



Conference of Major Superiors of Men

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Oct. 31, 2017

Dear Member of Congress,

As leaders of U.S. Catholic men's religious institutes, who serve many immigrants across the U.S. and in their countries of origin, we urge the immediate passage of the Dream Act of 2017 (S. 1615/H.R. 3440).

To help leverage pressure to pass the Dream Act, we are mobilizing organizations and individuals in the U.S. to [boycott Wells Fargo and Bank of America](#).¹ These major banks profit from these policies that result in increased detention because they fund private prisons, such as GEO and CoreCivic. They are also key funders of President Trump and other policymakers, including many Congress members, while at the same time a large number of Congress members hold shares in these banks.

It is urgent to pass the Dream Act because of the recent decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. DACA provided work authorization and temporary protection from deportation to about 780,000 people who were brought to the United States as children. We have already heard reports of DACA students so disoriented by this decision that they have risked suicide. The decision not only puts these children of God at risk of deportation in the near future but also even death in unknown, often dangerous countries.

Over 90% of these youth have graduated high school and nearly 90% are employed. Our leaders should be asking what is justice rather than exact a narrow obsession with the apparent rule of law. It is simply not justice to further marginalize the vulnerable. God calls us to care for immigrants and treat them "no differently than the natives born among you." (LV 19:34).

CMSM Executive Director, Rev. John Pavlik, OFM Cap. says, "The President and Congress are playing the welfare and the lives of children, young people, and families against legislators who have shirked their responsibilities to provide the citizens of the United States an immigration policy worthy of the principles on which our society and our government are based. The moment to act justly and rightly is now."

As Christians, we lift up the example of Jesus who had a compassionate and merciful justice humanity could often not imagine. We choose to remind all people of our long standing Catholic social teaching on the poor and Pope Francis' renewed call to all humankind to encounter the other, build bridges with relationships, and resist injustice.

We pray that you, our nation's leaders, will step up to this moral call and pass the Dream Act of 2017.

Sincerely,

Eli McCarthy, Ph.D.

Director of Justice and Peace

The **Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM)** supports and offers resources for U.S. leaders of Catholic men's religious institutes. CMSM promotes dialogue and collaboration on issues of religious life as well as peace and justice issues with major groups in church and society. There are more than 17,000 religious priests and brothers in the United States.

¹ <http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/interfaith-boycott/>