



Mayor's Office of
Immigrant Affairs
Nisha Agarwal
Commissioner

June 19, 2017

Testimony of Assistant Commissioner Bitta Mostofi

NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

NYC Council Committee on Immigration Hearing

Oversight – Supporting New York City's DREAMers and "DACA-mented" Youth

Thank you to Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chair Menchaca, and members of the Committee on Immigration. My name is Bitta Mostofi, and I am the Assistant Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

My testimony will provide an overview of the work MOIA has done under the leadership of Mayor de Blasio to support immigrant New Yorkers, and in particular DREAMers – those who have received, or are eligible to receive, immigration relief through the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Before I begin I should recognize the incredible partners who have helped to make this work possible: our colleagues across the Administration, community organizations and the Council, who have been critical partners in our work to support immigrant youth.

BACKGROUND

Just last week we celebrated the 5th anniversary of President Obama's 2012 announcement that immigration relief would be available to immigrant youth across the country through DACA. DACA was designed to provide temporary protection from deportation, access to a work authorization and a Social Security number for young immigrants who came to the United States as children and want to contribute to their communities. DACA requires that applicants are in school, have graduated from high school, or served in the armed forces, and meet other eligibility rules.

The local impact of this program has been tremendous. In New York City alone we estimate that there are over 30,000 DACA recipients, with an estimated 55,000 more eligible. By receiving DACA, immigrant youth have greater opportunity to pursue educational and professional ambitions, as well as contribute to the economy. DACA holders are teachers, lawyers, and men and women in uniform. This temporary immigration relief has provided thousands with the opportunity to come out of the shadows, gain financial stability, and contribute to our local and national economies through taxes and higher wages. Revoking DACA would mean \$200 million in lost wages and \$6 million in lost taxes in New York City alone. We will continue to call on the new Administration in Washington, D.C. to provide affirmative confirmation of DACA's continuation, for the sake of our communities, economy, and so many NYC residents who have benefited from this truly life-changing program.

Today I will review the work of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to support DREAMers and advocate for NYC's immigrant youth. MOIA has made connection to immigration relief through DACA a priority through our programmatic; inter-agency; and outreach and advocacy work.

OUTREACH

New York City is the ultimate city of immigrants, and that includes approximately 85,000 DACA holders and DACA-eligible youth. The Mayor's Office recognizes the transformative impact even temporary protection from deportation and access to work authorization can have on

a young person's life. We have reflected this through our range of work to help NYC youth learn about and realize DACA status.

In June 2014, MOIA proudly launched the first City advertising campaign in recent years geared towards immigrants – a DACA awareness campaign. To ensure the greatest reach and impact, MOIA and our partners considered potential barriers facing DACA-recipients, including lack of awareness of the program, access to information, and legal support. In developing the campaign concept, content, and in order to smartly target resources, MOIA analyzed data to identify current and DACA-eligible populations and held focus groups in collaboration with Make the Road New York and Asian Americans for Equality.

These conversations were incredibly valuable. Recommendations stemming from those focus groups impacted the messaging, design and dissemination of the campaign. For example, language was informed by feedback received, resulting in our campaign using the term “accion diferida” in Spanish, in addition to “DACA.” This multi-pronged, multi-language campaign consisted of ads in subways and bus stops, community and ethnic newspapers and radio, as well as information cards across City agencies, in schools, at consulates, and more.

Ads on subways and in bus shelters delivered more than 340 million impressions over eight weeks; and ads in community and ethnic media, including both print and radio, reached hundreds of thousands of readers and listeners. What's more, during the life of the campaign, MOIA's DACA website saw a 400 percent increase in visits.

In 2016, MOIA built on this work in partnership with the New York State Health Foundation by launching a major public education campaign to connect DACA recipients, and those eligible for DACA, to Medicaid and other benefits. This was the largest effort across the country to highlight low-income DACA recipients' potential eligibility for benefits such as Medicaid, and facilitate enrollment.

Again, through information sessions conducted in collaboration with community-based organizations, we learned that many DACA recipients were unfamiliar with basic information about the Medicaid program and Medicaid eligibility. We learned that our target population would benefit from clear information about what health insurance is available. The campaign's visuals were designed to reflect the diversity of DACA-eligible individuals, from parents to workers to college students. The campaign also included three short video testimonials for social media that feature DREAMers expressing the ways DACA and Medicaid changed their lives.

Additionally, MOIA has engaged in focused outreach to DACA-eligible New Yorkers and DACA recipients, including through our DACA+/DAPA Town Hall, co-sponsored with the Hispanic Federation, Make the Road New York and Telemundo. This event was followed by a weeklong telethon, geared towards answering caller questions about DACA. Throughout the campaign, volunteers fielded 1,000 calls.

INTER-AGENCY INITIATIVES

MOIA regularly partners with City agencies to expand our reach to immigrant youth and ensure we smartly leverage connection-points with New Yorkers to highlight available services and resources.

To begin, our work with the Department of Education (DOE) has been extensive. DOE's Pathways to Graduation program has trained college and career staff on scholarship opportunities for DACA youth, and through the program has awarded 35 stipends for completed internships. The Department, with support from MOIA, has also conducted ongoing classroom-level outreach to inform students about legal service events and make in-house appointments, including over 137 free legal screenings for District 79 students wherein 67 percent of students qualified for immigration relief. Application assistance for DACA and DACA renewal were also provided to students in District 79.

Through ActionNYC, in partnership with Fordham Law, MOIA has also provided Know Your Rights workshops in schools for over 1,000 students citywide. The program has worked with high-need schools, including Community Schools that serve as hubs for education and social services; International Schools that have a foreign-born population of over 90 percent; and District 79 schools serving older immigrant students ages 17-21.

Beyond our work to connect eligible New Yorkers to benefits through DACA, MOIA's outreach efforts in support of the IDNYC program have included a particular focus on the young adult population – including immigrant youth and their families.

One month after the launch of the IDNYC program, the City opened a location at La Guardia Community College. The site was so successful that we stayed until December, 2016. During our time at La Guardia Community College our teams enrolled over 33,000 New Yorkers for their official ID card.

Additionally, through our ongoing partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY), MOIA promoted student IDNYC enrollment by hosting a series of pop-up enrollment sites at college campuses including Brooklyn College, Hunter College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, Queensborough Community College, and Kingsborough College. Through these pop-ups, our teams enrolled nearly 3,000 students and staff. As part of this engagement, IDNYC brought together over 30 CUNY Student Government leaders from several campuses for an event at BMCC to join in promoting IDNYC to their fellow students.

Partnerships have been key to IDNYC engagement. Working closely with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), we have targeted outreach to youth through DYCD's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) – the largest youth workforce initiative of its kind in the country – and through other community-based school and youth programs. Specifically, IDNYC partnered with DYCD to deliver information to SYEP youth through multiple channels, such as digital materials, at the program's orientation and at job placement sites.

Through IDNYC we have also worked with the DOE to engage with public school students and parents. DOE has been a consistent partner, regularly issuing guidance and information on IDNYC to all staff and principals. Since the launch of the program, IDNYC has partnered with Pathways to Graduation to facilitate streamlined bulk enrollments and in September, 2016,

IDNYC and DOE collaborated to launch on-site enrollment in high schools. This series of pop-ups were sited at Fort Hamilton High School, Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, George Washington Educational Campus, Francis Lewis High School, Fort Hamilton High School, Edward R. Murrow High School, and Stuyvesant High School. Additionally, IDNYC sent brochures home with all 1.1 million DOE students, and all Universal Pre-K (UPK) schools distributed IDNYC informational materials to parents. In the course of this work, we have engaged over 100 DOE Parent Coordinators as well.

Finally, when children in foster care have DACA or any other immigration legal need, ACS partners with immigration legal service providers such as The Door, Legal Aid, Sanctuary for Families, and others for consultations and representation.

The wide-ranging work of the Mayor's Office, City agencies, and our partners to connect immigrant youth to services would not be complete without our cornerstone legal services program: ActionNYC.

ACTIONNYC AND CITIES FOR ACTION

In 2015, heralding President Obama's 2014 Executive Actions on immigration, Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Mark-Viverito announced the creation of ActionNYC, representing the nation's largest investment by a municipality to prepare for Executive Action. ActionNYC is the first model of its size to connect outreach, community navigation and legal support.

In further support of Executive Action, MOIA has helped lead Cities for Action – a national coalition of over 150 Mayors and county leaders – in aggressive advocacy, penning letters to the Supreme Court of the United States urging them to review the appeal for *Texas v. U.S.*

The coalition filed amicus briefs in support of President Obama's Executive Actions on immigration on multiple occasions: in January 2015 to the Supreme Court, alongside 120 Mayors; in January 23, 2015 to the district court, alongside 33 Mayors; and in April 2015 to the 5th circuit, alongside 73 Mayors. The coalition also urged President Obama to take additional steps to support DACA recipients as the end of his Administration neared.

While we were ultimately disappointed in the Supreme Court's decision on Executive Action, ActionNYC moved forward to ensure that immigrant New Yorkers, including those who are DACA-eligible and other immigrant youth, have access to free, safe immigration legal help. In particular, ActionNYC began a strategic partnership with DOE to provide legal services directly in schools.

Partnering with schools has allowed ActionNYC to reach students and parents in a safe and familiar setting. Since launch in March 2016, ActionNYC has offered 86 legal clinics at over 25 unique schools, serving over 900 individuals. ActionNYC has also made 87 referrals for City and social services, including IDNYC, healthcare enrollment, and English language classes. Approximately three out of ten individuals screened was found to have an immigration benefit available. In addition, a preliminary analysis in April showed that at least 80 percent of those screened at schools have stated that it was the first time they were accessing free, immigration legal services.

THE WORK AHEAD

In the face of uncertainty around the future of the DACA program and growing enforcement initiatives by federal immigration authorities, Mayor de Blasio has made a firm call to Washington, D.C. to affirm the program will be preserved for the 30,000 New Yorkers with DACA and the approximately 750,000 nationwide.

Additionally, in response to shifts in immigration policy and enforcement at the national level, ActionNYC has pivoted its outreach model and has increased the scale of regular Know Your Rights forums. Organizers have participated in nearly 400 community workshops. In addition, as mentioned, ActionNYC in Schools has partnered with Fordham Law School to deliver nearly 100 Know Your Rights Workshops in 33 schools from January through May 2017, reaching 2,488 attendees.

MOIA recently announced an expansion of ActionNYC in NYC Health + Hospitals facilities, with the opening of three new ActionNYC sites in NYC Health + Hospitals facilities in Queens, Lower Manhattan and the Bronx. These sites will provide immigration legal services and facilitate connections to health insurance and health care for NYC Health + Hospitals patients and community members, including DACA-eligible youth.

Further, MOIA has been in close conversations with private funders to serve as a citywide Know Your Rights coordinator, ensuring effective and strategic delivery of rights information and legal services referrals to immigrant communities, in collaboration with community-based organizations, City agencies, and legal service providers.

We will continue to work with partners in our national coalition Cities for Action to fight for the continuation of DACA, which has allowed approximately 750,000 residents to come out of the shadows. Our coalition urges the President to explicitly commit to continuing the program and building on its success.

CONCLUSION

We recognize that despite recent indications from the federal government that DACA will continue, this is not enough. We will continue to monitor federal policy changes, and ensure that the immigrant communities we are here to serve, our colleagues and our partners have trusted and reliable information. We continue our call to the Administration give DREAMers the peace of mind they deserve, and commit to protecting these young people through DACA, and by supporting legislation to provide them with permanent relief

We look forward to continuing this conversation with the Council in the coming weeks, and working with the Council and Agency partners, advocates and others to do this important work.



Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL)

Department of Education of the City of New York

Teresa Arboleda, *President*

Alma Fuentes, *1st V.P.*

Raymond Lee, *Rec. Secretary*

Vanessa Leung, *Treasurer*

Council Members:

Martha Arenas

Antonieta Alarcon

Awatef Ibrahim

Office of English Language Learners: Angelica Infante, Executive Director

Lisette Colon, Chief of Staff

Citywide Council for English Language Learners (CCELL) Resolution # 08

Support for passage of the NY State DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act
June 2012

Whereas, the CCELL, established by NYS Education Law 2590-B, 5. (a) (i) – (iii) (the Law) with the power to advise and consent on any educational or instructional policy involving bilingual or English as a Second Language Programs, and to issue an annual report on the effectiveness of the city district in providing services to English Language Learners (ELLs) and making recommendations, as appropriate, on how to improve the efficiency and delivery of such services; and

Whereas, according to NYCDOE Spring 2011 Report (the Report), on 2010-2011 Demographics of NYC English Language Learners (ELLs) more than 41% of NYC students report speaking a language other than English at home; and

Whereas, the Report states that the current number ELLs in the NYC system is 154,466 students, which is 14.3% of the student population (excluding charter schools), among which 168 home languages are represented; and

Whereas, the Report states that about 45.5% of current ELLs are foreign born and that new immigrant students in NYC schools this year number 72,630 or around 6.7% of the student population; and

Whereas, there is no hard data on the number of undocumented students in NYC schools, it is logical to expect that many ELLs who are foreign born or new immigrants will be undocumented and that they were brought to this country by their parents at an age where they were unaware of their status; and

Whereas, in 2010, the U.S. Congress did not pass the federal DREAM Act legislation that would have granted some undocumented students, who came to the United States at a young age, a path to education and citizenship if they met certain criteria; and

Whereas, California, Texas and New Mexico have already passed their versions of the DREAM Act, without the citizenship provision, which can only be accomplished by a federal law; and

Whereas, in January 2012 the State University of New York (SUNY) Trustees unanimously approved a resolution supporting a plan to offer state sponsored tuition assistance, grants and scholarships to college-bound illegal immigrants who want to enroll in state schools, with H. Carl McCall, Chairman of the Board of Trustees stating: “the current demographic realities of NYS indicate that many of the brightest and hardest working students eligible to enroll at SUNY are of undocumented status, and it is imperative that SUNY remain accessible to these students”; and

Whereas, there is a growing number of NY State DREAM Act supporters; which includes the NY State Department of Education, the City University of New York, New York University, NY State Board of Regents, the NYC Council and NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg, for bills circulating in the NY State Assembly and Senate that would extend financial benefits to undocumented students; and

Whereas, on June 14, 2012, President Obama issued an Executive Order allowing illegal residents under the age of 30, who came to the United States before the age of 16 and have no criminal or security threat, and who have been successful students or have served in the military, to get a two-year deferral of deportation; and

Whereas, failure to pass DREAM Act legislation will stop the pursuit of education and career fulfillment of many bright and talented students whose barriers to achieving their dreams are lack of resources and undocumented status; and

Whereas, the CCELL advocates for equal access to higher education for all students, whether or not they are undocumented; and now therefore, be it

Resolved, that the CCELL fully supports pending New York State DREAM Act legislation that will ensure equal access to higher education for all students, regardless of immigration status; and be it further

Resolved, that the CCELL fully supports New York State DREAM Act legislation that will provide financial resources from both the public and the private sectors, as well as make available tax-free education accounts for undocumented students to help their families plan for college; and be it further

Resolved, that that the CCELL fully supports that NY State DREAM Act legislation be passed so that the great untapped potential of undocumented youth will have the opportunity to make valuable economic and social contributions to NY State.

Adopted by the Citywide Council on English Language Learners on June 27, 2012.

References:

1. NYCDOE Spring 2011 Report on 2010-2011 Demographics of NYC English Language Learners (ELLs)

Testimony by New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)
before the NYC Council Committee on Immigration regarding:
Oversight: Supporting New York City’s DREAMers and “DACA-mented” Youth

June 19, 2017

Chair Menchaca, Council Members, staff, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Immigration Committee about support of New York City’s DREAMers and DACA-mented Youth.

My name is Helen Drook, and I am a Senior Staff Attorney at the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG). NYLAG is a nonprofit law office dedicated to providing free legal services in civil law matters to low-income New Yorkers. NYLAG serves immigrants, seniors, the homebound, families facing foreclosure, renters facing eviction, low-income consumers, those in need of government assistance, children in need of special education, domestic violence victims, persons with disabilities, patients with chronic illness or disease, low-wage workers, low-income members of the LGBTQ community, Holocaust survivors, veterans, as well as others in need of free legal services.

NYLAG strongly supports Resolution 1484, which calls on the state and federal government to extend protection for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level. We applaud the City Council for its continued work to protect undocumented New Yorkers.

NYLAG has been a longtime proponent of the DREAM Act, and has advocated on behalf of DREAMers for many years. Since 2012 NYLAG has helped more than 2,000 young people to apply for DACA and renew their status. We have firsthand knowledge of how beneficial this program has been for DACA recipients and their families. DACA status allows young people

who were brought to the United States as children to move out of the shadows. With DACA status, undocumented people can get a Social Security Number and a driver's license, and get a job with benefits. According to a number of studies, DACA recipients have significantly contributed to our economic growth. As of today, hundreds of thousands of young undocumented New Yorkers are denied the opportunity to gain access to higher education. Without a college degree, these students are far too often forced into the shadows of poverty and desperate existence. The proposed resolution will give undocumented youth to educational and economic opportunities that, in their turn, will yield economic benefits for New York State.

In the absence of comprehensive immigration reform and uncertainty of DACA's future under the current Administration, NYLAG strongly supports the City Council's call for Congress to pass the BRIDGE Act of 2017. This bill will enable almost one million undocumented youth to live and work in the United States without constant fear of deportation.

NYLAG enthusiastically supports Resolution 1484 and encourages the Council to pass it as soon as possible. I would like to thank the Committee for holding this hearing, and for their commitment to protecting New York City's immigrants.

Respectfully submitted,

New York Legal Assistance Group



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**STATEMENT OF
MARIUM KHAWAJA
OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR
COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS, NEW YORK, INC.**

**BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL**

**FOR A HEARING CONCERNING,
A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE PASSAGE OF THE NEW YORK STATE
DREAM ACT AND THE BRIDGE ACT**

**PRESENTED
June 19, 2017**

Good morning, my name is Marium Khawaja, and I am the Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator for the New York Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (“CAIR-NY”), a leading Muslim civil rights advocacy organization. Today, I speak in support of Resolution 1484, which calls on State lawmakers to pass The New York Dream Act, providing educational opportunities to undocumented college students, and calls on Congress to enact the BRIDGE Act, protecting many undocumented New Yorkers from arrest and deportation.¹ I will address the benefits these laws provide to all New Yorkers, focusing on their impact within the Muslim community.

The BRIDGE Act would continue President Obama’s policy of protecting DREAMers; undocumented immigrants who qualify for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) program. DREAMers are undocumented immigrants who are younger than 31, entered the United States as children, lived continuously in the United States for at least five years, and have never been convicted of a serious criminal offense.²

Since President Trump’s inauguration, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) has rapidly expanded its detention of undocumented immigrants with no criminal record. So far this year, ICE more than doubled the number of arrests compared to 2016.³ Many of those detained include DREAMers

President Trump’s policies targeted undocumented immigrants from his first days in office. Thankfully, in a victory for community advocates, this past Friday President Trump conceded the importance of DACA and agreed to extend the program. Let me be clear, the word of this volatile president is not enough. New York’s DREAMers need the protections of the BRIDGE Act to assure them that their rights will be protected going forward.

DREAMers have been exemplary leaders, active in their local communities, and we all benefit from the stability they receive under DACA. DACA is predicted to add more than \$230 billion to the U.S. economy over ten years.⁴ Rolling back DACA would hurt our community and put DREAMers at risk of deportation from the only country they’ve ever known. The BRIDGE Act provides provisional protected status to undocumented individuals until their DACA’s expiration.

Many undocumented New Yorkers also require assistance to attend higher education. The New York DREAM Act responds by helping alleviate the financial burden that inhibits many DREAMers from

¹ New York Dream Act, State Senate, S. 471A (2017); BRIDGE Act U.S. Congress, S. 3542 (114th Congress, 2nd Session, 2016)

² U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Security, Program of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Section 2, (2012). “An individual must show that he or she: ... (4) has not been convicted of a felony offense, a significant misdemeanor offense, multiple misdemeanor offenses, or otherwise poses a threat to national security or public safety.”

³ Maria Sacchetti, *ICE Immigration Arrests of Noncriminals Double Under Trump*, THE WASHINGTON POST, April 16, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/immigration-arrests-of-noncriminals-double-under-trump/2017/04/16/98a2f1e2-2096-11e7-be2a-3a1fb24d4671_story.html?utm_term=.52129cdde6f2

⁴ Silva Mathema, *State-by-State Analysis of the Economic Impact of DACA, DAPA, and DACA Expansion*, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, June 15, 2017. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2015/06/15/114894/state-by-state-analysis-of-the-economic-impact-of-daca-dapa-and-daca-expansion/>

pursuing college.⁵ Of the 4,500 undocumented New Yorkers who graduate from high school every year, only 5-10% continue on to higher education.⁶ The New York DREAM Act is an indispensable tool for promoting the social mobility of undocumented New Yorkers, but it will also improve our State's economy overall.⁷ In the United States, college graduates earn on average \$30,000 more per year than those with only a high school degree.⁸ In New York State, the effect is even more drastic, with college graduates earning \$57,400 more.⁹

The nature of our workforce is changing, and in the coming years New York will need ever expanding numbers of college educated workers. As the market demand for high school graduates shrinks, 65% of jobs are expected to require more than a high school diploma by 2020.¹⁰ Yet despite this increased demand, the United States is projected to underproduce 5 million college educated workers within the same period.¹¹

Dream acts in other states have repeatedly proven to be a success. The the Georgia Dream Act secured educational opportunities for immigrants in that state, increasing workforce productivity between \$111 million and \$494 million within a ten year period.¹²

CAIR-NY sees these laws as essential to the community we serve. Muslim New Yorkers are frequently targeted for surveillance by local and federal law enforcement at a much higher rate than other immigrant groups. We know that 95% of the NYPD's recent political and religious investigations targeted Muslim individuals and organizations.¹³ The NYPD has engaged in extensive surveillance of

⁵ State Assembly, 4311, Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (N.Y. 2017).

⁶ Press Release, ASSEMBLY TO PASS NEW YORK STATE LIBERTY ACT & DREAM ACT (2017), N.Y.S. Assembly (February 6, 2017). <http://nyassembly.gov/Press/20170206/>.

⁷ U.S. Dep't of Labor, Employment Projections, Modified April 20, 2017.

https://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm. The chart, based on data collected in 2016 notes a lower unemployment rate for higher education levels as well and an increase in earnings with greater education.

⁸Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney, *Is Starting College and Not Finishing Really That Bad?* THE HAMILTON PROJECT (2013).

http://www.hamiltonproject.org/papers/what_happens_to_students_who_fail_to_complete_a_college_degree_is_som_e/

⁹ N.Y. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Market Information Division of Research and Statistics, Analysis of New York State's 2012-2022 Occupational Projections by Education Level, 10 (2015). <https://labor.ny.gov/stats/PDFs/Analysis-of-2012-2022-Occupational-Projections-and-Wages.pdf>.

¹⁰ Anthony P. Carnevale ET AL., Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020 13, 21 (Georgetown Public Policy Institute 2013). https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.FR_Web.pdf

¹¹ *Id.* at 8-9; Anthony P. Carnevale ET AL., Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020 4, (Georgetown Public Policy Institute Executive Summary 2013). https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web.pdf

¹² Mariaangela Buenaventura, *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Georgia's Proposed Dream Act: A Bill to Grant in-State Tuition to Undocumented Students in Georgia*, GEORGETOWN IMMIGRATION LAW JOURNAL 419 vol. 30 (Spring, 2016)

¹³ *Id.* at 4. "According to the Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD ("OIG"), over 95% of recent NYPD political and religious investigations targeted Muslim individuals and organizations."

the Muslim community, targeting neighborhoods, families, mosques and even local businesses for nothing more than simply exercising their faith.¹⁴

Undocumented Muslims face the combined threat of both local and Federal surveillance. There was a time where over 700 undocumented Muslim men were detained for several months before being deported.¹⁵ In the following years, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security implemented the National Entry-Exit Registration System (“NSEERS”), a *de facto* Muslim registry that resulted in the detention of more than 60,000 men from Muslim majority nations, and the deportation of over 10,000.¹⁶

In light of the Trump Administration’s ongoing demonization on Muslim immigrants, our city’s ever-present surveillance apparatus puts undocumented Muslim New Yorkers in an increasingly precarious position. The NYPD’s deployment of highly-intrusive surveillance technologies, often without court approval or oversight, compound the fear of immigrant Muslims. The technologies include military-grade “X-Ray” vans and cell phone surveillance devices known as “Stingrays.” Despite our Mayor’s continued assurances that New York will remain a sanctuary city, NYPD operates without sufficient oversight to ensure that our city’s surveillance tools won’t become the vanguard of a deportation force. The information collected from these technologies remains vulnerable to subpoenas from federal authorities, including ICE, who could potentially use the intelligence collected by the NYPD to track down undocumented immigrants for detention and deportation.¹⁷

For that reason, CAIR-NY and other civil rights advocates continue to support this council’s passage of the POST Act, which would ensure that this council has the ability to oversee the NYPD’s use of new and invasive technologies, closing a loophole that has permitted our police to buy these tools with private and federal funds, thereby circumventing council review.

