

that had the worst deficit in the country. The State of Delaware tied with Puerto Rico. We were a mess.

Finally, Pete du Pont, a Republican, did a wonderful job for 8 years as Governor. I had the opportunity to serve with him in the State treasury and later on to become the Governor of the State of Delaware, when we went to a triple A credit rating for the first time in State history.

I came here in 1983 as a Congressman who was concerned about debts and deficits. My sense is that here in the Senate and the House, we don't have a lot of deficit hawks these days. If we do, their voices are not heard very loudly. We are on a course that is unsustainable in terms of our accumulation of more debt.

This is an interesting chart because it goes back to really the beginning of World War II, the war my dad was in and my uncle served in. There is a lot of red ink here, and it shows the deficit as a percentage of gross domestic product, and it reached about 30 percent right in the middle of World War II. After the war, we have the green down here where we actually had some surpluses in the late 1940s and the early 1950s. We actually had a surplus in 1968. Then we went from 1968 to about 1998 and never balanced the budget, all of those years at one time. The last 4 years of the Clinton administration, we balanced our budget four times. It was a bipartisan deal.

The chairman of the House Budget Committee, if I am not mistaken, was a Republican from Ohio, John Kasich, who is now the Governor of Ohio. John and I came to the House together in 1983. He came as a deficit hawk as well. He and the Clinton administration obviously did a nice job to help to balance four budgets. We haven't done so well since then. Since then, we have shown, right from here up to the present, which would be right around there, one deficit after the other—deficits that peaked out over the last year of George W. Bush's administration, when we were again falling into the great recession, and we have spent a lot of money in stimulus to try to get us out of recession.

The debt dropped from about \$1.4 trillion per year down to about one-third that much, and now it is starting to go up again. The debt last year—the year that ended on September 30—the deficit had bounced back up to \$666 billion again in 1 year—a lot of money. The prospect going forward is not encouraging; it is actually discouraging.

The tax cut bill that was passed in this Chamber just a few days ago—last Saturday morning, in the middle of the night—called for tax breaks, some for individuals for a while, some for corporations that tend to be more permanent in nature. But for me, maybe the most troubling aspect of the tax bill that was enacted last Saturday morning, aside from the way it was pushed through, is the idea that we got, right here on the Senate floor, I think some-

time around the middle of the evening last Friday night, a 400-page amendment, over 400 pages that we had never read, never seen, with scribbling on the side of the pages. The idea was that somehow we were supposed to read that and understand it and then vote it up or down in an amendment in like 4 or 5 hours. Good luck. That just doesn't happen. That would be the triumph of man's hope over experience.

I always ask these four questions when people ask about what we should do in tax reform. I say, No. 1, it ought to be fair. What we have actually passed is something where most of the benefits, the lion's share, go to people who are, frankly, very wealthy. Folks who are lower and lower middle income may realize some benefits in the first few years following the implementation of the new tax cut, but over time—say, by 2025—families with incomes up to \$75,000 per family are going to be realizing not a net gain from the tax cut but actually a net loss, which is not good.

I always ask: Is it fair? I think it is not fair when you look at the numbers and see how middle-income folks fare and those who happen to be wealthier fare.

The second question I always ask is this: Will it foster economic growth or diminish it? I focus a lot of my time and energy on economic growth, job creation, and job preservation. Senators, Presidents, and Governors don't create jobs. We create a nurturing environment for job creation, job preservation, and workforce, transportation infrastructure, protection of intellectual property rights, public safety, access to water and wastewater. There are a lot of things that contribute to economic growth and so forth. Tax policy is important. Commonsense regulation is important as well.

But my second question is this: Does the tax reform bill that we passed foster economic growth? Not really. To a modest extent, some, but not really. One of the things it does is it suggests uncertainty and the lack of predictability going forth, which I don't think businesses really care for.

One area where we, frankly, decided not to spend any money this time is the area where we could actually get the biggest bang for our buck in terms of growing GDP. We have a transportation infrastructure that is woefully inadequate these days, in terrible shape—roads, highways, bridges, rail, ports, and airports. We have many broad areas in the country that don't have access to the internet.

We just passed a tax bill that is going to increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion. Unfortunately, none of that goes to pay for or to make investments in things that would grow GDP by a lot and would provide employment opportunities—not just for a couple hundred thousand people but for millions of people, over the next decade or so. None of that is there.

The third question I always look at in terms of tax reform is this: Does it

simplify the Tax Code or make it more complex? The new provision that was adopted is going to increase by this much the thickness of the Tax Code, or by about another 15 or 20 percent—not making it simpler or easier to understand, but actually more difficult.

