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NETWORK Responds to the Introduction of the Dream Act

WASHINGTON, D.C. – NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice applauds Senator Lindsey Graham and Senator Dick Durbin for today’s introduction of *The Dream Act of 2017*, bipartisan legislation that would provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers brought to the United States as children.

“It is time that Congress ensure the vibrant future of our nation by passing this Dream Act. It has been nearly two decades since the first bipartisan effort to pass legislation to address this painful reality,” said **Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice**. “Dreamers, their parents, and other undocumented individuals in the U.S. simply want an opportunity to succeed. They need protection so they can live without fear and fully participate in our society. The introduction of this bipartisan Dream Act is a good first step on the road to immigration reform that promises a path to citizenship for all the hardworking individuals who are positively contributing to our communities and our society. The Bible teaches that we must welcome the stranger and love our neighbors, and the Dream Act helps us fulfil this faith mandate.”

“The direct beneficiaries of the Dream Act would be the undocumented young people who have grown up in the United States and are fully participating in their communities, but the reality is that our entire society will benefit by allowing these young folks to move without fear into the center of our society,” continued Sister Simone. Many of the beneficiaries of the Dream Act are recipients of President Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which has allowed them to work, go to school, unleash their creativity and reach their full potential.

NETWORK member and DACA recipient, Laura Muñoz said, “I have lived in the United States for nineteen of my twenty two years as an undocumented person. If the Dream Act were to become law, it would alleviate my sister and my grave fear of being deported. It would eliminate uncertainty and would allow my sister and I to finally be on a path to citizenship, meaning we could remain united with our U.S. citizen brother. Though the Dream Act doesn’t provide assurance for my hardworking parents, it gives them hope that their children will be safe from deportation in the country we’ve come to call home.”

Muñoz concluded, “The road to immigration reform that provides a path to citizenship to all undocumented individuals will continue to be long and difficult, but the introduction of the Dream Act has given my family hope that the past nineteen years have not been in vain. Hopefully soon, our government will embrace what we’ve known all along: the United States is our home. We belong here.”

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NETWORK, a national Catholic Social Justice lobby, which educates, organizes, and lobbies for economic and social transformation, has a more than 40-year track record of lobbying for critical federal programs that support those at the margins and prioritize the common good.

Sister Simone has media availability in Spanish and English. La Hermana Simone tiene disponibilidad de comunicarse con los medios en español e inglés.