

IMMIGRANT JUSTICE SHABBAT

The Reform Movement mobilizes to pass the Dream Act

Prepared
Autumn 2017



Youth

CAMP • NFTY • ISRAEL • MITZVAH CORPS

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כִּי־גֵרִים הֵיִיתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
for you were strangers in the land of Egypt

The Religious Action Center, in partnership with URJ Youth, is mobilizing the greater Reform Movement to help pass a clean Dream Act of 2017, which would grant permanent residence status on a conditional basis and provide a pathway to citizenship for DREAMers who attend college, work in the U.S. or serve in the military.

Jewish tradition is clear on the treatment of immigrants. Our faith demands of us concern for the stranger in our midst. Now is the time to turn our values into action, and to secure the American Dream for our country's most vulnerable. This will not happen without you.

Join the Reform Movement in our efforts to pass a clean Dream Act of 2017 by using this toolkit to host or plan an Immigrant Justice Shabbat observance with your congregation or community on November 3-4, 2017. Then, participate in a national Reform Movement Call-in Day to pass the Dream Act in Congress on Monday, November 6th.

This toolkit includes many resources to help raise awareness and take action around the Dream Act in your congregation or community:

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We have an opportunity to harness our collective power and make a difference in the lives of 800,000 at-risk young people. When we act together, we move one step closer to building the world we want—one filled with wholeness, justice, and compassion.



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Background on the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and the Dream Act of 2017

On September 5, 2017, the Trump administration announced its decision to terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. This decision puts at risk 800,000 undocumented young people who were brought to the U.S. as children and know no other country as home. [The Reform Movement calls on Congress to immediately pass a clean Dream Act of 2017.](#)

Who are DREAMers?

DREAMers are undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children and grew up in this country—their average age upon arrival was 6-and-a-half. To be eligible for DACA, these young people had to be under 16 years old upon arrival, as well as under age 31 years old and in the country at least five years before DACA's enactment date. Many DREAMers have no memory or understanding of a home other than the United States.

A 2016 survey of DACA recipients found that approximately 87 percent are in the workforce. If DACA workers lost their work permits and jobs, the Center for American Progress recently estimated that the cumulative U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) would be reduced by \$433.4 billion over 10 years.

Background: DACA

Since its creation in 2012, DACA has allowed DREAMers to obtain work permits and attend school, contributing to the only country they know as home without fear of deportation.

With the termination of DACA, DREAMers face a heightened risk of deportation. DACA participants and applicants trusted the federal government with their names and contact information when applying to the program – information that now makes them especially vulnerable to deportation.

The Administration has stopped accepting any new applications for DACA. For youth already enrolled in the program, all renewal applications had to be filed by October 5, 2017. Any DACA recipient whose current protections expire after March 5, 2018, will lose their protections as soon as their benefits expire, unless Congress acts now.



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Background: The Dream Act

Congress must immediately act to protect DREAMers and ensure there is no gap between the end of the DACA program and a permanent, legislative fix. The bipartisan Dream Act of 2017 (S.1615/H.R.3440) was reintroduced in Congress in July 2017 by Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Representatives Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL).

If enacted, the Dream Act would:

- Grant current DACA recipients permanent resident status on a conditional basis;
- Permit conditional permanent residents to then obtain lawful permanent residence status (known as a “green card”) if they attend college, work in the U.S., or serve in the U.S. military;
- Provide a pathway to citizenship for DREAMers, after they have been in conditional permanent resident status for 8 years and then lawful permanent residence for likely 5 years; and
- Improve college affordability for undocumented youth by changing rules that limit their access to in-state tuition and college loans.

It is imperative that Congress pass a clean bill, with no added enforcement measures or funding for a border wall.

We urge Senators and Representatives to co-sponsor the Dream Act and ask Congressional leadership to bring the bill to a vote immediately.



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Reform Movement Call-in Day Information

Join our efforts to pass a clean Dream Act by participating in a national Reform Movement Call-in Day. On November 6th, the Monday after the Reform Movement Immigrant Justice Shabbat, we are calling upon the entire community to call their elected officials to make our support for the Dream Act known.

Please use the scripts below to call your members of Congress, either asking them to advocate for immediate passage of a clean Dream Act of 2017 or thanking them for their co-sponsorship of the Dream Act of 2017. [Click here for a list of Co-Sponsors to thank in the Senate.](#) [Click here for a list of co-sponsors to thank in the House of Representatives.](#) If you see that your Senators or Representative **are** listed as a co-sponsor, please use **Call-In Script 2**.

