



CWS Strongly Urges House Judiciary Committee Members to Protect Dreamers, TPS Holders, DED Recipients, and Oppose Amendments that would Expand Criminalization or Racial Profiling

As a 73-year old humanitarian organization representing 37 Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox communions and 23 refugee resettlement offices across 17 states, Church World Service (CWS) urges the Committee to pass a pathway to citizenship for millions of community members as outlined in the *Dream and Promise Act of 2019* (H.R.6). It is long overdue that dreamers, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders, and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) recipients have permanent protection.

Now is the time for immediate and compassionate action. We urge you to swiftly pass this legislation without undermining other immigrants, vulnerable populations, or border communities. It is critical that this legislative solution not expand the criminalization of our immigrant neighbors, violate the sanctity of family unity, expand racial profiling, increase harmful border militarization, or expand immigrant detention or deportation.

Dreamers, TPS holders, and DED recipients deserve a pathway to citizenship that affirms their inherent dignity. True justice does not automatically lock people out of status based on past mistakes or prior run-ins with the law. Current immigration law already restricts individuals with prior convictions from accessing immigration status. As you consider amendments to H.R.6, we urge you to advance an inclusive, positive vision for our nation, which recognizes our immigrant neighbors as integral members of our families, communities, and society. **To unilaterally deny someone a second chance is to deny the transformational power of God.** We urge you to reject amendments that would discriminate or criminalize entire categories of people, and to instead consider ways to maximize eligibility, including through individualized review that considers the totality of a person's situation.

Families are the cornerstone of our communities; they are what holds us together. Our churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples deeply cherish family unity, both the family we are born with and those we choose, and these same ideals are true of our national fabric. Yet, current immigration laws keep families separated or in legal limbo for decades. We urge you to reject any attempts to further criminalize migration, exclude beloved family members, or keep families apart. Amendments that help some in our communities gain stability through permanent status, while locking out others permanently is not a solution. We will not trade the relief of some with devastating policies that harm other immigrant community members.

CWS echoes the call of communities directly impacted by this legislation, urging Congress to:

- **Support** all amendments that expand eligibility for permanent immigration relief, especially changes that afford independent or judicial review and discretion for persons with prior convictions.
- **Support** amendments that extend protections such as permanent residency to family members of TPS and DED recipients as seen in the [SECURE Act](#).
- **Oppose** all amendments that would disqualify beneficiaries from sponsoring family members, as that would effectively create a structure of second-class citizenship.
- **Oppose** all amendments that would eliminate categories of family reunification visas.
- **Oppose** all amendments that pair the immigration relief of some with increased enforcement and endangerment of others.
- **Oppose** all amendments that restrict the existing eligibility criteria or expand criminal bars, grounds of deportability, or grounds of inadmissibility, including amendments to institute additional bars based on prior criminal convictions, allegations of gang-affiliation, or wide-sweeping claims that make it more difficult for victims of terrorism to access protection.

Every day that a real solution is delayed, countless members of our community have to live in anxiety and fear, unsure if they will be allowed to stay in the country they call home, or if they will be [forcibly returned](#) to nations they have never really known. As you consider this legislation, we urge you to envision a better path forward for our nation; one where all are recognized as full members of their communities. **Congress must invest in a compassionate, long-term solution that honors our nation's commitment** to families and provides dreamers, TPS holders, and DED recipients with a pathway to citizenship.