I commend this committee for its leadership on these crucial issues and the broader fight for the safety of undocumented immigrants. Thank you for giving me the opportunity today to address the Council about this critical issue, and I look forward to working with the Council in advocating for the rights of immigrant New Yorkers.

¹⁴ Albert F. Cahn, Statement Before the Committee on Public Safety New York City Council for a Hearing Concerning, Creating Comprehensive Reporting and Oversight of NYPD Surveillance Technologies 3 (June 14, 2017). “...the NYPD’s Intelligence Division engaged in extensive, suspicionless surveillance of majority Muslim neighborhoods and Muslim families. Additionally, NYPD officials have conducted blanket surveillance of entire mosques, surveilling men, women, and children for nothing more than practicing their faith. Some local businesses have even been classified as “place[s] of concern” for nothing more than having customers of middle eastern dissent.”

¹⁵ *Ziglar v. Abbasi*, 137 S. Ct. 615 (2017). Case currently pending.

¹⁶ American Civil Liberties Union, *Sanctioned Bias: Racial Profiling Since 9/11*, 7, (2004).

¹⁷ Raphael Pope-Sussman, *NYPD Warns That Oversight of Surveillance Efforts Will Embolden Terrorists*, GOTHAMIST, March 1, 2017, http://gothamist.com/2017/03/01/big_brother_is_none_of_yr_business.php.



Testimony Before the New York City Council's Committee on Immigration

Presented on June 19, 2017

A. The Legal Aid Society

The Legal Aid Society (Society), the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services organization, is more than a law firm for clients who cannot afford to pay for counsel. It is an indispensable component of the legal, social, and economic fabric of New York City — passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal, and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform. The Society's unique value is in its ability to go beyond any one case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals, and broader, more powerful systemic changes for society as a whole. Through a network of borough, neighborhood, and courthouse-based offices in 27 locations in New York City, more than 2,000 attorneys, paralegal case handlers, and support staff, along with volunteer help coordinated by the Society's Pro Bono program, we provide comprehensive legal services to fulfill our mission that no New Yorker should be denied access to justice because of poverty. Through three major practice areas—Civil, Criminal, and Juvenile Rights—the Society handles approximately 300,000 cases a year in city, state, and federal courts.

Our commitment to serving immigrants began in 1876, when The Legal Aid Society was founded to defend the individual rights of German immigrants who could not afford to hire a lawyer. Though we have significantly broadened our legal practice, we have remained committed to our original mission: helping low-income immigrant communities. We have maintained an Immigration Law Unit (ILU) which has served New York City's immigrant population, providing access to justice to vulnerable populations, helping citizens by challenging removal proceedings and preventing the separation of immigrant families.

The Immigration Law Unit is currently comprised of over 45 staff including an Acting Attorney-in-Charge, Deputy Attorney-in-Charge, supervising attorneys, staff attorneys, paralegal case

handlers, and social workers. The ILU specializes in the intersection between immigration and criminal law. In addition to comprehensive immigration representation, the Unit works collaboratively with all of the Society's practice areas to serve our diverse immigrant clients through an integrated service model, providing clients with assistance with public benefits, health care, family law, employment and tax matters, and other issues faced by low-wage earners. ILU staff represents immigrants before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), immigration judges in removal proceedings, and the Board of Immigration Appeals, the federal circuit court, as well as in family courts in ten counties, in federal court on habeas corpus petitions, and petitions for review.

B. Resolution Number 1484: Calling on the state and federal government to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level

Since August 2012, the Society's ILU has helped thousands of New York residents apply for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a crucial remedy for young people who would be eligible for the DREAM Act. During the first weeks that the DACA program, we had young people sleeping overnight outside our Brooklyn Neighborhood Office at 111 Livingston Street, desperate for assistance. DACA application assistance screenings were often the first time that these young people were meeting with an immigration practitioner. We provide full immigration screenings for all the DACA applicants with whom we meet. Some are eligible for other forms of relief, such as Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), adjustment of status through family members, U nonimmigrant visas, T nonimmigrant visas, and relief under the Violence Against Women Act, among other remedies. For those individuals fortunate enough to be eligible for these more permanent forms of relief, we assist with those applications. But the vast majority of DACA applicants do not at this time qualify for other forms of relief. For them, DACA remains the sole, tenuous remedy available.

Although the grant of DACA status provides protection against removal by U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), it is not a guarantee. DHS has the authority to end an individual's DACA status at any time and seek to remove that person from the U.S.

By memorandum dated June 15, 2017, DHS Secretary John Kelly rescinding the November 20, 2014 memorandum expanding DACA and creating the new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents (DAPA), but leaving untouched the June 15, 2012 memorandum establishing the original DACA program. While we are relieved that original DACA will continue for the time being, it could be terminated as easily as were expanded DACA and DAPA.

The continuation of original DACA is beneficial for DACA registrants not only because it offers temporary relief from removal, but also because it offers the possibility of traveling abroad with Advance Parole. Upon returning to the U.S., the DACA registrant is paroled into the country, which can open the door to adjustment of status through certain family-based immigrant visa petitions, for individuals who had originally entered the U.S. without inspection and admission. This can be a life-changing event.

Passage of the federal BRIDGE Act would allow these young people to remain in the country safely, without fear of removal, until Congress can at long last pass the DREAM Act itself, to allow eligible individuals to obtain conditional residency and hopefully earn permanent residency at last, generally a necessary step on the road to full U.S. citizenship.

In order to lift the conditions from residency provided by the DREAM Act (should it eventually be passed), an immigrant would have to attend college for two or four years. Upon successfully completing two or four years of higher education, she would be eligible for legal permanent residence.

One of the greatest barriers to attending college is the exorbitant cost. In the course of assisting thousands of DACA applicants, we have heard time and again how challenging it is for low-income, undocumented individuals to afford the cost of college. The high costs either keep them from enrolling in the first instance, or force them to abandon their studies. These are ambitious and hard-working young people who are eager to apply themselves and, through education and hard work, realize the American dream.

Passage of the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the State level would make college more accessible for immigrant youth and the children of undocumented immigrants, by opening the door to various forms of financial assistance.

The Society applauds the Council's resolution 1484 calling on the state government to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, and calling on the federal government to similarly protect undocumented youth by passing the BRIDGE Act of 2017 at the federal level.

The Legal Aid Society

By: Hasan Shafiqullah
Deputy Attorney-in-Charge
Immigration Law Unit

**Resolution # 1484 in support of
New York State DREAM Act of 2017
&
Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017**

**Testimony Submitted to the
New York City Council**

Monday June 19, 2017

Emerald Isle Immigration Center (EIIC) is a 501(c) (3) organization providing immigration, social services and employment related services to immigrants through its offices in Woodside, Queens, and Woodlawn in the Bronx. We assist more than 20,000 clients annually by providing case assistance, information, and referrals. EIIC offers legal counseling on immigration and naturalization matters to indigent immigrants and New York City residents. Over the past five years we provided legal assistance and social services to over one hundred DACA recipients.

EIIC would like to thank the New York City Council for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding this legislation affecting immigrant students in New York. We especially thank Chairperson Carlos Menchaca, the Committee on Immigration and the New York City Council for their continued support of our work to assist the New York City immigrant community through the Immigrant Opportunities Initiative (IOI).

On June 15, 2012, the Obama Administration moved the country forward by providing the nation's youth with the discretionary relief of *Deferred Action*. By passing the New York State Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level, New York State will become one of the pioneering jurisdictions providing youth the opportunity to reach higher education and further deportation relief.

I. EIIC supports the passage of New York State DREAM Act of 2017, in the New York State Legislature, and urges the Governor to sign the New York DREAM Act of 2017, which would grant educational benefits to qualifying undocumented immigrant students.

There are currently 2 million undocumented immigrant youths living in the United States.¹ Sixty-five thousand are undocumented youths who graduate from high schools throughout the United States each year,² and 400,000 are immigrant youths living in New York that would benefit from the passage of the New York DREAM Act of 2017.³ The United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) provided statistics as to the federal progress of *Deferred Action*. As of March 31, 2017, 1,889,311 undocumented youths nationwide submitted *Deferred Action* requests, of that number, 111,233 came from the state of New York.⁴

More specifically, the New York Dream Act of 2017 allows all students—regardless of their immigration status - access to financial aid such the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), Higher Education Opportunity Program, Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program, Educational Opportunity Program which is already in other community colleges.⁵ Allowing undocumented students to be eligible for financial aid also has tremendous benefits for the economy. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, the “median earned income for a New York State worker with a bachelor’s degree is \$25,000 higher per year” than someone with just a high school diploma.⁶ The “additional taxes paid by the bachelor’s degree holders would amount to about \$3,900 per year to state and local governments, and a 2-year degree would entail an \$8,000 state investment in aid, [which means] a maximum TAP aid of \$4,000 at 2-year colleges.”⁷ The

¹ <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/>

² N.Y.C. Council Res. 1484

³ *Id.*

⁴

https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca_performancedata_fy2017_qtr2.pdf

⁵ N.Y.C. Council Res. No. 1484

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ David Dyssegaard Kallick, *The New York State DREAM Act: A Preliminary Estimate of Costs*

median income of a 2-year college graduate would amount to about “\$10,000 more per year, higher” than a worker with just a high school diploma. The state and local taxes paid each year would also be about \$1,000 higher.⁸ Thus, there is quite a huge return on investment for the State of New York. Further, if New York allows all of its students—both documented and undocumented more access to higher education, New York will also have an increase in highly educated workers, which means more productivity.⁹

Also, the New York Dream Act of 2017 is not a route to providing legal residency for undocumented youths.¹⁰ In fact, not all undocumented youths would be affected by the New York Dream Act of 2017, since there are certain requirements for eligibility. The New York Dream Act of 2017 eligibility requirements include: (1) attended a registered New York high school for two or more years, graduated from registered New York high school, and applied for attendance at the institution of higher education for undergraduate study for which an award is sought within five years of receiving a high school diploma; (2) attended an approved program for a state high school equivalency diploma, received a diploma, and applied for attendance at the institution of higher education for undergraduate study for which an award is sought within five years of receiving such diploma; or (3) is otherwise eligible for the payment of tuition and fees at a rate no greater than that imposed for resident students of the State University of New York, the City University of New York or community colleges.

To help immigrant families prepare for higher education expenses, the DREAM Act would also allow families to open a New York State 529 family tuition account under the New

and Benefits, Mar. 9, 2012

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ N.Y.C. Council Res. 1484

York State College Tuition Savings Program if they have an individual taxpayer identification number. Estimates show that of the roughly 4,500 undocumented students who graduate from New York High Schools every year, only 5-10 percent are able to pursue a college education because of financial burden¹¹.

II. EIIC also supports the passage of the BRIDGE Act of 2017, at the federal level, and urges Congress to provide qualifying DACA- eligible individuals “provisional protected presence” and employment authorization for three years.

The BRIDGE Act of 2017, would offer a “provisional protected presence” and employment authorization for three years to those who meet the guidelines to apply for DACA. This BRIDGE Act would be a legislative shield against the unilateral revocation of DACA by the President and further protection from deportation. A new study shows that people who have DACA contribute to our economy and education growth.¹² Further it would ensure that these undocumented youths can continue to work, study, file income tax returns, and be a productive member of society as long as they continue to meet the eligibility criteria.

Thus, EIIC urges the New York State Legislature to pass the New York Dream Act of 2017, and for Governor Cuomo to sign the Act making the pursuit of a higher education for all students possible, regardless of one’s immigration status.