Visit rac.org/passthedreamact for the most up-to-date information for calling your elected officials.

Call-In Script 1: For Members of Congress that are NOT Co-Sponsors of the Dream Act

- Hello, I am a constituent and Reform Jew from (Congregation Name) in (Town/City Name).
- I'm calling to express my concern for the 800,000 immigrant youth in danger of detention and deportation as a result of the administration's decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.
- Jewish history and tradition demands that we welcome the stranger and compels us to work for a just immigration system.
- Congress must act now to protect the youth affected by the end of DACA. The bipartisan Dream Act of 2017 would grant DACA recipients permanent residence status and provide a pathway to citizenship. I urge the Senator/Representative co-sponsor and call for immediate passage of a clean Dream Act S.1615/H.R.3440.
- Does Senator/Representative (Last name) support immediate passage of the Dream Act?
- Thank you for your time.

Call-In Script 2: For Members of Congress that ARE Co-Sponsors of the Dream Act

- Hello, I am a constituent and Reform Jew from (Congregation Name) in (Town/City Name).
- I'm calling to thank the Senator/Representative for co-sponsoring the bipartisan Dream Act.
- I'm concerned about the 800,000 immigrant youth in danger of detention and deportation as a result of the administration's decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.
- Jewish history and tradition demands that we welcome the stranger and compels us to work for a just immigration system
- I thank Senator/Representative (Last Name) again for his/her support for this vulnerable community, and urge the Senator/Representative to call on Congressional leadership to bring a clean Dream Act to a vote immediately. Thank you for your time.



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Service Additions

Consider using these prayers and songs during your Shabbat service to draw attention to the need to pass a clean Dream Act

O God, by faith, like Abraham, let us obey Your call to leave our comfortable homes and set out for strange places although we do not know for certain where we are going.

By faith, like Noah, let us heed Your signs and warnings and build sturdy arks to rescue our children from the coming floods.

By faith, like Isaac and Jacob, let us seek Your blessings on our children's futures. By faith, like Moses, let us leave Pharaoh's house and head across the wilderness to lead our oppressed children to freedom.

By faith, like Joseph, let us turn evil into good and welcome our erring brothers and kin with a spirit of reconciliation and love.

By faith, like the child David, let us go out without fear to face the Goliaths of our day with slingshots of righteousness and justice confident of Your divine guidance and protection.

Marian Wright Edelman in
Guide My Feet: Prayers and Meditations on Loving and Working for Children

The New Colossus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Emma Lazarus



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“I Believe in the Power of Love”

Music and Lyrics by Avital Abraham, Alumna of NFTY-GER/Eisner Camp Song Leader

[Chords](#)

[Listen to the song online!](#)

I believe in the power of
music
And I believe that if we can
use it
We can come together
across the land
We can come together
hand in hand

Chorus:

Let there be more love
Let there be more love
Let there be more love
And let it start right now
Let it start right now

I believe in the power of
dreamers
Because all it takes is one
believer

We can come together
across the land
We can come together
hand in hand
I believe in the power of
huggin'
And open hearts that let the
love in

So let's come together
across the land
Let's come together hand in
hand
I believe in the power of
listenin'
Really taking in the stories
we're missin'

So let's come together
across the land
Let's come together hand in
hand
I believe in the power of
marching
Gotta tell the world we're
just getting
started

So let's come together
across the land
Let's come together hand in
hand
I believe in the power of
dreamers
Because all it takes is one
believer
We can come together
across the land
We can come together
hand in hand



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Sermon Starters

Consider giving a sermon or D'var Torah during the Immigrant Justice Shabbat to help raise awareness about the Dream Act, and to encourage people to join us on Monday, November 6 for the Reform Movement Call-in Day to Congress.

Sermon starters for Parashat Vayera

Rabbi Chuck Briskin, Temple Beth El, San Pedro, California

As we read the powerful stories from *Parashat Vayera*, first of Abraham and Sarah's hospitality towards the three strangers who visit their tent followed by the cruel treatment these same strangers receive when they arrived in Sodom, we must ask ourselves this question: What kind of place do we aspire to be? Do we want to be Mamre, where homes like Abraham and Sarah's were open on all sides, ready to welcome weary visitors with food and drink and hospitality? Or do we prefer Sodom where outsiders were always at risk, where strangers, the poor and vulnerable were always the most endangered? The Jewish answer should be clear as *Hachnasat Orchim*, welcoming guests is among our most treasured values. Despite many powerful forces in our nation that seem to prefer Sodom to Mamre, may we always put the values of Mamre above those of Sodom.

