

Evangelical Immigration Table

Council for Christian Colleges
and Universities

Ethics and Religious Liberty
Commission of the Southern
Baptist Convention

Korean Churches for
Community Development/Faith
and Community Empowerment

National Association of
Evangelicals

National Hispanic Christian
Leadership Conference

The Wesleyan Church

World Relief

August 30, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
S-230 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

We are writing to support your efforts to find a workable solution for Dreamers, those young undocumented immigrants in our country who were brought here by their parents and who contribute great things to our society. Many of these young immigrants are currently protected by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, but we share your concerns that an executive order is a problematic tool to accomplish these policy objectives. The complexity of this particular issue begs for a legislative solution and demands leadership on Capitol Hill. We are also calling on President Trump to ensure these people are protected while a legislative solution is finalized.

We have seen immigrants strengthen our great nation throughout its history, including their positive impact on our churches, our communities, and our economy. One group of immigrants who exemplify these benefits are young people brought to our country by their parents as children. We carry particular concern for the future of these Dreamers because they have much to offer America. They were brought here without their consent, and in most cases the United States is the only home they have known.

We know that these young people who stepped forward in good faith are not threats to America. By enrolling in DACA, they already have submitted to screening for criminal activity and potential threats to national security. As a country, we need to focus on real solutions for our broken immigration system that address safety, security and economic fairness. Deporting these young people runs counter to these priorities.

These young people have shown through their great determination and fortitude that our nation is better off because of their presence. They are leading in our churches and our communities. They are studying in our universities and creating jobs for American workers. They are paying taxes. We hope that you will work to find solutions that allow these young people to stay in our country long-term and continue to be a blessing to our communities.

Now is the time for bold leadership and action. President Trump has repeatedly indicated his strong support for these young immigrants, assuring them that they should “rest easy” and that he was “not going to hurt those kids.” President Trump has also said privately, drawing from his experience as a grandfather and a father, that he would “protect these children.” We call on the president to ensure this population is protected while a legislative solution is worked out.

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We ask you to work with House leadership and the White House to develop and pass legislation to protect these young immigrants. The recent introductions of bipartisan, bicameral bills that would provide permanent legislative solutions for Dreamers provide several vehicles for Congress to deal with this issue in a just and humane way. We also call on you to work with the White House to ensure that these Dreamers are protected while Congress is finalizing a permanent legislative solution.

The Evangelical Immigration Table is a broad coalition of evangelical organizations and leaders advocating for immigration reform consistent with biblical principles. As Christians, we believe that all immigrants are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), deserving to be treated with dignity. Throughout the Old and New Testaments, we find God commanding his people to treat foreigners with special hospitality. In Leviticus 19:33-34, God reminds the Israelites:

When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

From Abraham to Paul, many biblical heroes were themselves immigrants, including even Jesus, whose parents brought Him to Egypt to escape persecution early in his life. As Americans, we are proud that our country has affirmed this biblical principle of valuing and protecting immigrants while also protecting national security.

We offer our prayers as you and your advisors make this and countless other important decisions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leith Anderson, President, National Association of Evangelicals

Scott Arbeiter, President, World Relief

Shirley V. Hoogstra, President, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

Hyepin Im, President & CEO, Korean Churches for Community Development/
Faith and Community Empowerment

Jo Anne Lyon, Ambassador, General Superintendent Emerita, The Wesleyan
Church

Russell Moore, President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern
Baptist Convention

Samuel Rodriguez, President, National Hispanic Christian Leadership
Conference