The EIIC also urges Congress to pass the BRIDGE Act of 2017 to safeguard DACA holders and eligible applicants from deportation and encourage them to contribute to America’s future prosperity.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2016/10/18/146290/new-study-of-daca-beneficiaries-shows-positive-economic-and-educational-outcomes/>

Fryda Guedes

Director of Immigration and Civic Engagement

Hispanic Federation

Testimony on Resolution 1484

June 19, 2017

Good Afternoon. My name is Fryda and I am the Director of Immigration and Civic Engagement of the Hispanic Federation. Chair Menchaca and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Federation and the more than 60 Latino-led community based organizations we represent in New York.

I would like to thank the NYC Council's Committee on Immigration for bringing us together today and affording our community of immigrant and Latino advocates the opportunity to express our need for the passage New York State DREAM Act and the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017. We commend the Committee for passing this timely resolution in favor of the DREAM and BRIDGE bills.

As a leader in the Latino community, Hispanic Federation calls on the NYS legislature to pass the DREAM Act to ensure that DREAM students have fair and equal access to higher education. We also call on Congress to pass the BRIDGE Act, which would grant legal relief to DACA recipients and other DREAMers, offering provisional protected presence and the opportunity for sustained contribution to the American workforce.

For more than fifteen years now, the Federation has been working on advocating for the passage of humane and fair immigration reform in our nation's capital. This year, we have witnessed a rise in political initiatives intended to disrupt immigrant lives. The Trump administration has taken a firm stance against DAPA, striking down any hopes that the successful DACA program will expand during his presidency. There is no time better than now to pass legislation that would secure the future for our nation's DREAMers. Passing the DREAM bill and the BRIDGE Act would make a significant difference in the lives of over 2 million DREAMers in this country.

The proposed DREAM bill offers Governor Cuomo the chance to not only stand up for immigrant rights, but to demonstrate this populations' value to the rest of New York's economic, cultural, and social wellbeing. Most of our DREAMers were brought to the United States as young children, and as such, were educated in our public schools, developed ties to their local communities, and above all – consider themselves American. To deny this already vulnerable population the equal access to education would be to contradict our values and stymie economic development.

The proposed BRIDGE bill would have an even more profound impact on the lives of DREAMers than the current DACA Executive Action, which has already transformed the lives of thousands of people - increasing their income and educational opportunities, reducing unemployment rates, and boosting the nation's labor market. The BRIDGE act would extend protections to members of our society who pose no threat to public safety and that have made significant contributions to the US economy. The over 2 million undocumented youth that could be eligible for BRIDGE program deserve to live their lives free of

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fear and free of unnecessary barriers to education and employment.

Undocumented immigrants in New York and beyond represent a wealth of untapped potential and talent that, under current policy, threatens to be wasted. Most notably, our undocumented youth – seeking an education that would allow them to become the state’s next leading doctors, lawyers, and community leaders – are not only deserving of our support, but eager to prove and contribute their value to the state they call home. DREAMers should have the opportunity to both afford higher education and work legally in their desired profession.

Looking to improve not just the lives of immigrants, but our community as a whole, we can demonstrate to the rest of our nation that the success of future generations – comprised of both immigrants and native New Yorkers alike – is a valuable resource worth our financial investment and moral support.

Study after study has affirmed that per capita income and college attainment rates are closely correlated. A worker in New York holding a bachelor’s degree earns an average of \$25,000 more per year than their counterparts who only have a high school diploma and therefore contribute an additional \$3,900 each year in taxes to local and federal governments. It is clear that by investing in our youth, New York can continue to position itself as one of the largest economies in the world while reaping the benefits of increased economic productivity and increased tax revenues.

Let’s give DREAMERS the opportunity that other generations of immigrants have been granted: to work hard, achieve and fully contribute to our society. In doing so, we will be answering affirmatively how we view immigrants as integral to New York’s future success.

Thank you.

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FOR THE RECORD

WOMANKIND

FORMERLY NEW YORK ASIAN WOMEN'S CENTER

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Testimony of Womankind (Formerly New York Asian Women's Center)
Before the New York City Council
Committee on Immigration
June 19, 2017

FOR THE RECORD

Good morning Chairperson Menchaca and distinguished members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Chenshen Wang and I am an Advocate at Womankind (formerly New York Asian Women's Center). We would like to first thank you for your continued support of ensuring that services for immigrants – including survivors of gender-based violence – are a priority.

Womankind works with survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking to rise above trauma and build a path to healing. We bring critical resources and deep cultural competency to help Asian communities find refuge, recovery, and renewal. We provide culturally matched direct services to survivors in 18 distinct Asian languages citywide. Womankind fields nearly 2,000 first time helpline calls annually. Our services include 24-hour multilingual helpline, crisis intervention, safety planning, and emergency and transitional housing, financial literacy and empowerment, education and employment assistance, children and youth services, ESOL tutoring, and immigration legal services. Our resourceful advocates expertly navigate issues of language access, cultural norms, and trauma, within the city's systems, to ensure survivors receive the help and support they want and deserve. Annually, we serve over 1,000 survivors, most of whom are immigrants.

Womankind has worked with survivors who were applicants and beneficiaries of DACA since July 2013. Many of the individuals whom we worked with disclosed survivorship of domestic violence, sexual violence, or human trafficking. We were then able to assist the survivors with applying for U-Visa, T-Visa, and VAWA. The majority of the youth we worked with did not make an intentional decision to live undocumented. They desire to contribute to and thrive in the only society they know. Yet, these youth continue to endure, what feels like a punishment, for a decision that was, in most cases, not theirs to make. Compounded with other barriers such as,

WOMANKIND

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wariness of authorities, lack of knowledge about legal rights and available support, and limited service resources in the community, survivors feel trapped in their circumstances. We conducted DACA-targeted outreach to immigrant communities who are often further isolated from service resources by barriers such as, language and fear of deportation are also assets.

The impact of fulfilling immigration relief needs goes deeper. A year after deportation relief became available to undocumented youth, analysts started noticing a trend that Asian immigrants are not proportionately applying for DACA. Asians comprise an estimated 6% of the eligible DACA population, but of the total 552,240 applicants who applied, they comprise only 4%. Asian youth face unique cultural barriers when it comes to applying for DACA. Asian cultures highly value family loyalty, which inspires reluctance in Asian youth who fear authorities might locate their immigrant family.

Recent immigration enforcement tactics have caused survivors to be more fearful of seeking even our agency's services. Our advocates have also experienced difficulty in learning about survivors' immigration status; they do not want to share this information for fear of negative repercussions. This in turn prevents us from connecting them with services, including our in-house immigration services, that could help survivors to obtain status and work authorization and ultimately free themselves from their abusers and exploiters. Finally, these tactics have also enabled certain unscrupulous individuals to prey on survivors and other undocumented immigrants by conning them into filing fake or weak applications for asylum or other relief, or paying for motions to reopen with very low likelihoods of success.

We stand along with you and many service providers here today to call on the state and federal government to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the BRIDGE ACT 2017 (Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy) at the federal level.

**Testimony of JASSELIN,
NEW YORK LAWYERS FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST CLIENT
In support of Resolution No. 1484
June 19, 2017**

My name is Jasselin, and I am a client of the Health Justice Program at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to share my story, and my testimony, with Immigration Committee Chair Menchaca, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Education Committee Chair Dromm, and Environmental Protection Committee Chair Constantinides—thank you for this opportunity. This is my story, in my words, with only translation help from NYLPI:

I was born in Mexico and came to the United States before I turned 16. I am now 27 years old. My parents brought me here because there were no work opportunities in Mexico, and they were having trouble putting food on the table. Also, only very basic education was available where we were living.

I have end stage renal disease and I need a kidney transplant. Until I receive a transplant, I have to go to dialysis three times a week. Dialysis makes me weak and unwell. It is very difficult. A cure for kidney failure exists, and that is a transplant. As an adult, I can only get emergency Medicaid, but I cannot get a transplant through emergency Medicaid.

Now that I have DACA, I have applied for regular Medicaid. Now I hope I can get a transplant. I would not be eligible for a transplant without DACA. Access to a transplant means more than just what it can do for me and my health. The transplant will allow me to regain the life I had before my grueling dialysis schedule.

Getting access to a transplant means so much to me. My cousin, who was as close to me as a sister, died on May 16, 2016. She was the same age as me and was also an End Stage Renal Disease patient. She lived in Mexico, where it was hard for her to get proper medical treatment. Unfortunately, she did not survive and died from an infection in her catheter.

With DACA, I can look now for a job. I would really like to work since I have been unable to work because I have spent years in dialysis and have not had authorization to work until now. I hope that after I get a transplant, I will be able to work more and earn more money in the future to support myself and help my family.

I am concerned about the new President and his administration because DACA has given me an opportunity to live well, have a job, and to be able to get the medical care I need.

I was fighting for over two years to get DACA. At first, I had trouble applying for DACA on my own without an attorney. I am very, very grateful for my attorney, Sarika, and NYLPI's help in finally obtaining DACA.

DACA has helped me a lot. I also know many people who have benefitted from DACA and that is why I support the BRIDGE Act and the New York State DREAM Act. I am happy to know that the New York City Council also supports these laws. Thank you for Reso 1484, and standing by me and others like me.

I would just finally like to ask the City Council to provide more information to immigrants about their rights. People in my community are confused about what their rights are, and some do not realize that they have rights. Aside from this simple request, I only want to say again thank you—thank you for allowing me to submit my story, thank you for standing by me, and thank you for standing up for immigrants.



**Testimony of SARIKA SAXENA,
NEW YORK LAWYERS FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST
In support of Resolution No. 1484
June 19, 2017**

Good morning, my name is Sarika Saxena, and I am a Staff Attorney in the Health Justice Program at the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (“NYLPI”). I would like to thank Immigration Committee Chair Menchaca, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Education Committee Chair Dromm, and Environmental Protection Committee Chair Constantinides for the opportunity to submit testimony on the importance of extending protections for undocumented youth in our city. We at NYLPI strongly support Reso. 1484

For the past 40 years, NYLPI has been a leading civil rights and legal advocate for New York City communities and individuals marginalized by race, poverty, disability, and immigration status. Led by community priorities, we use tools such as community organizing, impact litigation and individual representation, policy advocacy, pro bono partnerships, and public education to make equal justice a reality. NYLPI’s Health Justice Program brings a racial justice and immigrant rights focus to health care advocacy in New York City and State. We provide expertise through our Immigrant Health Initiative, utilizing individual and systemic advocacy to improve immigrant access to healthcare, including for those in immigration detention facilities.

We are very grateful that this Council funds our UndocuCare program through the Immigrant Health Initiative. Our UndocuCare program connects undocumented and uninsured immigrant New Yorkers with serious health conditions to state-funded Medicaid. Approximately 45% of the 250,000 undocumented immigrants living in New York are eligible for Medicaid, but are without access to proper legal assistance, and many of these individuals endure serious, sometimes fatal, diseases alone. In New York State, state-funded Medicaid is available to income-eligible Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or “DACA,” recipients, amongst other undocumented New Yorkers. We have seen firsthand the impact that the protections of DACA status has on our client community, which is why we echo the words and the spirit of the Resolution that is the subject of today’s hearing.

I would like to tell the Council about a client of NYLPI’s, Jasselin, who will be submitting her own testimony in support of today’s Resolution as well. Jasselin has lived in New York City for over 14 years, and is an End Stage Renal Disease patient who was unable to obtain necessary medical treatment for years. Jasselin only recently secured DACA, through our assistance at NYLPI, and is now eligible to enroll in Medicaid. Jasselin is one example of the millions of undocumented immigrants who do not have health insurance, and who struggle every day, not knowing whether today is the day that their immigration status will determine whether they are allowed to live or die. Without DACA, Jasselin would not have had a pathway to obtain life-saving treatment.

Jasselin's story, and the stories of the many other who find themselves in similar desperate situations, provides compelling evidence that DREAMers, and all immigrants who are forced to live in the shadows of society because they do not have a path to lawful immigration status and are at risk of deportation, should be protected and should have access to essential services, like life-saving health insurance.

Resolution 1484, which calls on the state and federal governments to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level, are crucial for the protection of DACA recipients like Jasselin and future applicants.

