

September 28, 2017

Senator Charles Schumer  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

We, the undersigned organizations interested in the wellbeing of children and their families, write to share our disappointment about the termination of Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA) and to express our strong support of the DREAM Act to protect those who arrived in our country as children and who have since become cherished and vibrant members our communities. We are deeply concerned, however, by the Administration's efforts to tie border security measures to DACA legislation, and we fear that such proposals may roll back vital protections for other vulnerable children, including unaccompanied minors and asylum seekers, and their families. The protection of one group of young people need not and should not come at the expense of another. We urge you to reject any legislative compromise that risks the futures and well-being of vulnerable children.

As professionals engaged in ensuring the rights and needs of children are protected and met, we work with children and families from diverse backgrounds, including child immigrants and asylum seekers. Many of these children have fled pervasive violence in Central America in search of safety in the United States. The vulnerabilities that come with tender age are especially acute for child survivors of trauma, and we work together with social service and legal service providers to ensure that these children are provided the care, support, and safety that all children need and deserve.

We, like policymakers, are concerned about the dangers that many children experience both in their home countries and on their journeys to safety at our borders. Yet efforts to close our nation's doors to these children or to undermine protections for them once in our country do little to address the reasons for their flight. No child should be forced to leave his or her home or country to feel secure and thrive. Rather than blaming or punishing children for fleeing danger, our country should address the violence driving children to our borders and provide these young people the safety and security they so desperately need. Amid complex discussions of immigration policy, we must never forget that immigrant children are children first. And *all* children deserve the right to be safe from harm.

As you work to ensure that DACA recipients may remain in this country they call home, we ask that you reject all proposals that link the futures of these incredible young people to eliminating protections for other vulnerable children. Child protection should not come down to politics.

Sincerely,