The Tosefta to Sota 3 and Sanhedrin 109a teaches "Because of their wealth, the people of Sodom became haughty. They said to one another "Since gold and silver come from our land, why should we allow strangers to visit our borders, eat our food, use our resources, and share what is ours? They will only take what we have, and there will be less for us. Let's keep them from entering, and let's drive out those who get in as soon as possible - especially the poor or the sick ones."

Ibn Ezra also comments that the problem was that not one citizen protested the cruel treatment of the stranger.



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Dislocation. Alienation. Subjugation. Humiliation. These are not our way...they are Pharaoh's.

*D'var Torah by Rabbi Larry Bach, Judea Reform Congregation, Durham, North Carolina
Delivered on January 27, 2017 (Parashat Va'era 5777)*

[To read the entire sermon, please click here.](#)

So God lays it out for Abraham way back at the beginning, and then tells Moses just how the undoing of this state of affairs will happen: in reverse. "I will bring you out from beneath the oppressive burden..." First, stop the humiliation, the beatings and the persecution. "Next, I will save you from slavery to them..." Economic security comes next. "I will redeem you with an outstretched hand..." That is to say, I will lift you out of the geographical dislocation, bringing you home. Finally, "I will take you to me..." Using language from the realm of marriage, God promises that the geographical homecoming will be accompanied by the end of that spiritual alienation, a People and their God joined together again.

This morning I stood side-by-side with people who have left everything in order to stay alive amidst war, privation, and persecution. They look to this land, to our community, for a sense of home, a sense of belonging, a chance to make a living, and, it should go without saying, the opportunity to live free of the oppression and persecution that led them here in the first place. America has frequently lived up to its self-image as a place of refuge and freedom. Frequently enough that a woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo can say to a crowd in downtown Durham on a chilly morning, with no irony or pessimism, "I wanted to come here because we know America is the place where it doesn't matter what color you are."



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Eight teachings from the Torah on Immigrants

Text study and discussion guide

Teachings compiled by Rabbi Mona Alfi, Congregation B'nai Israel Sacramento, California

Questions created by Liora Bernstein, RAC Intern

1. You shall not wrong nor oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 22:20)
2. You shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 23:9)
3. You shall not pick your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger; I the Eternal am your God. (Leviticus 19:10)
4. When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them. The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens; you shall love each one as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt; I the Eternal am your God. (Leviticus 19:33-34)
5. You too must befriend (love) the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.. (Deuteronomy 10:19)
6. You shall not abhor an Edomite, for such is your kin. You shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a stranger in that land. (Deuteronomy 23:8)
7. You shall not subvert the rights of the stranger or the fatherless; you shall not take a widow's garment in pawn. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and that your Eternal God redeemed you there; therefore do I enjoin you to observe this commandment. (Deuteronomy 24:17-18)
8. Cursed be the one who subverts the rights of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. And all the people shall say, Amen. (Deuteronomy 27:19)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the significance of repeating the phrase, "for you were a stranger in the land of Egypt" 36 times throughout the Torah?
2. How do you personally relate to these teachings? Have you ever felt like a stranger in a strange land?
3. Does your family have an immigration story? If so, how were they treated when they first arrived in the U.S. or their new country?
4. What measures can we take to ensure the protection of "the stranger" today?

Dream Act Programs for Teens

Full program by Zoe Turner, NFTY-STR SAVP

This program is designed to give participants a sense of the stories and experiences of DREAMers. First, participants will think about their own family's immigration stories and how those stories relate to all U.S. immigration stories. With this grounding, participants will engage in a simulation to help them better understand the experiences of DREAMers. Participants will end the program with education on DACA and the Dream Act designed to inspire them to take action for the Monday, November 6 Call-in Day.

Additional Program Stems

By Davida Rimm-Kaufman - NFTY MAR Social Action Vice President 2017-18

This list of activities can be incorporated into Dream Act education programs. They can be used as ideas, inspiration, or altered to fit your own program needs as we prepare to take action on the November 6 Call-in Day.

- **Two Truths and a Lie**
 - Goal: Debunk myths about DREAMers.
 - Show participants three facts about DREAMers, immigrants or the DACA program. Then, you can vote or discuss which ones are true, and what is a lie.