The Federal BRIDGE Act would protect DACA recipients like Jasselin from losing their temporary deportation relief under the "provisional protected presence" and their employment authorization. This would have a profound impact on Jasselin's ability to take control of her health and obtain life-sustaining treatment. The Trump Administration currently has the authority to end the DACA program without the approval of Congress, and regardless of what message is coming out of the White House on any particular day, has created a great deal of uncertainty. The anxiety created by this uncertainty is amplified in the case of young undocumented youth who are seriously ill. They have to make an incredibly difficult decision, choosing between their health—and possibly their lives, and coming out of the shadows to face possible deportation. The BRIDGE Act allows undocumented youth eligible for the original DACA program to attain temporary deportation relief and employment authorization that would remain in effect until Congress changed or repealed the provisions, which provides more certainty.

New York prides itself on being a sanctuary city for immigrants. Therefore, it is imperative that our leaders pass strong, affirmative legislation that protects us all. We wholeheartedly support this resolution calling for the extension of protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals Who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level.

Thank you.

**NORTHERN MANHATTAN
IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION
(NMIC)**

TESTIMONY

In support of

Extending Relief and Protection for Undocumented Minors

PRESENTED BEFORE:

THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION
June 19, 2017

PRESENTED BY:

Sandra Perez, Esq.
Coordinating Immigration Attorney
LEGAL SERVICES
NORTHERN MANHATTAN IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION

Good afternoon Chair and council members. My name is Sandra Perez and I am the Coordinating Immigration Attorney at Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (hereafter, "NMIC"). On behalf of NMIC, we thank you for inviting us to present our views on the resolution calling for the extended protections for undocumented youth.

NMIC is a community-based settlement house founded in 1979. We have grown into a leading multi-service agency with a staff of over 100 persons, serving all of New York City. Our mission is to serve as a catalyst for positive change in the lives of the people in our community. Our legal and social services programs include immigration legal services, housing court representation/eviction prevention and counseling for victims of domestic violence. Our education and career services provide the community with the additional tools necessary to build secure and prosperous futures. NMIC does not charge any fees and serves low income and indigent persons.

NMIC is one of the few legal service providers available to serve the high-volume demand for immigration services in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx. NMIC's nine story office building is ideally situated in the heart of Washington Heights where large immigrant and mostly Spanish speaking populations in these communities can easily access the broad range of services available. For example, a DACA eligible client can be referred to our education services in order to fulfill the educational requirement then sent back to our legal team to file an application. Should this client have housing issues, our experienced housing litigators can intervene to preserve their apartment as they go through this process.

NMIC's Immigration Unit provides access to an extensive array of immigration services. We are a designated *ActionNYC* site, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs ("MOIA"). Our immigration unit provides services ranging from preparation of applications for U.S. Citizenship, family based petitions and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ("DACA") to complex forms of relief such as U-Visas and Violence against Women's Act petitions ("VAWA"). In addition to conducting daily immigration screenings through *ActionNYC*, our Immigration Unit offers walk-in consultations twice per month. NMIC also provides "Know Your Rights" workshops on various issues, including the protection against immigration fraud by "Notarios." We have also experienced a recent surge in the demand for consultations on the immigration consequences of criminal arrests, which we also provide on a daily basis.

At NMIC we have been on the front-lines in the quest for expanding DACA. Many young, college-bound immigrants have relied and trusted NMIC for assistance and representation. Our office has witnessed numerous young, intelligent and hard-working DACA recipients anxiously awaiting a future opportunity to obtain permanent legal status. Some of these young immigrants are experiencing fear, anxiety and confusion. Given the volume of immigration services which NMIC has provided for the immigrant community, we stand poised to continue helping in their quest to become fully integrated.

We stand also in solidarity with the City Council and our colleagues in preserving and expanding these opportunities for young immigrants.

On January 25, 2017, the current president signed the Executive Order entitled: “*Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States.*” Among other objectives, the Order directs additional resources devoted to ICE’s *Criminal Alien Program*, which accounts for more than two-thirds of all deportations. The most disturbing aspect of the Executive Order is the sweeping language of the categories of individuals prioritized for removal. Merely being *charged* with any criminal offense or having “committed acts which constitute a chargeable criminal offense” may potentially strip an immigrant of his or her liberty and ultimately their hope of remaining in the U.S.

Due to the language of this Executive Order and the latitude given to ICE agents, prospective *DREAMers* could be subject to harsh consequences which would bar them from eligibility. Notably, the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”) does not make the distinction between adult and youthful or juvenile offenders, while state law has long established a sound basis for not holding young offenders to the same level of accountability as adults. This shortcoming in immigration law adds another layer of reasoning for not precluding young immigrants from this immigration benefit. Immigration law should mirror the state’s principles with regard to young offenders. The efforts and resources expended by states in rehabilitating young offenders is frustrated when that young person becomes subject to removal without regard to well established scientific principles, such as lack of maturity, cognitive under-development and vulnerability.

For these and many public policy reasons, DACA eligible immigrants should not be barred from eligibility nor subject to removal. The latter may be easily triggered by a conviction or in some instances, mere conduct alone or an arbitrary finding of an ICE officer. Such would destroy the hope of a young and otherwise promising immigrant, subjecting him or her to exile from the

United States. At NMIC, we have had clients who due to lack of judgment, immaturity or unfortunate circumstances, have encountered the criminal justice system – yet have not only shown remorse, but have become increasingly educated and productive members of the community.

DACA’S POSITIVE ECONOMIC, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT

To date, DACA recipients have been shown to add to the fabric of America in countless ways. The *Center for American Progress* set forth statistics showing that:

- over 62% of DACA recipients in the last year were able to secure employment with greater earnings;
- over 60% pursued higher education;
- over 70% have been deemed an asset to employers – oftentimes bringing their second language to established companies in need of these skills;
- over 70% of DACA recipients contributed to the economy by making major purchases, such as a home or car;
- it is projected that by the year 2024, DACA recipients and immigrants will have added 90 billion to our gross domestic product.

These statistics demonstrate the invaluable asset which DACA recipients have become and how they continue to favorably impact our country, its educational institutions and the U.S. economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We urge that DACA be expanded with a three (3) year renewable work authorization. DACA effectively causes young immigrants to emerge from the shadows and forever change their circumstances. Expanding DACA would also protect young, vulnerable and fearful immigrants

from the clutches of predatory criminals who prey on aimless youth for recruitment into gang membership or other forms of abuses, coercion and servitude.

It is imperative that the State's effort to pass the DREAM Act and avoid a bar to eligibility for DACA is supported – and also praised. We must recognize that this objective is of paramount importance in avoiding the devastating effects of an Executive Order which confers unilateral discretion to newly hired ICE agents, yielding results which are against the interests of the United States' growth, prosperity and inclusion.

We thank you for the opportunity to hear NMIC on this most important issue.



**BROOKLYN
DEFENDER
SERVICES**

TESTIMONY OF:

Lindsey Buller – BIA Accredited Representative

BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES

Presented before

The New York City Council Committee on Immigration

Hearing on

Supporting New York City's DREAMers and "DACA-mented Youth

&

Resolution 1484-2017

June 19, 2017

Introduction

My name is Lindsey Buller. I am a Board of Immigration Appeals Accredited Representative for the Youth and Communities Project at Brooklyn Defender Services (BDS). BDS provides innovative, multi-disciplinary, and client-centered criminal, family, and immigration defense, as well as civil legal services, social work support and advocacy, for over 30,000 clients in Brooklyn every year. The Immigrant Youth and Communities Project (YCP) has represented thousands of Brooklyn immigrants in their applications for lawful immigration status and in defending against deportation in non-detained removal proceedings. Highlights of our work include assisting more than 320 young clients in their pursuit of Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), Adjustment of Status, U visas, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and other immigration benefits or

removal defense, and assisting more than 1,000 Haitian New Yorkers with their applications for Temporary Protected Status, work authorization, and other immigration benefits or removal defense. I thank the City Council Committee on Immigration for the opportunity to testify today about BDS's support for Resolution 1484-2017 and the challenges that our DACA youth clients face in accessing education and supporting their families.

BDS's Provision of DACA Services

Since 2009, BDS has counseled, advised or represented more than 7,500 immigrant clients. In 2016 alone, we handled more than 1,500 immigration matters across a full spectrum of services. Our immigration practice is composed of 17 full-time immigration attorneys, two law graduates, five paralegals accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals, one full-time and one part time social worker, two legal assistants and two Immigrant Justice Corp Legal Fellows representing more than 1,000 immigrant New Yorkers every year. We are a Board of Immigration Appeals-recognized legal service provider.

BDS recently completed a contract with the Division of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to provide DACA services.¹ Through that contract we established ourselves as a well-known DACA provider in Brooklyn, and we continue to receive DACA and other immigration referrals from community-based organizations and literacy providers, as well as from former DACA clients referring their friends and family members to us. While many New Yorkers with "simple" expanded DACA cases can be helped by community based organizations and programs like Action NYC, we stand ready to help those with cases made more complicated by interactions with the criminal justice system and/or immigration enforcement.

Indeed, BDS and other public defender offices like ours are in a unique position to provide complex immigration legal services for clients who may not otherwise seek immigration assistance but come to us by way of the criminal and family court systems.

To give you an example, BDS's *Padilla* practice advises BDS clients facing criminal charges on the ramifications of any plea or conviction on their immigration status.² When our *Padilla* attorneys screen clients we frequently identify family members of our clients who are eligible for DACA. Consequently, even if the clients who we represent in our criminal defense/family defense cases are ineligible for DACA themselves (either because of a pending case, past criminal history or because they already have status), we are able to flag for clients that their family members are eligible and may call our office

¹ It is our understanding that future RFPs related to DACA/DAPA services will be made through the Mayor's Office of Immigration Affairs and/or Action NYC.

² In 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Padilla v. Kentucky* that the Sixth Amendment requires defense counsel to provide affirmative, competent advice to a noncitizen defendant regarding the immigration consequences of a guilty plea. Absent such advice, a noncitizen may raise a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel. See *Padilla v. Commonwealth of Kentucky*, 559 U.S. 356 (2010).

for an intake. Other times, once we start speaking with the client about his or her immigration status, the client will ask if they can send their family members to us for help, too. Thus, through our robust *Padilla* representation, BDS attorneys and BIA Accredited Representatives earn the trust of our clients who may then actually confide in us to help their family members come out of the shadows and apply for DACA.

Current Climate for Potential DACA Applicants

Since the new administration took office in January, we have had to be far more cautious about submitting DACA applications, especially for young people who have had contact with the criminal justice system. We were happy to hear the news just this past Friday that DACA is apparently safe, at least for the moment.³ We hope to see more qualified individuals interested in applying for the program.

Until recently, we had a pretty steady stream of referrals from adult education programs funded by the city. Students would be identified by their teachers as being possibly DACA eligible and referred to us for legal assistance. Recently, however, we have noticed a bit of a downtick in these types of referrals. This may also be attributable to the general chill within immigrant communities after the presidential election.

BDS DACA Client Story

Sophia is a 19-year-old young woman from Mexico who has been living in the U.S. since she was 9 years old. She submitted a DACA application with the assistance of an unqualified tax preparer and was denied. Fortunately I picked up her case through the Youth and Communities Project and we were able to submit a second application on her behalf, which was approved just before she graduated from high school.

Sophia was an exemplary student in the New York City public school system. A letter of support from her high school social studies teacher states: “While many of our American-born students may take their education for granted, Sophia does not. The reality of her circumstances does not allow for this because she knows she has the most to gain from the American education system, but also, the most to lose if she is not able to continue her studies.”

Sophia just finished her first year at Guttman Community College in Manhattan and hopes to transfer to John Jay or Hunter College. She is pursuing an Associate's degree in Liberal arts & Humanities. While this is a very positive development for Sophia, her lack of immigration status means she is ineligible for financial aid. In her words, *“Scholarships are hard to get, which makes it ten times harder for me since many require community service, and I already work 3-4 days a week. I am a full time student so it is very challenging. My parents have been saving money and I am*

³ See, e.g., Michael D. Shear & Vivian Yee, ‘Dreamers’ to Stay in U.S. for Now, but Long-Term Fate is Unclear, N.Y. TIMES, June 16, 2017, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/16/us/politics/trump-will-allow-dreamers-to-stay-in-us-reversing-campaign-promise.html? r=0>.

enrolled in payment plans in order to pay the tuition. I work in order to buy books, use the money for tuition and any other expenses that come across.”

