

Dear Members of the House of Representatives:

We, the undersigned national, state and local organizations, write to oppose Representative Bob Goodlatte's bill, the Securing America's Future Act (H.R.4760) and any cuts to our family-based immigration system, and the diversity visa program or ramped up enforcement measures that would further tear families apart. The bill's protections for some undocumented youth are temporary and woefully inadequate, while undermining other immigrant populations and militarizing our communities. We urge you to support passage of a permanent solution that does not harm people, like a clean Dream Act, and support policies that keep families together.

The over 43 million immigrants living in the U.S. are the backbone and multi-ethnic fiber of our communities giving our country competitive advantage while providing economic opportunities, freedom, safety and stability to many who need it most. Around 21 million immigrants are naturalized citizens, the majority of which came through our family-based immigration system. There are around 11 million undocumented immigrants, many of whom are unable to be sponsored by family members due to unforgiving immigration laws. H.R.4760 sends the message that these Americans and future Americans are unwanted and would wrongfully criminalize large swaths of them.

H.R.4760 perpetuates and codifies a permanent underclass for immigrant youth, as it offers an insufficient three-year renewable legal status without a pathway to citizenship - and only for those already enrolled in the DACA program, a fraction of the Dream Act-eligible population. Their legal status will never be certain and will always face the threat of being revoked. Undocumented youth, known as Dreamers, are immigrant youth who are parents, doctors, farmworkers, teachers and first responders who have rescued, [and died rescuing](#), Harvey flood victims. [91% of Dreamers](#) are employed, pay taxes, and contribute to Social Security. The [average age](#) Dreamers entered the United States is 6 years old. Some don't even [speak the language](#) of the country where they were born.

To be clear, even if H.R. 4760 is amended to include the Dream Act, we oppose its other anti-family, anti-immigrant and inhumane provisions. H.R.4760 would slash immigration to the U.S by around 40% - at a time when we are seeing record-low unemployment. It makes these cuts by ending almost all family-based sponsorship categories (it would continue to allow citizens and lawful permanent residents to sponsor their spouses and minor children), cutting off the millions of people in line to come to the U.S., and lowering the age of children from under 21 to under 18 years of age. The bill would also end the diversity visa program, a successful program that offers opportunities for immigrants from countries of low immigration and is a primary way that African immigrants come to the U.S.

H.R.4760 would also authorize a wasteful and redundant border wall, expand mandatory detention, and grow the deportation force by 5,000 Border Patrol (CBP) agents and 4,000 Immigration and Office of Field Operations officers. The United States has robust border security measures in place to protect national security interests, and the dramatic militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border region has already stifled the economic vitality and overall well-being of U.S. border communities. Given that much of the land along the Texas border is privately-held, the administration will face expensive, lengthy court battles to seize it from hundreds of American ranchers, farmers, and other land owners. This bill would impose even more severe penalties and expand the federal government's ability to prosecute individuals for "illegal reentry" - even though prosecutions for migration-related offenses already make up more than 50% of all federal prosecutions.

At the same time, this bill removes critical protections for individuals who reenter the United States in order to seek protection, which would place asylum seekers at risk of being returned to the violence and persecution they fled. New barriers to protection are unnecessary and would dangerously impede our obligations under [international](#) and U.S. law. We have seen how Border Patrol's current practices violate existing U.S. law and treaty obligations by preventing viable asylum claims from moving forward. DHS has found that in some areas, Border Patrol refers asylum seekers for [criminal prosecution](#) despite the fact that they have expressed fear of persecution. In May 2017, a [report](#) was released highlighting that

many asylum seekers, who had expressed a fear of returning to their home countries are being turned away by CBP agents. Especially at a time when border crossings are at record lows, the intent behind this bill is clear: to deport the millions of people who have been living in the U.S. for years and have families here and roots in their communities. Additionally, the bill would strip farmworkers on temporary visas of workers protections, lower their wages and ask undocumented farmworkers to “self-deport” in the hopes of possibly coming back on a temporary visa. H.R.4760 would strip humanitarian and due process protections from unaccompanied children and would expand the detention of children apprehended at the border.

