

Voces de la Frontera: Wisconsin Urges Congress to Pass the Dream Act

Posted on Wednesday, Sep 20, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Contact: Sam Singleton-Freeman, [414-469-9206](tel:414-469-9206), sfreeman@vdlf.org

Madison, WI – On a press call on Wednesday, September 20, Madison Mayor Paul Soglin joined DACA recipients from Speaker Paul Ryan’s district, as well as local activists to discuss why a legislative solution for Dreamers is so urgent for Wisconsin and America. In Wisconsin, there are [more than 7,500 Dreamers who are DACA recipients](#) whose futures and opportunities to fully contribute to their communities is threatened by President Trump’s decision to end the popular and successful DACA program.

For a recording of today’s call, click [here](#)

Mayor Paul Soglin, Mayor of Madison, Wisconsin, said, “Every time this issue is raised, every time President Trump speaks out and there is a new initiative to repeal DACA, it extends fear, not just to the 800,000, but also to their families and friends, and disrupts their daily lives. We have to understand the magnitude of this impact. Discrimination and the singling out of young people who are working hard to live the American dream is just wrong. DACA is an important protection and needs to be preserved and strengthened.”

Ilse Merlin, DACA recipient and activist, Youth Empowered in the Struggle (YES), said, “My mom arrived in the United States when she was 19 and I was 4. Going through school, I was responsible for taking care of my two siblings. I made honor roll every semester, and going into high school, was presented with an opportunity for a scholarship that would provide a full ride for University of Wisconsin, Madison. However, because I did not have a Social Security Number, I was rejected. I still

managed to attend Gateway College and get my Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education, but the expenses of school stand in my way of receiving further education. I am currently working at a Lutheran Church, dealing with children and youth. Countless DACA recipients are benefitting both their families and communities. As a constituent of Speaker Ryan's district, I am asking him to pass a clean Dream Act that doesn't further militarize our border."

Christine Neumann Ortiz, Director, Voces de la Frontera, said, "Wisconsin is home to more than 7,500 Dreamers who have come out of the shadows to work and drive legally without fear of deportation. By doing so, they have shown society who they are: young people with perseverance to pursue their dreams despite incredible odds. Most have fulfilled their dreams to continue their education, graduate, and work in a better paying profession that allows them to give back to their communities. According to an April Morning Consult and Politico [Poll](#), 78% of American voters support giving Dreamers the chance to stay permanently in the U.S., including 73% of Trump voters. Trump and Ryan's recent comments in support of the Dream Act are a direct result of the pressure they are receiving nationally and in Paul Ryan's district. Voces de la Frontera, alongside other advocates, is working to escalate the pressure from the forces on the ground in his district to win back protections for Dreamers and ensure that Ryan does not cave into pressure from the far right and those who are seeking mass deportation."