Sophia is representative of many of our young clients who suddenly find themselves the only members of their family with employment authorization. They struggle to balance the desire to help support their families financially with their desire to pursue higher education. Young people in New York should not be forced into the role of primary breadwinners for their families, and we encourage City Council to do everything you can to help support students like Sophia who want nothing more than to pursue their dreams in this country.

Resolution 1484-2017

Sophia’s story, and that of dozens of other BDS clients, exemplify why the City Council should adopt Resolution 1484-2017 calling on the state and federal government to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level.

New York City does not set federal immigration policy or determine statewide funding for higher education. However, the City Council can use its moral authority as a sanctuary city to call for improved opportunities for all New York residents, no matter where they were born. We will all be stronger and safer if our young people have the opportunity to work and go to school. We strongly urge you to support this resolution to send a powerful message to the state and federal legislatures that New York City believes in the strength and possibility of our immigrant communities.

Questions?

Please feel free to contact me at lbuller@bds.org or 718-254-0700 ext. 309.

The New York City Council City Hall
New York, NY 10007
Committee on Immigration
Carlos Menchaca, Chair
Members: Mathieu Eugene, Daniel Dromm, Peter A. Koo and Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.

June 19, 2017

Marlen Fernandez, Community Outreach Coordinator, Jamie Lucero Mexican Studies Institute at CUNY

I want to thank the committee for having us here today.

My name is Marlen Fernandez. I am a proud CUNY Graduate of Lehman College. I currently work for the Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute at CUNY as the Community Outreach Coordinator. I am here on behalf of the Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute at the City University of New York. I am here representing our scholarships recipients most who are completely undocumented and some who are recipients of DACA. I myself am a beneficiary of DACA and also a scholarship recipient from 2012.

I am also a founding member of the Lehman Dream team. The first student club to advocate for the rights of undocumented youth in the nation. I must remind the council members present that in 2012 there was a walk to Albany from New York City to Albany. In which participants walked over 100 miles to pass the New York Dream Act. I was one of those participants.

We are all gathered here 5 years later still discussing the importance of passing the New York Dream Act. More than ever it is time to move forward with the proposed legislation and move away from the continuous discussions and no action. New York has indeed fallen behind in providing access to higher education for immigrant students.

To all those who are here as representatives I urge you to take the time to meet the youth who are here, to make meaningful connections, to understand that this is a real issue that our city is facing. It time to begin to understand the complexities of what it means to be an undocumented immigrant in the United States. Undocumented students come from a diverse background. Many of them face a variety of barriers in addition to their immigration status, such as being a first generation student to attend college, low socioeconomic status, poor access to adequate housing, lack of access to health care, and the constant fear of deportation of themselves or loved ones. Through the stories of these youth you will hear the struggle, the anxiety, and the fear that many have had to overcome to reach their dreams. Many who are still in pursuit of the American Dream regardless of the odds against them.

Our scholarship program is living proof of the potential undocumented students can reach when they are funded. More often than not these students through their adversity have become the best of the best succeeding with limited resources. These circumstances have made them creative, innovative, ambitious, analytical, and with an intense drive to tackle many

of the great challenges we face today. Many of our scholarship recipients have gone on to work for prestigious institutions and companies. They are all in one way or another leading change in our community.

Every year we receive more applications than the last. This year alone we received over 200 applications. Due to funding we were only able to grant 44. Most students who seek our scholarships are counting on it as the only means to pay for school. What happens to those who are not fortunate enough to obtain a scholarship? These students are forced to decide between going to school and work. Scholarships are only able help a small percentage of students. They are a band aid solution to the problem. Having legislation in place would allow undocumented students to continue their educational path just like their U.S born peers.

Furthermore, through my job as an outreach coordinator, I have seen our students struggling to manage school, work, and family responsibility even when having the scholarship. I have seen other students who are our clients choosing between school and work, delaying the start of college, taking breaks to save for the next semester. The most admirable students are those that continue to persevere a college degree and or are currently in school who do not qualify for DACA. These students are at an even higher disadvantage and more vulnerable. We cannot continue to close the door to a better future.

We need state and city legislation to close the gap. Students should not have to choose if they can afford to school. We cannot let this talent go to waste. Our city, our state our nation demands that we open the doors to higher education for all students. Education has always been seen as the great equalizer. Equal access gives everyone a chance to succeed.

We hope that you will see the value in contributing to the funding and protecting of undocumented students. At the institute we see education as they key to socioeconomic mobility. CUNY has often been referred to as the engine of upward mobility. By supporting all students of all ages, status, and abilities, the City is making an investment in the future and in our great city and these United States of America.



Manhattan Young Democrats

Testimony of Jake LaRaus, Chair, Immigration Taskforce, Manhattan Young Democrats

Hearing before the New York City Council Committee on Immigration

Oversight: Supporting New York City's DREAMers and “DACA-mented” Youth

Monday, June 19, 2017, 10:00 AM

My name is Jake LaRaus and I am the Chair of the Immigration Taskforce of the Manhattan Young Democrats (MYD), the official youth arm of the Democratic Party in Manhattan County. I speak today on behalf of the Manhattan Young Democrats’ Immigration Taskforce, and graciously thank Chairman Menchaca and the other members of the Committee on Immigration for inviting me to provide testimony at this hearing.

The MYD organization is comprised of and represents the millennial, young adult Democrats of Manhattan, from the progressives to the Blue Dogs and everyone in between. While there may at times be some disagreement among our members on certain political issues, we are steadfastly united in our support for and advocacy in favor of policies that directly address the problems and difficulties that our generation is facing. Whether it be affordable healthcare or student loan reform or civil rights protections, political issues that particularly affect millennials and young adults are especially important to the MYD membership and leadership. Accordingly, we actively seek to champion legislation and policy developments that protect and defend the rights of young New Yorkers and young Americans. Undocumented youth and so-called DREAMers, despite their legal status and the mendacious characterizations with which they are painted by anti-immigrant zealots and restrictionists, are as deserving of the protections of this state and this country as we are because they are just as much New Yorkers and Americans as we are. As such, the Manhattan Young Democrats proudly and enthusiastically support the bill sponsored by Chairman Menchaca, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Council Member Dromm, and Council Member Constantinides that is the subject of today’s oversight hearing.

Our full-throated support of this legislation should not be surprising. The roughly 83 million millennials in the United States, whose political views are largely more liberal and “left-leaning” than those of their parents or grandparents, on the whole support immigrants, a pathway to citizenship, and protections for undocumented youth with a far stronger and firmer consensus than the older generations.¹ This heightened level of pro-immigrant sentiment among young Americans was most recently reaffirmed in a YouGov poll, which found that a full two-thirds (66.7%) of respondents aged eighteen to twenty-nine held positive views of immigrants, while less than one quarter (24.8%) of the same group held negative views.² The

older age brackets, by comparison, were not so warm: 30.9% of thirty to forty-four year olds, 35.4% of forty-five to sixty-four year olds, and 38.5% of those sixty-five and older viewed immigrants unfavorably.³

More important than this sort of statistical politicking, though, is the fact that young Americans support undocumented immigrants and DREAMers because we recognize that such status-specific labels belie the fact that they are, first and foremost, our colleagues, our neighbors, our friends, our family. The Manhattan Young Democrats and American millennials know that one's humanity is not given permission to exist by virtue of one's legal status, and thus those without status should not be denied service and protection by the State purely because their indelible humanity has been obfuscated by a broken immigration system and nativist extremists.

Enacting the New York State DREAM Act would not only fulfill the promise of equality of opportunity that New York projects outward, but would also inarguably be in all of our mutual interests. Over three-and-a-half thousand undocumented students graduate from high school every year in New York State, yet less than half of these new graduates later enroll in college.⁴ For many undocumented youth in New York, as well as around the country, higher education is cost prohibitive because they are not able to access most sources of financial aid due to their lack of legal status. At present, New York's undocumented young adults contribute over \$140 million annually in state and local taxes, but this rate of economic contribution pales to their potential if they are put on the same footing as their American-born peers.⁵ States that have taken measures to level the higher education playing field for undocumented youth by giving them access to in-state tuition rates and financial aid have not only seen decreases in their high school dropout rates for undocumented youth, but also related increases in these young adults' rate of college enrollment.⁶ These newly-enabled college enrollees, upon their graduation from their respective higher education institutions, on average earn more money and quantitatively contribute more to their state's economy. In New York, this suppressed potential is enormous: college graduates earn about \$25,000 more annually and pay almost \$4,000 more annually in taxes than their peers who only have high school diplomas.⁷ As young adults ourselves, the Manhattan Young Democrats fully understand these sorts of values and benefits that come with a college degree. Consequently, by denying young undocumented New Yorkers access to financial aid for college, we are not just depriving them of the fair opportunity to higher education, but we are also depriving our state of the enormous benefits and opportunities their unleashed abilities would bring.

The BRIDGE Act, which has languished in the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security since early February 2017, is of similar significance, seeking to create statutorily-enshrined temporary relief from removal for undocumented youth and DREAMers in the same vein as President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The current state of DACA beneficiaries and DACA-eligible undocumented youth remains unclear, despite the hollow promises few unreliable and untrustworthy members of the Trump Administration have offered up. Republican supporters of the Administration, from establishment conservative media outlets like *National Review* to

far-right xenophobia-courting media outlets like *Breitbart* to elected officials in Congress, have kept up the call for DACA's termination.⁸ Those of us who believe that the protections the DACA program provides to undocumented youth are not only important but also necessary cannot rest on our laurels, merely hoping that the anti-immigrant extremists groomed by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) and the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) who now hold positions in the Trump Administration will forget to take steps to severely limit or just axe DACA.⁹ Their drive to disenfranchise and dispossess American DREAMers is seemingly boundless, and so our will and mettle to safeguard these protections through measures like the BRIDGE Act must be similarly unceasing.

In vociferously supporting this proposed legislation, the Manhattan Young Democrats further recognize that the needs of the immigrant community in New York and the country at large are unfortunately at present all the more dire due to the inhumane, un-American actions and rhetoric of the Trump Administration, which are borne out with disconcerting constancy. One need look no further back than just last Tuesday when the acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Thomas Homan, told the Homeland Security Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations that undocumented immigrants should “be uncomfortable” and “look[ing] over [their] shoulder[s].”¹⁰ The Administration's draconian crackdown on the immigrant community has been unfolding across the country, including in our own backyard; ICE arrests increased by approximately thirty-one percent in New York State between January and April of this year, with law-abiding immigrants without criminal records – like Diego Puma Macancela, the high school senior who was arrested by ICE two weeks ago in Westchester just hours before his senior prom – facing significantly heightened targeting.¹¹ In advocating for the rights and protection of undocumented youth pursuant to the bill at issue today, it would be a mistake to not also deplore these unjustifiable “enforcement” actions by the Department of Homeland Security, with particular attention paid to the condemnable apprehensions of non-citizens by ICE in New York courts.¹² These court apprehensions undermine the right of immigrants and other non-citizens to have equal and equitable access to justice as crime victims or to aid in the provision of justice as witnesses in trials, and thus should be loudly opposed by this body.

We also would like to bring attention to one other related development that, much like the Trump Administration's inexcusable expansion of immigrant apprehensions, directly affects the rights and safety of undocumented youth, as well as the immigrant community writ large. Prosecutorial discretion, a legal concept that recognizes that the government is “under no obligation to strictly and aggressively enforce the letter of the law in every case” (especially when persuasive equities and factors are present), has long been “a widely accepted doctrine” in the immigration context and was strongly emphasized in President Obama's November 2014 immigration executive actions.¹³ The availability of such options is of the utmost importance when our immigration court system is being hobbled by a crushing backlog of over 585,000 cases nationwide.¹⁴ But beginning shortly after the issuance of the Trump Administration's logic-eschewing executive orders on immigration in this past February, immigration practitioners and activists started noticing that ICE attorneys who represent the government in immigration court proceedings had begun to become more oppositional and hostile to requests

from opposing counsel for prosecutorial discretion and other procedural tools (e.g., motions) that rely on government cooperation. More recently, ICE more forthrightly articulated its change in position on prosecutorial discretion during a meeting with the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA).¹⁵ In taking these steps, the Administration has proven itself to be unwilling or unable to either enact immigration policies in accordance with easily-observable facts and reality or display any appreciation of the destructive consequences of such policies.