The principle of family unity was at the core of our immigration system 53 years ago when Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. We look forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (enacted in 1968) this June 30th. Many thriving and diverse communities in the U.S. would not exist but for the INA of 1965 and the subsequent Immigration Act of 1990, which created the diversity visa program. We think America’s immigrant communities are worth celebrating not attacking. Immigrants and refugees are good for this country and have made many positive contributions to our economy, our culture and our communities.

The family is the cornerstone of the community and the most fundamental institution in society. Family members step in to provide support in times of personal and economic hardship. Together, families buy homes and start businesses that create jobs. When Congress fails to protect families, it abdicates its most essential role.

Instead of focusing on dismantling what actually works about our immigration system, Congress should focus on defending the immigrant populations under attack by passing a clean Dream Act and a solution for individuals with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), as well as drastically reducing funding to the administration’s harsh deportation machine that is separating countless families. The bipartisan Dream Act has [broad support from the faith community, state and local elected leaders, business leaders, and faith](#) and [secular](#) educators, and would provide the pathway to citizenship that would treat Dreamers with the dignity they deserve.

In the coming weeks, the House of Representatives may have the opportunity to pass a permanent solution that does not harm immigrants, like a clean Dream Act, and we urge you to do so - without compromising family unity, undercutting other immigrant populations, or further militarizing border communities. We also urge you to reject Rep. Goodlatte’s bill in all the forms it might takes.

Sincerely,

605 Citizenship Project

ACLU

ActLocal

Adjunct Justice

Adorers of the Blood of Christ

Advocates for Youth

African Advocacy Network

African Career and Education Resource, Inc

African Communities Together

African Immigrant Services (AIS)

Alianza Americas  
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)  
American Immigration Lawyers Association  
Americans for Immigrant Justice  
Amnesty International USA  
Anti-Defamation League  
Arizona Asian & Pacific Islander American Vote Table  
Arkansas United Community Coalition  
Asian American Federation of Florida South Region  
Asian American Psychological Association  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Asian Law Caucus  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Atlanta  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago  
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Los Angeles  
Asian Counseling & Referral Service  
Asian Economic Development Association  
Asian Law Alliance  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO  
Asian Pacific Development Center  
Asian Pacific Environmental Network  
Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council  
Asian Services In Action  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action - Bay Area  
California Food Policy Advocates  
California for Progress  
California Sanctuary Campaign  
CaliforniaHealth+ Advocates  
Casa Mariposa Detention Visitation Program  
Chinatown Community Development Center  
Chinese Community Center, Houston  
Christian Community Development Association  
Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice

Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC  
Church World Service  
Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE)  
Cleveland Jobs with Justice  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)  
Coalition on Human Needs  
Columbus Sanctuary Collective  
Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces  
Congregation of Sisters of St Agnes  
CREDO  
Daya Inc.  
Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries  
Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Raids  
Dominican Sisters of Houston  
Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose  
Dominican Sisters of San Rafael  
Dominicans of Sinsinawa  
El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos  
Emgage  
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)  
Equality California  
Equality North Carolina  
Esperanza Community Housing Corporation  
Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM)  
Faith in Public Life  
Family Equality Council  
Farm Worker Ministry Northwest  
Farmworker Justice  
First Congregational United Church of Christ of Ypsilanti  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
FL Immigrant Coalition  
Florida Asian Service Center  
Florida Asian Services Center

Food Empowerment Project  
Franciscan Action Network  
Freedom for Immigrants  
Freedom Network USA  
Friends of Broward Detainees  
Fuerza del Valle  
GAPIMNY—Empowering Queer & Trans Asian Pacific Islanders  
Global Justice Institute, Metropolitan Community Churches  
Haitian Bridge Alliance  
Having Our Say Coalition  
Healthy House Within a MATCH Coalition  
Higher Ground International  
Hmong Innovating Politics  
Hospital Sisters of St.Francis-Springfield IL  
Human Rights Campaign  
Human Rights First  
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights  
Immigrant Defense Project  
Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota  
Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda  
Indivisible  
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice  
Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)  
Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center  
Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace  
Interfaith Welcome Coalition  
Jalloh's Upright Services of North Carolina  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jobs With Justice  
Joy Laike a River United Church of Christ  
Justice  
Keep Tucson Together/No More Deaths