- **An Attitude of Gratitude**
 - Goal: Acknowledge privileges of citizenship people may be unaware of
 - Have participants stand in a line. Read out a list of statements that reflect privileges that U.S. citizens have (such as being able to go to college, have a social security number, legally live in the U.S. for longer than two years). If a statement applies to a participant, have that participant step forward from the line. Afterwards, discuss that these are things sometimes we take for granted, but make major differences in the lives of DREAMers.

- **Migration Station**
 - Goal: Use primary sources to understand the diversity of immigration stories and how the stories of DREAMers fit into the vast array of immigration stories.
 - Create slips of paper with primary sources reflecting on a few mass migrations (for example, the Syrian refugee crisis, Angel/Ellis Island, etc.). Sources can be photos, quotes, poems, or anything else meaningful, but they should be as vague as possible. Half of the slips should be migration stories of DREAMers. Some examples of DREAMer stories can be found on pages 12-13 of this toolkit. Give participants a list of the mass migrations that the slips correspond to. Ask them to sort the slips into the migration that they fall under. When they're done sorting, correct any mistakes in the sorting. Discuss the similarities and differences between DREAMers and the other immigrants discussed, as well as the source's impressions.



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Explainer videos with discussion questions

These videos provide narrative, data, and policy background on DACA and the Dream Act. The questions below can be used to discuss any of the videos.

- [“What is DACA?” CNN Money](#): This video provides background information on the DACA program, outlines the requirements for applying to the DACA program, and highlights some of the criticisms of the program.
- [“DACA, explained” Vox](#): This video explains the history of the DACA program through the narrative of DACA recipients. It also gives a brief policy update and covers recent events.
- [“What ‘Dreamers’ gained from DACA, and stand to lose” New York Times](#): This video features several stories of DREAMers, told by the DREAMers themselves. Participants discuss what opportunities they have because of DACA and what is at stake if those protections disappear.

Discussion questions by Zachary Herrmann, NFTY President, 5777-5778

1. What part of the video stood out to you the most?
2. Were you surprised by anything you learned?
3. After watching this video, has your impression of DACA or DREAMers changed?
4. What does the data in the video mean to you? Why do we care about the statistics for what immigrants do after they have become documented?
5. Why are the prerequisites for DACA related age, education level, and criminal record? Should anything else be considered?
6. Why is there opposition to DACA?

Social Media Sign for Call-in Day Post

[After calling your Member of Congress, print and/or post this sign to help spread the word.](#)

Remember to tag @theRAC, @NFTY, and your elected officials!

I called congress to say
Pass The Dream Act.
 You should too!

#Faith4Dream

RAC.org/passthedreamact



Dreamer Stories

If a DREAMer is unable to attend your Shabbat service or program, consider asking a volunteer to read one (or several) DREAMer story aloud so that your community is able to connect to this issue through a personal story.

Benita Veliz

Benita Veliz came to the U.S. from Mexico with her parents in 1993, when she was 8. Benita graduated as the valedictorian of her high school class at the age of 16. She received a full scholarship to St. Mary's University, where she graduated from the Honors program with a double major in biology and sociology. Benita's honors thesis was on the DREAM Act. She dreams of becoming an attorney. In a letter to Senator Durbin (IL), Benita wrote: "I can't wait to be able to give back to the community that has given me so much. I was recently asked to sing the national anthems for both the U.S. and Mexico at a Cinco de Mayo community assembly. Without missing a beat, I quickly belted out the Star Spangled Banner. To my embarrassment, I then realized that I had no idea how to sing the Mexican national anthem. I am American. My dream is American. It's time to make our dreams a reality. It's time to pass the Dream Act."

Cesar Vargas

Cesar Vargas came to the U.S. from Mexico with his parents when he was 5. He graduated from the City University of New York School of Law, where he founded the Prosecutor Law Students Association. Cesar recently interned at the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office. Cesar's dream is to serve as a military lawyer in the Judge Advocate General's Corp, and, following his military service, to become a prosecutor and journalist.

Marie Gonzalez-Deel

Marie Gonzalez came to the U.S. from Costa Rica with her parents when she was 5. In 2008, she graduated from Westminster College in Missouri with a double major in political science and international business. Marie, one of the first Dreamers to speak out about her situation, testified before the House Judiciary Committee on May 18, 2007: "No matter what, I will always consider the United States of America my home. I love this country. Only in America would a person like me have the opportunity to tell my story to people like you. Many may argue that because I have a Costa Rican birth certificate I am Costa Rican and should be sent back to that country. If I am sent back there, sure I'd be with my Mom and Dad, but I'd be torn away from loved ones that are my family here, and from everything I have known since I was a child."