It is exceedingly important, if not morally imperative, that the City of New York continue to demonstrate its dedication to the protection of undocumented and immigrant New Yorkers, including undocumented youth and DREAMers, through word and deed because ours is a city inextricably tied to the immigrant experience, as I know personally. My great-great-grandfather, Abraham Anshel Kessler, arrived in New York City in 1895 at the age of twenty-three, became a prominent member of the Lower East Side *landsmanshaft* of Bialystoker Jews later in life, and played a leading role in the planning and construction of the Bialystoker Home for the Aged in the late 1920s – the same building that still proudly stands today after being named a city landmark in 2013.¹⁶ This kind of story is neither unique nor rare among our fellow New Yorkers, many of whom have similarly deep ties to the very brick and mortar of the city through their respective ancestors' immigration journeys. It is the young who are tasked with carrying on the memories and lessons of those who came before, and so the Manhattan Young Democrats, as millennial New Yorkers, take on this responsibility now by cheering the proposed legislation at issue today and calling on the City Council to enact it. Our shared humanity – the humanity we share with our fellow young New Yorkers who lack legal status, the humanity they share with our forebears who made the fateful decision to pursue the promise of freedom and opportunity by starting their lives anew in the United States, and the humanity that will run through all of our descendants when we are gone – calls us all to action now. We must answer that call.

I offer thanks again to the Committee on Immigration for inviting this testimony. I look forward to working with the City Council on this important immigration issue and others in the future.

¹ See Press Release, U.S. Census Bureau, Millennials Outnumber Baby Boomers and Are Far More Diverse, Census Bureau Reports (June 25, 2015), available at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html>; Ruth Milkman, "A New Political Generation: Millennials and the Post-2008 Wave of Protest," 82 *Am. Sociological Rev.* 1, 6 (2017); see generally Bradley Jones, "Americans' Views of Immigrants Marked by Widening Partisan, Generational Divides," Pew Research Center (Apr. 15, 2016), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/15/americans-views-of-immigrants-marked-by-widening-partisan-generational-divides/>.

² YouGov, 2016 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (CCAP) Panel Study (November 29 – December 29, 2016), Voter Study Group (June 2017).

³ *Id.*

⁴ See Fiscal Policy Institute, "The New York State DREAM Act: A Preliminary Estimate of Costs and Benefits," at 3 (Mar. 9, 2012), <http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/FPI-CostBenefitAnalysis-NYS-DREAM-Act-20120309.pdf>; see also Rebecca Phipps & Jessica Rofo, *The New York DREAM Act: Creating Economic Opportunities for NY State*, New York University Law School Immigrant Rights Clinic, at 5 (2015).

⁵ See Misha E. Hill & Meg Wiehe, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants*, Institute on Taxation & Economy Policy, Appx. 1 (Apr. 2017).

⁶ See Phipps & Rofo *supra* n. 4, at 5-6.

⁷ *Id.* at 6.

⁸ See, e.g., Kevin D. Williamson, "Trump's Executive Amnesty," *National Review* (June 13, 2017); Ben Kew, "125,000 'DACA' Illegals Got Work Permits Since January," *Breitbart* (June 9, 2017); Chris Massie, "Rep. Steve King: Trump Should've Repealed DACA on Day 1," *CNN* (Feb. 9, 2017).

⁹ See generally Maria Santana, "Hard-line Anti-illegal Immigration Advocates Hired at 2 Federal Agencies," *CNN* (Apr. 12, 2017).

¹⁰ Maria Sacchetti, "ICE Chief Tells Lawmakers Agency Needs Much More Money for Immigration Arrests," *The Washington Post* (June 13, 2017).

¹¹ Emma Whitford, "Spike in NYC ICE Arrests Proves Need for More Legal Defense Funding, Advocates Say," *Gothamist* (May 22, 2017); Noah Goldberg & Reuven Blau, "Supporters Demand Release of Westchester Student Nabbed by ICE Just Hours Before Senior Prom," *Daily News* (June 12, 2017).

¹² See Edgar Sandoval et al., "NYC Immigrant Communities Shaken After Federal Raids Led to Around 40 Arrests," *Daily News* (Feb. 13, 2017); Nicholas Kulish et al., "Reports of Raids Have Immigrants Bracing for Enforcement Surge," *The New York Times* (Feb. 10, 2017); see also Caitlin Dickerson, "Immigration Arrests Rise Sharply as a Trump Mandate is Carried Out," *The New York Times* (May 17, 2017) ("But agents also have been moving more aggressively, taking into custody people who arrived for routine check-ins and even apprehending people arriving at courthouses on nonimmigration matters.").

¹³ See Michael Kagan, "Binding the Enforcers: The Administrative Law Struggle Behind President Obama's Immigration Actions," 50 *U. Rich. L. Rev.* 665, 673 (2016); see generally Memorandum from Sec'y Jeh Johnson, DHS, to Thomas S. Winkowski, Acting Dir., ICE, et al., Policies for the Apprehension, Detention and Removal of Undocumented Immigrants (Nov. 20, 2014).

¹⁴ See TRAC Immigration, Immigration Court Backlog Tool: Pending Cases and Length of Wait in Immigration Courts, http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court_backlog/.

¹⁵ American Immigration Lawyers Assoc., "AILA/ICE Liaison Meeting April 6, 2017," AILA Doc. No. 17060602, at 6 (June 6, 2017).

¹⁶ See generally Landmarks Preservation Comm'n, "Bialystoker Center and Home for the Aged," Designation List 464 (May 21, 2013), available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2529.pdf>.

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every year in New York State, yet less than half of these new graduates later enroll in college.⁴ For many undocumented youth in New York, as well as around the country, higher education is cost prohibitive because they are not able to access most sources of financial aid due to their lack of legal status. At present, New York's undocumented young adults contribute over \$140 million annually in state and local taxes, but this rate of economic contribution pales to their potential if they are put on the same footing as their American-born peers.⁵ States that have taken measures to level the higher education playing field for undocumented youth by giving them access to in-state tuition rates and financial aid have not only seen decreases in their high school dropout rates for undocumented youth, but also related increases in these young adults' rate of college enrollment.⁶ These newly-enabled college enrollees, upon their graduation from their respective higher education institutions, on average earn more money and quantitatively contribute more to their state's economy. In New York, this suppressed potential is enormous: college graduates earn about \$25,000 more annually and pay almost \$4,000 more annually in taxes than their peers who only have high school diplomas.⁷ As young adults ourselves, the Manhattan Young Democrats fully understand these sorts of values and benefits that come with a college degree. Consequently, by denying young undocumented New Yorkers access to financial aid for college, we are not just depriving them of the fair opportunity to higher education, but we are also depriving our state of the enormous benefits and opportunities their unleashed abilities would bring.

The BRIDGE Act, which has languished in the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security since early February 2017, is of similar significance, seeking to create statutorily-enshrined temporary relief from removal for undocumented youth and DREAMers in the same vein as President Obama's Deferred Action

for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The current state of DACA beneficiaries and DACA-eligible undocumented youth remains unclear, despite the hollow promises few unreliable and untrustworthy members of the Trump Administration have offered up. Republican supporters of the Administration, from establishment conservative media outlets like *National Review* to far-right xenophobia-courting media outlets like *Breitbart* to elected officials in Congress, have kept up the call for DACA's termination.⁸ Those of us who believe that the protections the DACA program provides to undocumented youth are not only important but also necessary cannot rest on our laurels, merely hoping that the anti-immigrant extremists groomed by the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) and the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) who now hold positions in the Trump Administration will forget to take steps to severely limit or just axe DACA.⁹ Their drive to disenfranchise and dispossess American DREAMers is seemingly boundless, and so our will and mettle to safeguard these protections through measures like the BRIDGE Act must be similarly unceasing.

In vociferously supporting this proposed legislation, the Manhattan Young Democrats further recognize that the needs of the immigrant community in New York and the country at large are unfortunately at present all the more dire due to the inhumane, un-American actions and rhetoric of the Trump Administration, which are borne out with disconcerting constancy. One need look no further back than just last Tuesday when the acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Thomas Homan, told the Homeland Security Subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations that undocumented immigrants should “be uncomfortable” and “look[ing] over [their] shoulder[s].”¹⁰ The Administration's draconian crackdown on the immigrant community has been unfolding across the country, including in our own backyard; ICE arrests increased by approximately thirty-one percent in New York State between January

and April of this year, with law-abiding immigrants without criminal records – like Diego Puma Macancela, the high school senior who was arrested by ICE two weeks ago in Westchester just hours before his senior prom – facing significantly heightened targeting.¹¹ In advocating for the rights and protection of undocumented youth pursuant to the bill at issue today, it would be a mistake to not also deplore these unjustifiable “enforcement” actions by the Department of Homeland Security, with particular attention paid to the condemnable apprehensions of non-citizens by ICE in New York courts.¹² These court apprehensions undermine the right of immigrants and other non-citizens to have equal and equitable access to justice as crime victims or to aid in the provision of justice as witnesses in trials, and thus should be loudly opposed by this body.

We also would like to bring attention to one other related development that, much like the Trump Administration’s inexcusable expansion of immigrant apprehensions, directly affects the rights and safety of undocumented youth, as well as the immigrant community writ large. Prosecutorial discretion, a legal concept that recognizes that the government is “under no obligation to strictly and aggressively enforce the letter of the law in every case” (especially when persuasive equities and factors are present), has long been “a widely accepted doctrine” in the immigration context and was strongly emphasized in President Obama’s November 2014 immigration executive actions.¹³ The availability of such options is of the utmost importance when our immigration court system is being hobbled by a crushing backlog of over 585,000 cases nationwide.¹⁴ But beginning shortly after the issuance of the Trump Administration’s logic-eschewing executive orders on immigration in this past February, immigration practitioners and activists started noticing that ICE attorneys who represent the government in immigration court proceedings had begun to become more oppositional and hostile to requests from opposing

counsel for prosecutorial discretion and other procedural tools (e.g., motions) that rely on government cooperation. More recently, ICE more forthrightly articulated its change in position on prosecutorial discretion during a meeting with the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA).¹⁵ In taking these steps, the Administration has proven itself to be unwilling or unable to either enact immigration policies in accordance with easily-observable facts and reality or display any appreciation of the destructive consequences of such policies.

It is exceedingly important, if not morally imperative, that the City of New York continue to demonstrate its dedication to the protection of undocumented and immigrant New Yorkers, including undocumented youth and DREAMers, through word and deed because ours is a city inextricably tied to the immigrant experience, as I know personally. My great-great-grandfather, Abraham Anshel Kessler, arrived in New York City in 1895 at the age of twenty-three, became a prominent member of the Lower East Side *landsmanshaft* of Bialystoker Jews later in life, and played a leading role in the planning and construction of the Bialystoker Home for the Aged in the late 1920s – the same building that still proudly stands today after being named a city landmark in 2013.¹⁶ This kind of story is neither unique nor rare among our fellow New Yorkers, many of whom have similarly deep ties to the very brick and mortar of the city through their respective ancestors' immigration journeys. It is the young who are tasked with carrying on the memories and lessons of those who came before, and so the Manhattan Young Democrats, as millennial New Yorkers, take on this responsibility now by cheering the proposed legislation at issue today and calling on the City Council to enact it. Our shared humanity – the humanity we share with our fellow young New Yorkers who lack legal status, the humanity they share with our forebears who made the fateful decision to pursue the promise of freedom and opportunity

by starting their lives anew in the United States, and the humanity that will run through all of our descendants when we are gone – calls us all to action now. We must answer that call.

I offer thanks again to the Committee on Immigration for inviting this testimony. I look forward to working with the City Council on this important immigration issue and others in the future.

¹ See Press Release, U.S. Census Bureau, Millennials Outnumber Baby Boomers and Are Far More Diverse, Census Bureau Reports (June 25, 2015), available at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html>; Ruth Milkman, “A New Political Generation: Millennials and the Post-2008 Wave of Protest,” 82 *Am. Sociological Rev.* 1, 6 (2017); see generally Bradley Jones, “Americans’ Views of Immigrants Marked by Widening Partisan, Generational Divides,” Pew Research Center (Apr. 15, 2016), <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/15/americans-views-of-immigrants-marked-by-widening-partisan-generational-divides/>.