Kino Border Initiative  
Laotian American National Alliance  
Las Cruces CIVIC  
Latin America Caribbean Committee - Loretto  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
League of Women Voters of the United States  
Little Tokyo Service Center  
Lopez & Freshwater PLLC  
Loretto Community  
Los Angeles LGBT Center  
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service  
Main Street Alliance  
Mi Familia Vota  
Migrant Center for Human Rights  
Migrant Rights Collective  
Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates  
Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project  
NAACP  
NAKASEC(National Korean American Service & Education Consortium)  
NAPAFASA  
National Action Network  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Alliance for Filipino Concerns (NAFCON)  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)  
National Black Justice Coalition  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (National CAPACD)  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Domestic Workers Alliance  
National Employment Law Project  
National Employment Lawyers Association  
National Equality Action Team (NEAT)  
National Farm Worker Ministry

National Immigrant Justice Center  
National Immigration Law Center  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health  
National Lawyers Guild - Los Angeles  
National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association  
National Network for Arab American Communities  
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)  
National Tongan American Society  
Nationalities Service Center - Philadelphia  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
New Mexico Asian Family Center  
New Mexico Immigrant Law Center  
NM Comunidades en Accion y de Fe  
North Bay Immigrant Youth Union  
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates  
OCA South Florida Chapter  
OneAmerica  
OneJustice  
Orange County Equality Coalition  
Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers  
Pangea Legal Services  
Peninsula DSA  
Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition  
Pilipino American Untiy for Progress, Inc.  
Project IRENE  
Reformed Church of Highland Park  
RISE Stronger  
Riverside Detention Visitation Program  
Salvadoran American National Network (SANN)  
San Francisco Peninsula People Power  
School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province  
SEIU 32BJ  
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network (SIREN)  
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership

Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross USA Province  
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur USA  
Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet  
Sisters of ST. Joseph of Chambéry - U.S. Province  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester Justice & Peace Office  
Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate  
Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Villa Maria, PA  
Sisters of the Presentation of Mary  
Sojourners NYC  
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)  
South Asian Network  
South Bay People Power  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)  
Southern Border Communities Coalition  
Southland Resistance  
Southside Presbyterian Church, Tucson, Arizona  
Springfield Dominican Justice Committee  
St Matthews Immigration/Detention Committee  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition  
The Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project  
The Jus Semper Global Alliance  
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
The Stuart Center, JPIC Office  
United Cambodian Community  
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries  
United We Dream  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity  
Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland  
Ursulines of the Roman Union, Eastern Province  
Vietnamese American Community Center of the East Bay



Vietnamese Voluntary Foundation  
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
Virginia Organizing  
VN TeamWork, Inc.  
Voto Latino  
Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
WeCount!  
Wellspring United Church of Christ  
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club  
Win Without War  
Women For: Orange County  
YWCA Greater Austin

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<sup>[1]</sup> Open for Business: How Immigrants Are Driving Small Business Creation In The United States, <http://www.newamericaneconomy.org/research/open-for-business-how-immigrants-are-driving-small-business-creation-in-the-united-states-2/>

<sup>[2]</sup> American Immigration Council - The Diversity Immigrant Visa Program: An Overview <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/diversity-immigrant-visa-program-overview>

<sup>[3]</sup> US Department of State Immigrant Number Use for Visa Issuances and Adjustments of Status in the Diversity Immigrant Category Fiscal Years 2005-2014 <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Statistics/AnnualReports/FY2014AnnualReport/FY14AnnualReport-TableVII.pdf>