David Cho

David Cho's came to the United States from South Korea with his parents when he was 9. He had a 3.9 GPA in high school. David is now a senior at UCLA, where he is majoring in International Finance and has a 3.6 GPA. David is also the leader of the UCLA marching band. David wants to serve in the Air Force. If the Dream Act doesn't pass, David won't be able to serve his country.

Isabel Castillo

Isabel Castillo graduated from high school with a 4.0 grade point average. She worked her way through college and, in three and a half years, graduated magna cum laude from Eastern Mennonite University with a degree in social work. At a town hall meeting in her home state of Virginia last year, she recounted these facts to Governor Bob McDonnell. The crowd applauded her success and the governor remarked that Virginia needed more people like her. Then, she said she was an undocumented immigrant. Though polite, the governor declined to support the Dream Act. He went on to say that those in the country illegally should be arrested and deported. Isabel's parents brought her to the U.S. when she was six years old. Without documentation, she is unable to work as a social worker. Now 26, Isabel knows the clock is ticking. Her chance to benefit from the Dream Act will likely end when she turns 30. A tireless advocate, Isabel started the Harrisonburg-based Dream Activist-Virginia advocacy group. Though she used to keep her identity carefully guarded, last year, Isabel participated in a Dream Act demonstration outside a U.S. Senate office. Isabel and four others were arrested.

A New York Times article in 2011 described her process of coming out in the open: "At first, I'd only allow the media to shoot my face turned away and only my first name. And then it just progressed. I said, 'O.K., use my face and you can say I went to a local university.' Then it was, 'I graduated from Eastern Mennonite University and I'm Isabel Castillo.' "

Elier Lara

Elier Lara's parents came to the United States in 1994, when he was four. Elier is a computer whiz. In high school, he won awards for outstanding achievement in science and information technology. He graduated in the top 5% of his high school class and was named Tech Prep Student of the Year in Cincinnati. He even started a computer repair business. Elier was a 19-year-old honors student at the University of Cincinnati majoring in Information Technology and has a 3.8 GPA. One of his professors said, "I have worked with thousands of students over the past 30 years, and Elier Lara is that student who comes along every 10 years or so who makes your heart sing." For Elier, technology and computers are where he wants to spend the rest of his life. He wants to be at the forefront of the technological frontier, implementing and discovering the new technologies of the future. He has said, "I am dreaming big and will continue to do so." Elier is waiting to utilize his gifts to benefit the country he loves.

Source: Interfaith Immigration Coalition Dream Sabbath Toolkit

More Social Justice Opportunities

Urgency of Now Initiative, Brit Olam and North American Immigrant Justice Campaign

In 2017, the Religious Action Center launched the Urgency of Now Initiative

Developing a strong network of active and empowered congregations is imperative to the sacred work of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. The Religious Action Center's [Urgency of Now Initiative](#) focuses on building power and momentum across North America by engaging congregations in issue-specific social justice work that enables each community to grow and learn from one another.

In a polarized political climate, this Initiative helps congregations come together, initiate important and sometimes challenging conversations about the type of social justice work that best fits your community, and then map power and available resources to discern where to focus efforts for the greatest possible impact.

Join us in building a network of strong congregational teams committed to acting powerfully and effectively in local communities *and* within a broader movement to create long-lasting positive change across North America.

The North American Immigrant Justice Campaign

The [North American Immigrant Justice Campaign](#) is one of our three Urgency of Now Initiative campaigns. It is designed to encourage URJ congregations to declare themselves "Immigrant Justice" Congregations, signifying their work to protect and defend undocumented immigrants facing deportation.

Throughout our history, Reform Movement congregations have acted as safe-havens for those seeking refuge from persecution and deportation. Today we face new challenges in addressing the flaws in our immigration system and are called to once again take action. In the absence of legislation establishing comprehensive immigration reform, Reform Movement congregations are called to take action to protect the lives of undocumented immigrants facing deportation.

The Brit Olam

The Brit Olam, a Covenant with our World, articulates our Movement's dedication to acting powerfully and together to bring upon the world we want—one filled with justice, compassion, and wholeness. Signing onto the Brit Olam allows your congregation to publicly reaffirm its commitment to meaningful social justice work grounded in our sacred and enduring Jewish values. This commitment, and the network it creates between congregations working in concert to repair our world, will live beyond any individual event or campaign. [To learn more about the Brit Olam, download resources to help start a conversation with your congregation's leadership, and submit a signed Brit Olam, visit our website.](#)