

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

^[1] 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/>

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

^[3] 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>