The last piece I consider is this: What is the effect on the deficit? Pumping up the deficit by another \$1.5 trillion is making the situation even worse.

We are going to go to conference now, the House and Senate. My hope is that it will be more bipartisan than what we saw here in the Senate. It needs to be. I quoted last week and I quoted again today an old African-American proverb: If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together. Our Republican friends, at least on this side of the Congress, for the most part have chosen to go fast and to go alone. That is unfortunate. The last time we did tax reform, we did it together. It took 3 years, but it was a more lasting and, I think, a better outcome.

#### DACA

Mr. CARPER. I want to pivot for just a moment, Mr. President, and talk about workforce. Most people, when they think of Dreamers and DACA, think of young people who were born in other countries and maybe at a very early age were brought here by their parents and maybe have no recollection of the countries they grew up in. But they have been here now. They came here, were raised here, and were educated here, many of them in our public schools. A number of them had the opportunity to go to college.

Delaware State University is a historically Black university in Dover and is the home of the Hornets. It is a wonderful land grant school that I have been heavily invested in as Governor and even now to make sure they rise and continue to improve. I am very proud of all of the progress that has been made there. I was invited by their president, Harry Williams, to come to their campus a couple of months ago. We met with Dreamers, "DACAs," students born in other countries who were brought here by their parents years ago.

I have met a lot of college students in my day. I have been joined on the floor here by Senator DURBIN from Illinois. He has probably met at least as many as I have—probably more, because he is from a bigger State.

I don't think I have ever been more impressed by a group of college students in my life than the young men and women I met that day. We literally happened to be there at 11 in the morning that day, when the President's administration announced that the time for the Dreamers was going to expire in 6 months, unless Congress was somehow able to put together an agreement and pass legislation—which is hard to do without the support of the administration.

I was there with young people that day. I will never forget what a young man said. I think he was born in Central America—either Honduras, Guatemala, or El Salvador. This was right on the heels of the problem of recognizing these young people and celebrating their promise and potential. Right in the middle, we got an announcement, learning that the administration had just announced about sending these folks home in 6 months—not really home, because their home is here, but back to the places where they were born.

There were about five or six students, all undergrads—freshmen, sophomores. One young man had come here maybe from Guatemala, and he stood up and said: As a young person, I honestly don't remember ever living in my native country. The only country I remember is this country.

I grew up in public schools. Every day, we would start our school day in class, in home room, by standing, putting our hands over our hearts, and pledging allegiance to the United States of America.

He said: This is my home. This is my country. This is the only home I have ever really known.

He then went on to tell about his aspirations.

Those kids are smart and have parents who are engaged in their education and have high expectations for their children. A number of the students are working not one but two jobs to help support themselves through school. As a Navy ROTC midshipman at Ohio State, I worked two jobs to help pay the bills. These students are too. They are taking courses that include math, science, and physics. They want to do the kind of work that, frankly, a lot of people in this country—some want to serve in the military, some want to be in public safety, some want to be educators, some want to be scientists. They want to do all kinds of things. This is a time when we have across the country some 4 million to 5 million jobs that are literally going unfilled today, and people who maybe would like to do those jobs don't have the requisite skills to do them, maybe they don't have the interest in doing the jobs, or maybe they can't pass a drug test. But at a time when we have 3 million or 4 million jobs that are vacant, unfilled, and employers are pleading for qualified applicants, that somehow we are going to send 700,000 or 800,000 Dreamers back to wherever they were born makes no sense.

One of the loudest voices we have heard in this debate is that it is not just a fairness argument for the Dreamers, in terms of turning our backs on their aspirations and hopes, but that it is in our self-interest as a nation, in terms of a stronger economy, to keep them here.

Why would we educate them here and they learn values here, and then we ship them off to another country to

compete with us, to start businesses of their own, instead of doing that here?

I suggest that we listen to the employers of this country. We don't always agree with everything that the U.S. Chambers of Commerce or State Chambers of Commerce say, but in this case they are absolutely right.

I have a 3-minute statement that I would like to read, if I could, from one of our Dreamers. Could I do that, I ask the Senator, our Whip, from Illinois?

This is about a woman living in Wilmington, DE, which is where my wife and I live. Her name is Kay-Dean Hayden. This is a portion of a short email she recently sent to me:

My name Kay-Dean, a community builder who happens to be a DACA recipient. I was born in Jamaica but I have lived in the U.S. since I was 7 or 8 years old. I grew up in Delaware and moved to New York in 2012 and moved back [to Delaware] recently after 5½ years [in New York].