² YouGov, 2016 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project (CCAP) Panel Study (November 29 – December 29, 2016), Voter Study Group (June 2017).

³ *Id.*

⁴ See Fiscal Policy Institute, “The New York State DREAM Act: A Preliminary Estimate of Costs and Benefits,” at 3 (Mar. 9, 2012), <http://www.fiscalpolicy.org/FPI-CostBenefitAnalysis-NYS-DREAM-Act-20120309.pdf>; see also Rebecca Phipps & Jessica Rofo, *The New York DREAM Act: Creating Economic Opportunities for NY State*, New York University Law School Immigrant Rights Clinic, at 5 (2015).

⁵ See Misha E. Hill & Meg Wiehe, *State & Local Tax Contributions of Young Undocumented Immigrants*, Institute on Taxation & Economy Policy, Appx. 1 (Apr. 2017).

⁶ See Phipps & Rofo *supra* n. 4, at 5-6.

⁷ *Id.* at 6.

⁸ See, e.g., Kevin D. Williamson, “Trump’s Executive Amnesty,” *National Review* (June 13, 2017); Ben Kew, “125,000 ‘DACA’ Illegals Got Work Permits Since January,” *Breitbart* (June 9, 2017); Chris Massie, “Rep. Steve King: Trump Should’ve Repealed DACA on Day 1,” *CNN* (Feb. 9, 2017).

⁹ See generally Maria Santana, “Hard-line Anti-illegal Immigration Advocates Hired at 2 Federal Agencies,” *CNN* (Apr. 12, 2017).

¹⁰ Maria Sacchetti, “ICE Chief Tells Lawmakers Agency Needs Much More Money for Immigration Arrests,” *The Washington Post* (June 13, 2017).

¹¹ Emma Whitford, “Spike in NYC ICE Arrests Proves Need for More Legal Defense Funding, Advocates Say,” *Gothamist* (May 22, 2017); Noah Goldberg & Reuven Blau, “Supporters Demand Release of Westchester Student Nabbed by ICE Just Hours Before Senior Prom,” *Daily News* (June 12, 2017).

¹² See Edgar Sandoval et al., “NYC Immigrant Communities Shaken After Federal Raids Led to Around 40 Arrests,” *Daily News* (Feb. 13, 2017); Nicholas Kulish et al., “Reports of Raids Have Immigrants Bracing for Enforcement Surge,” *The New York Times* (Feb. 10, 2017); see also Caitlin Dickerson, “Immigration Arrests Rise Sharply as a Trump Mandate is Carried Out,” *The New York Times* (May 17, 2017) (“But agents also have been moving more aggressively, taking into custody people who arrived for routine check-ins and even apprehending people arriving at courthouses on nonimmigration matters.”).

¹³ See Michael Kagan, “Binding the Enforcers: The Administrative Law Struggle Behind President Obama’s Immigration Actions,” 50 *U. Rich. L. Rev.* 665, 673 (2016); see generally Memorandum from Sec’y Jeh Johnson, DHS, to Thomas S. Winkowski, Acting Dir., ICE, et al., Policies for the Apprehension, Detention and Removal of Undocumented Immigrants (Nov. 20, 2014).

¹⁴ See TRAC Immigration, Immigration Court Backlog Tool: Pending Cases and Length of Wait in Immigration Courts, http://trac.syr.edu/phptools/immigration/court_backlog/.

¹⁵ American Immigration Lawyers Assoc., “AILA/ICE Liaison Meeting April 6, 2017,” AILA Doc. No. 17060602, at 6 (June 6, 2017).

¹⁶ See generally Landmarks Preservation Comm’n, “Bialystoker Center and Home for the Aged,” Designation List 464 (May 21, 2013), available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/reports/2529.pdf>.

**Hearing: Oversight: Supporting New York City's DREAMers and "DACA-mented" Youth.
Res. No. 1484: Calling on the state and federal government to extend
protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017
at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our
Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level.**

Monday, June 19, 2017

Testimony by: Teresa Arboleda

President, Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL)
(ccell@schools.nyc.gov or arboledat@yahoo.com)

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. The Citywide Council on English Language Learners (CCELL) was established by New York State Education Law 2590-B, 5., with the power to advise and consent on any educational or instructional policy involving bilingual, dual language or English as a Second Language Programs. The CCELL encourages parents of English Language Learners (ELLs) to engage in their children's education by providing information about public school ELL programs and services. Many of these parents are immigrants and the CCELL provides them with a forum to voice their concerns about programs and services. Interpretation in the appropriate language is provided at all CCELL meetings and flyers and other documents are translated. In April 2017 the CCELL scheduled a presentation by the NY Immigration Coalition on "How to Support Immigrant Students and Families Given the Current Political Climate." This presentation was very helpful in providing vital information in the event a parent or child is detained by ICE.

On June 17, 2012 the CCELL passed a resolution titled "Support for Passage of the NY State DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act" in support of the children of immigrant families covered by DACA, which is attached. The CCELL reiterates its support for the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 to eliminate barriers faced by immigrant families to apply for programs to alleviate the high costs of attending college. DREAMers should have the opportunity to attend college, pursue careers and contribute to their communities so they may benefit the economy and future of New York State and the USA,

The CCELL also supports the Federal BRIDGE ACT (Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy) which would provide temporary deportation relief for those undocumented youth who could be eligible for the original DACA Program.

The CCELL supports NYC Council Resolution No. 1484, which calls on the state and federal government to extend protections for undocumented youth by passing the New York State DREAM Act of 2017 at the state level, as well as the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017 at the federal level.

The CCELL continues to support any efforts to provide protections for all immigrants.

1 Encl
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**Testimony of Immigrant Justice Corps on
Resolution Number 1484
June 19, 20017**

Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC) thanks the New York City Council for the opportunity to submit testimony on Resolution 1484. IJC supports the proposed resolution which calls on the state government to pass the New York State Dream Act of 2017 and the federal government to pass the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (BRIDGE) Act of 2017. We thank the Council for its Immigrant Opportunities Initiative support for IJC’s comprehensive legal assistance for immigrants in all five boroughs.

The U.S. immigration system has been broken for more than two decades and in need of comprehensive reform. During the Obama administration, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) implemented memoranda to prioritize deportation of those who it felt posed a threat to the United States and to exercise prosecutorial discretion towards those who came to the United States to reunite with family, flee dangerous conditions, or find a better life. In June, 2012, then DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano announced a new program – Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA – which would allow immigrants who were brought to the United States as children, had completed or were enrolled in educational programs, and had not committed any serious crimes, to “come out of the shadows,” complete a background check, and obtain employment authorization. In five years, nearly one million individuals have applied for protection and work authorization under the program.¹ DACA has been a lifeline for many of this country’s most talented and passionate young people and IJC fully supports the City Council’s resolution urging state and federal action to protect DREAMers.

¹ See USCIS Statistics, https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/All%20Form%20Types/DACA/daca_performancedata_fy2017_qtr2.pdf

Immigrant Justice Corps

Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC) is the country's first and only fellowship program dedicated to meeting the need for high-quality legal assistance for immigrants seeking a path to lawful status, citizenship and fighting deportation. IJC's goal is to use legal assistance to lift immigrant families out of poverty – helping them access secure jobs, quality health care and life-changing educational opportunities. Inspired by the Katzmann Study Group on Immigrant Representation, IJC brings together the country's most talented law school and college graduates, connects them to New York City's best legal and community institutions, leverages the latest technologies, and fosters a culture of creative thinking that produces new strategies to reduce the justice gap for immigrant families, ensuring that immigration status is no longer a barrier to social and economic opportunity. Now in our third year, IJC has trained and placed over 100 Justice Fellows (law graduates) and Community Fellows (college graduates) in support of our mission to increase both the quantity and quality of immigration legal services. All our fellows are lawyers, law school graduates, Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representatives, or in the process of becoming accredited representatives.

Since IJC's founding in 2014, our fellows have provided immigration screenings to over 7,000 non-citizens and represented them on more than 3,000 applications to improve or stabilize their immigration status. Among these applications, our fellows have assisted hundreds of individuals to apply for DACA or to renew their DACA status. Filing these applications has allowed clients to attend college, seek good jobs, obtain drivers' licenses, and travel to see family members who they hadn't seen in many years.

For example, one of our community fellows who is working at MinKwon Community Action Center in Flushing, Queens, represented a 26-year-old client who was enrolled in college. By helping this client to obtain DACA, the individual was able to obtain financial assistance to help with the cost of her college tuition. She now works in the financial industry, is making a significant salary, and paying substantial taxes to the U.S. government.

What makes this story even more meaningful is that the IJC community fellow who represented this client on her DACA application is herself a recipient of DACA who, after graduating from the

City University of New York's prestigious Macaulay Honors College, was accepted as a fellow at IJC. She underwent our extensive training and has personally assisted over 200 individuals apply for or renew their DACA status.

IJC is proud that several of our former and current fellows – selected through a competitive, nationwide search process – are or have been recipients of DACA. These dedicated fellows bring language skills, cultural competency, and a passion for justice to their work every day. Through our work with this vulnerable population, and employing fellows who themselves have DACA status, we have gained a unique perspective of their resiliency and potential to inherit the American Dream. Yet, to date these resourceful youth face enormous barriers including limited paths to permanent lawful status and limitations on access to higher education. As an organization, whose mission is to serve the immigration community, IJC would benefit greatly from passage of the BRIDGE Act, giving existing fellows peace of mind about their future, and aiding us in continuing to recruit the best possible advocates for immigrants.

We thank the City Council for taking a stand in support of these important State and federal bills which could improve the lives of so many New York City residents. In this time when immigrants are often demonized, it is important for government, at all levels, to take pro-active steps to provide stability for, in former-President Obama's words, DREAMers who "are Americans in their heart, in their minds, in every single way but one: on paper."² We thank the New York City Council for the opportunity to testify about this important matter and we look forward to further discussions regarding our comments. Thank you.

² "Obama to Permit Young Migrants to Remain in U.S.," The New York Times, June 15, 2012, (available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/16/us/us-to-stop-deporting-some-illegal-immigrants.html>)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1484

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sander Perez, ESQ.

Address: 95 Wadsworth Ave. NYC

I represent: NMTC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1484 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chenchen Wang

Address: 32 Broadway 10FL NYC, NY 10004

I represent: Womenkind

Address: 32 Broadway 10FL NYC, NY 10004

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jake Labaus

Address: 320 E. 92nd St, AFC, New York, NY 10128

I represent: Immigration Taskforce, Manhattan Young Democrats

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lindsey Butler

Address: 177 Livingston St Bklyn 11201

I represent: Brooklyn Defender Services

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1485

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Marium Khawaja

Address: 4601 20th Ave Queens NY 11105

I represent: The Council on American-Islamic Relation

Address: NY chapter 4601 20th Ave, Queens NY

Address: 11105

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/20

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cesar Vargas

Address: 1178 Arthur Kill rd SI, NY 1032

I represent: Dream Action Coalition

Address: same as above

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bitta Mostofi

Address: _____

I represent: NOLA

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1484

in favor in opposition

Date: June 19th, 2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rodrigo Camarena

Address: 211 Hancock St # 2, Brooklyn NY 11216

I represent: Mixteca Organization, Inc

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 06/19/2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tuan Golman

Address: 60-16 83 PL MIDDIE VILLAGE NY 11379

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 1484
 in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Helen DROOK
Address: 7 Hanover Square, 18th Floor, NY NY 10001
I represent: NYLAG
Address: 7 Hanover Square 18th Fl. NY NY 10001

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1484 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: June 19th 2017

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Marden Fernandez
Address: 129 South Broadway Apt 1 White Plains
I represent: Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute CUNY
Address: 250 Bedford Park Blvd West, Bronx NY 10468

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Appearance Card

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 in favor in opposition

Date: 6/19/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Joshiana Guaman

Address: 5976 WOODSIDE AVE WOODSIDE NY 11377

I represent: Emerald Isle Immigration Center

Address: _____

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**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Janet Perez

Address: 3044 Kingsbridge Ave.

I represent: Mixteca Org.

Address: 245 23rd St. Brooklyn NY 11205

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms