



FCNL Statement to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee, pertaining to its hearing: *Protecting Dreamers and TPS Recipients*

March 6, 2019

The Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL) Quaker faith compels us to see and answer to the Light of God in every person. Our pursuit of just immigration policies is built off that faith principle. The mass terminations of the Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) left over a million well-rooted, essential members of our society in a cruel state of limbo. **FCNL urges Congress to pass protection for Dreamers, TPS recipients, and DED recipients that includes a workable pathway to citizenship.**

DACA, TPS, and DED recipients are integral members of communities across the country. When these programs were in place, they transformed the lives of recipients, allowing them to participate in and contribute to our communities without fear of deportation. Recipients are our friends, coworkers, classmates, and family, working tirelessly to afford a chance to permanently thrive in our shared nation. Many families with DACA, TPS, or DED holders also include U.S. citizen children, spouses, and siblings. Providing attainable citizenship to them would help stabilize families, communities, and local economies.

More than 1 million community members are at renewed risk of detention and deportation. The administration's reckless cancellations of the DACA, TPS, and DED programs targeted individuals who used legal channels to seek and maintain immigration status. While various lawsuits have provided temporary relief for a fraction of recipients, only Congress can provide a permanent solution. Each day Congress does not act, over one million immigrants who are legally living, studying and working in our communities will do so in anxiety and fear. Until Congress passes legislation, there is no certainty they will be able to stay in the country they call home or if they will be forcibly removed to nations unknown to them or still rendered unsafe for return.

We urge Congress to enact a singular, clean pathway to citizenship for all Dreamers, TPS recipients, and DED holders. The Dream Act of 2017 (H.R. 3440 and S.1615) and the American Promise Act (H.R. 4253) were opportunities for Congress to offer just that - permanent protections and a pathway to citizenship for dreamers, TPS and DED communities at risk of losing their protected status. Both enjoyed broad support in the 115th Congress and we urge Congress to take up similar legislation paired together.

It is imperative that Congress does not pair relief for these communities with harmful enforcement policies. Opportunities to pursue citizenship should not exacerbate the existing injustices of our immigration system. DACA, TPS, and DED recipients themselves reject legislation that puts other immigrants, including their own family members, at increased risk of deportation or detention. Two-thirds of DACA recipients are also border residents; their protection should not further infringe upon their own civil liberties.

Our message is clear: We urge Congress to pass a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, TPS recipients, and DED holders that reflects shared faith values of welcome, dignity, and protection.