I am approaching 30 years old on March 1st, so I've been here [in the United States] for almost 22-23 years.

My grandmother raised myself and two of my cousins. I grew up not really understanding my immigration status or the implications it would have on my reality and dreams. I missed out on opportunities, but I assumed it was due to our financial lack. My grandmother worked hard but she couldn't read or write so this limited her.

After unjustly gaining a juvenile record because of poor representation and ignorance of my rights, I decided I would become a lawyer, not fully understanding that my immigration status would potentially bar me from obtaining that dream.

After that summer, I gained a better understanding of my status and why I couldn't really get a summer job or travel. In order to truly cope, I determined that if I worked hard enough, surely I could attain all my hopes and dreams.

I told my guidance counselor what I understood about my immigration status and heard nothing but disappointment, I was discouraged but I remained determined. I believed God would reward my hard-work and faithfulness. So I saw [a] different guidance counselor my 12th grade year, in tears, pleading for help. She looked at my records (grades, SAT score and activities) and by the grace of God she connected me with a family member who worked with international students at the local community college. With God's grace I had the privilege of attending Delaware Technical and Community College on a full scholarship.

In 2009, I graduated with my Associates in Business Administration [with Concentrations in] Marketing Management. Upon graduating, God opened the door and I was accepted to Goldey-Beacom College with scholarship assistance . . . I completed my degrees in 2011, and graduated in 2012 with my Bachelors in Business Administration [with Concentrations in] Financial Management.

After graduating from school and living and working in New York, Kay-Dean moved back to Delaware. She wrote:

I currently work with a program that provides mentorship opportunity for minorities and under-served youth who are interested in working in the medical field. I have been absolutely blessed to walk through the doors I have though they were not the ones I originally pictured. I have had the pleasure of helping and building up others, especially young people.

I thought for sure DACA would begin to allow me the chance to finally not only build up others, but myself as well.

But with Mr. Trump as President and his ending of the DACA Program and whispers of immigration raids, I fight to hold on to my dreams. My DACA status ends in March and with it all I have worked so hard to build over the last 4 years.

I wrote this long email to simply ask that you fight for people like me. We didn't choose to be here but we are grateful to be here.

It is here where we've grown, cried, dreamed and worked hard for our American Dream. Here is where those we hold dear reside.

It is my prayer that you will fight for me and others like me. It is my prayer that you will be our voice in congress. It is my prayer that you will humanize us to politicians who have marginalized and demonized us. It is my prayer that you would fight for us as if we were yours because truth be told, WE ARE.

Your prayer has been heard.

I just want to say to my colleague Senator DURBIN of Illinois, thank you for years of leadership on this issue to do the right thing, to treat other people as we would want to be treated if in their shoes and, frankly, to do the right things in terms of strengthening this economy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Delaware. He and I came to the House of Representatives together a few years back, and we have had the pleasure and honor of serving together in the Senate. When he is on my team, I feel much stronger because I know TOM CARPER is a person of values, principles, and hard work, and he really takes this job seriously. His State is lucky to have him, and I am lucky to count him as a friend. I thank him for joining me on this important issue.

Sixteen years ago, I introduced a bill addressing young people brought to America by their parents who, frankly, were young, didn't really know much about the immigration experience, grew up in the United States thinking they were just like all the other kids in the classroom, and then realized one day they weren't.

You see, they are not legal. Their parents didn't do it properly, didn't file the right papers. I am not holding it against their parents. Let me add that quickly. Their parents were doing the very best for the family they could. They were taking risks that many of us would take any day for a son or daughter to have a chance to live a good life.

Here were these young people in the United States undocumented. What were they to do? They didn't know that old country where their parents came from. They may not even be able to speak the language of that country, and here they were in the United States. They thought things would work out, some way or another. Time passed, and it didn't.

We have a broken immigration system. We have a lot of gaps in the system, and they were caught up in one of

them. Sixteen years ago, I introduced a bill, and here is what it said. If you came to the United States as a child, if you grew up in this country, you didn't have any serious problems with the law, and you graduated from school, we were going to give you a chance, a chance to earn your way into legal status. You could do it by furthering your education, volunteering for the military. There were a lot of ways to do it. We said to these young people: This will be your chance.

