream Act was supported by a broad array of national organizations and individuals, including President Barack Obama, US Conference of Catholic Bishops, AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union, National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, law enforcement leaders, and many others.

Pro-Dream Act supporters immediately expressed dismay at the Senate's action.

"Senate Republicans and a handful of Democrats have forgotten the meaning of Christmas" said Angela M. Kelly of the Washington-D.C.-based Center for American Progress Action Fund. "Rather than offer tidings of comfort and joy, they voted to shatter the hopes and dreams of hundreds of thousands of young people by rejecting the DREAM Act, a limited measure for immigrant youth that would also have strengthened our military and economy." Kelley termed the Senate vote a "Grinch-like rejection."

As it was written, the DREAM Act would have opened to the door to legalization for undocumented young people under 30 years of age who were brought to this country before the age of 16 and count at least five years of residency in the US.

Toddlers when they arrived, many of the so-called Dreamers have been raised in US culture and speak English fluently. With the defeat of the DREAM Act, such young people now face an increased risk of deportation to countries they do not really know.

Outside the beltway, pro-immigrant groups mobilized in support of a movement that picked up steam in recent months as groups of undocumented students and pro-Dream Act youth staged sit-ins and demonstrations around the country.

In New Mexico, for instance, the Las Cruces-based Task Force for Immigrant Advocacy and Services (TIAS) released a statement prior to the vote on the DREAM Act. Made up of social services providers, community advocates, people of faith and academic researchers, TIAS noted that many DREAM generation youth were productive and promising members of the southern New Mexico community,

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participating in church activities, sports, school clubs and the workplace.

On the other hand, DREAM Act opponents contended that the legislation's passage would reward law-breaking and open the door to "amnesty" for other undocumented residents.

On Capitol Hill, Republican Congressmen Lamar Smith of Texas objected to the DREAM Act on the grounds that illegal immigrants would benefit from public funds invested in university education.

"The Dream Act would mean fewer jobs for American workers," further read a statement posted on Smith's website. "And the Congressional Budget Office said it would cost taxpayers billions of dollars."

Smith's colleague, California Representative Dan Lungren maintained approval of the DREAM Act would trigger a chain of new immigration to the US.

In the Senate, South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham, who once supported comprehensive immigration reform, came out as opposed to the Dream Act.

Graham accused the Democrats of playing political games with the legislation, which he said would not fly until other conditions were satisfied.

"We are not going to approve the DREAM Act or any other legalization program as long as our borders are not secure," Graham said.

Following the Senate's December 18 failure to move the Dream Act forward, supporters of the proposed law vowed to keep their eyes on the legalization prize and target anti-DREAM Act legislators in future elections.

In a statement blasting a "moral and political travesty," the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) declared that Republicans had lost a "golden opportunity" to mend fences with Latinos. "It is now crystal clear to Latinos who stood with them and who did not," said NCLR President and CEO Janet Murguía.

Earlier attracting wide interest in Mexico and other Latin American countries, the death of the Dream Act in the 2010 Senate was played up on the main Internet news websites south of the border.

On the eve of the Senate vote, *La Jornada* columnist Ana Maria Aragonés questioned whether US legislators were capable of grasping what was in the best interests of their country.

"If the Senate doesn't approve the Dream Act, an entire generation of young people will be kept in legal limbo, and their potential could be lost," Aragonés wrote. "Mexico already failed to take advantage of them, to the shame of the country. Let's hope the US and its lawmakers are at least viewed as being more interested in their own country."

*Kent Patterson is the editor of the New Mexico-based Frontera NorteSur new service."*



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## BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE DREAM ACT LEGISLATION

By [Abaddon - 596 AP \(user/42\)](#)  
Last edited: 16 Jul 2010 - 9:06pm

*This information is based on the current legislation introduced on March 26, 2009 by Senator Richard Durbin and Representative Howard Berman.*

### Purpose

The purpose of the Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors Act, also called the DREAM Act, is to help those individuals who meet certain requirements, have an opportunity to enlist in the military or go to college and have a path to citizenship which they otherwise would not have without this legislation. Supporters of the DREAM Act believe it is vital not only to the people who would benefit from it, but also the United States as a whole. It would give an opportunity to undocumented immigrant students who have been living in the U.S. since they were young, a chance to contribute back to the country that has given so much to them and a chance to utilize their hard earned education and talents.

### Would I qualify?

The following is a list of specific requirements one would need in order to qualify for the current version of the DREAM Act.

- Must have entered the United States before the age of 16 (i.e. 15 and younger)
- Must have been present in the United States for at least five (5) consecutive years prior to enactment of the bill
- Must have graduated from a United States high school, or have obtained a GED, or have been accepted into an institution of higher education (i.e. college/university)
- Must be between the ages of **12 and 35** ([//faq#1n5272](#)), **at the time of application**
- Must have **good moral character** ([//faq#1n5262](#))

If you have met all those requirements and can prove it, once the DREAM Act passes you will be able to do the following:

### What do I need to do if the DREAM Act should pass?

If the DREAM Act passes, an undocumented individual meeting those qualifying conditions stated above, would have to do the following:

1. Apply for the DREAM Act (Since the legislation has not yet passed, there are no specific guidelines on how to apply)
2. Once approved and granted **Conditional Permanent Residency** ([//faq#1n5252](#)), the individual would have to do one of the following:
  - a. Enroll in an institution of higher education in order to pursue a bachelor's degree or higher degree **or**
  - b. Enlist in one of the branches of the United States Military
3. Within 6 years of approval for conditional permanent residency, the individual must have completed **at least two (2)** years of one of the options outlined in the previous step
4. Once 5 ½ years of the 6 years have passed, the individual will then be able to apply for Legal Permanent Residency (dropping the conditional part) and consequently will be able to apply for United States Citizenship

Those who have already completed at least 2 years of college education towards a bachelor's degree or higher degree, will still have to wait the 5 ½ years in order to apply for Legal Permanent Residency even though you may have already obtained a degree.

Students who do not complete the requirements will be **disqualified** ([//faq#1n5282](#)).

### Sources

To see the text of the legislation go [here](http://www.thomas.gov) (<http://www.thomas.gov>). Under word/phrase, click on Bill Number instead, type in **S. 729** (in the Senate) or **H.R. 1751** (in the House), in the search box and you will be directed to the bill.

[More Info on the DREAM Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DREAM_Act) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DREAM\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DREAM_Act))