That bill was introduced a long time ago, and it has never become the law. At one point when President Obama was in the Office of the Presidency, I wrote him a letter with 20 of my colleagues in the Senate and asked him to find a way, if he could, to protect these young people from being deported out of America, and he did. They called it DACA. The DACA Program said, if you are one of the people who, by definition under the DREAM Act, would be eligible, you can stay in the United States if you step up and pay about \$500 in a filing fee, go through a serious criminal background check, and then we will give you a temporary 2-year protection from deportation—2 years that you can work legally in the United States and come back and see us if you want to renew it.

At the end of the day, about 800,000 young people in America did that. They paid their fee. They went through the background check, they submitted all their information to our government, and they were protected.

Just 3 months ago, President Donald Trump abolished DACA and said, as of March 5 next year, it is gone. What does that mean for these young people? It means that as of March 5 of next year, many of them will be subject to deportation and subject to losing the jobs they have or being unable to finish school because they can't work.

I have met a lot of those young people. I am sure Senator HASSAN has met some. I know Senator CARPER has. He just read one of their stories. They are heartbroken, and they are scared. They worry about what is going to happen to them and their families when March 5 rolls around.

For weeks, months since President Trump's announcement, I have come to the floor and asked: For goodness' sake, can't we agree—Democrats and Republicans—to fix this problem? President Trump challenged us: Do your job, Congress. Pass a law.

That is what we are supposed to do. Here we are, 3 months later, and it hasn't been done. What I hear from the other side of the aisle is, give us a little more time; we will try to get to it next year.

March 5, 2018, DACA is over and finished. Waiting several weeks is bad enough. Waiting several months is unacceptable. I will tell you why it is. We know this needs to be done now. Today, 34 Republicans in the House of Representatives sent a letter to the Speaker of the House, PAUL RYAN, calling for

Congress to pass legislation to protect Dreamers this year—34 Republicans. They said: "It is imperative that Republicans and Democrats come together to solve this problem now and not wait until next year"—34 Republicans in the House. How many bipartisan things go on around here anymore? Not many. Here is one. I salute these Members of the House. I salute the four Republican Senators who joined me in cosponsoring the Dream Act. They, I think, have stuck their necks out, and I respect them so much for it. I will stand up for them because of it. I thank them for that. I know why they are doing it. They are not doing it for me. They shouldn't, and I am sure they are not. They are doing it for these young people. I will tell you without fail, when you meet them, they convert you in a minute.

For the last several years, I have come to the floor to tell their stories. I am told the one I am going to tell right now is the 99th time I have told a story like this. Each time I tell one of these stories, it makes the case for why we need to do something to help these young people and do it quickly.

Let me show you this wonderful young lady here. Her name is Blanca Morales. Blanca Morales was brought to the United States by her parents from Mexico when she was 5 years old. She grew up in Santa Ana, CA. Growing up, she took care of her two younger siblings while her parents worked in factories and in the agriculture fields of California.

She was quite a student. In high school, she was named one of the top 100 students in the county. She was active in community service, mentoring students who couldn't complete high school without help. She attended a community college, Santa Ana College. I might add, because she is undocumented, she didn't qualify for any Federal Government assistance. Going to college in that circumstance means working, scraping by, putting things off, sacrificing to get through. She did it. She majored in chemistry and biology. She was part of Phi Beta Kappa, an international honors society. She won first academic team in the All-USA Academic Competition. She was her class's valedictorian, with a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Blanca, after graduation, attended the University of California, Irvine. She majored in neurobiology. At UC Irvine, she graduated with honors magna cum laude. After obtaining this premed degree, she couldn't land a job in the medical field because she is undocumented in America.

Then, in 2012, everything changed. President Obama established the DACA Program I mentioned earlier, which allowed Blanca, for the first time in her life, to get a permit to legally work in America. Last year, Blanca Morales was accepted to the Harvard School of Medicine. She has remained involved in community service, mentoring students, teaching health classes at a

community health center, and volunteering as a translator at clinics for Spanish-speaking patients.

Close to 70 Dreamers are enrolled in medical schools around the country just like she is. Without DACA, these Dreamers will never become doctors. Why? They are going to be deported back to their countries if they are not lucky. If they happen to be able to stay, they cannot legally work in America without DACA status. You cannot finish medical school and go on to a residency without a work permit, without being able to legally work in America. They cannot legally work without DACA protection, and President Trump has ended it.

Are we going to be a stronger nation if we deport her, tell her to leave, go back to Mexico, which she left when she was 5 years of age, give up on all the education she has put on the board—at the community college where she was leading her class, on to get her degrees, on to be accepted to Harvard Medical School. The answer is clear. America would be less if she left.

The Association of American Medical Colleges reports the Nation faces a doctor shortage, which is only going to get worse. Both the AMA and the Association of American Medical Colleges have warned that ending DACA will make this problem worse. They have urged Congress to do something.

Blanca wrote me a letter, and here is what she said.

It took me eight years from graduating from the university to enter medical school. Without DACA or better yet, a formal way to become a full member of society, I am left to live in the shadows. I don't know if I will be able to finish my medical training without a permanent solution to my immigration status. Please help me keep my dream of becoming a physician alive.

When my colleagues come to the floor and say we are just too busy here to take up this issue, I wish they would have a chance to meet this spectacular young woman. I wish they would consider what she is asking us to do. She is asking us to do our job. We are supposed to solve problems.

When you read the numbers, 70, 80 percent of Americans approve of the Dream Act, even an overwhelming majority of those who voted for President Trump believe these young people deserve a chance to be legal in America. Why can't we get our job done? We need to do it and do it now. We have 3 weeks before we are likely to end the session this year. I want to see us get this finished this year. I want to see a bipartisan agreement.

I came to the floor earlier and listened to the speeches of many of my colleagues—one from North Carolina and another from Oklahoma, one from the State of Texas and another from the State of Arkansas—and each one of them said there are lots of things we need to do to fix our immigration system. I couldn't agree more.

I was on the task force—the Gang of 8 they called it—that came up with a comprehensive immigration reform. It

took us months to do it, but we did it. We did everything we could think of within the four corners of immigration reform. We passed it on the floor of the Senate with a strong bipartisan roll-call, and the House of Representatives refused to even consider it. That doesn't mean the problems have gone away. They are still here. What I am saying to my colleagues is, don't try to fix every immigration problem you can think of on the backs of these Dreamers like Blanca Morales. I am willing to talk to you honestly, forthrightly about border security. Count me in. I voted for it as part of comprehensive immigration reform, but every notion, every idea, every theory you have about immigration shouldn't be placed on the shoulders and backs of these young people.

Let's fix this, and then let's go on to the next phase of dealing with immigration reform in its totality. That makes sense to me. I am ready to bargain, work, compromise in good faith with any Member on the Republican side and the Democratic side who wants to make sure a young woman like this deserves a fighting chance in America. I believe that. I think most Americans believe it too. Now let's roll up our sleeves and go to work. There are plenty of things we can do the remainder of this year that will make a big difference in her life and in the future of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Senator from California.

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I would like to thank the senior Senator from Illinois. Senator DURBIN has been a longstanding leader in this Chamber and in our country on this issue, and I can't thank him enough for all he does so tirelessly. I see his work behind closed doors, and I know his passion and personal commitment to this issue. I thank the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. President, on February 16 of this year, which was 292 days ago, I offered my maiden speech as a new Member of the U.S. Senate. The subject of the speech was immigration—in particular, an emphasis on DACA and the Dreamers. Here we are 292 days later, and we have failed to move forward in any substantial or substantive way in bringing relief to these Dreamers who have qualified for DACA status. So we stand here, these 292 days later, talking about an issue that we must ultimately, and before the end of this year, resolve.

Let's also be clear that 3 months ago today, on September 5 of this year, the administration arbitrarily, recklessly, and cruelly ended DACA—the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program. DACA allowed young immigrants who were brought here by their parents to live and work in this country without fear that they would be deported. Later this week, on Friday, December 8, funding for the government runs out. I have been clear, along with my friend from Illinois and several

other colleagues, that any bill that funds the government must also include a fix for DACA.

I want to talk with you about why I believe it is important that we resolve this issue. I do believe there is a lot of misinformation out there. I think it is important that we as policymakers, as leaders in our country, craft and create public policy based on facts, not on misinformation and certainly not fear.

Let's begin by being very clear. The decision to rescind DACA is part of a much broader and troubling attempt to remake the demographics of the country by cracking down on immigrants. We have an administration that has ignited anti-immigrant sentiment, characterizing immigrants as rapists and murderers and people who are going to steal your jobs. We have an administration that has implemented an aggressive anti-immigrant agenda. This administration has called for a border wall that could cost up to \$70 billion. They have implemented Muslim bans which severely restrict immigration from six Muslim-majority countries. They have requested 10,000 new ICE agents and 5,000 new Border Patrol agents when they have not given the resources to be able to fill all the vacant positions they now have. They have ended the protected immigration status, known as TPS, for Haitians and Nicaraguans who fled disasters and may crack down on the protective status on Salvadorans as well. They are seeking to lower the refugee cap from 110,000 to 45,000 at a time when we have seen an increase in the worldwide number of refugees who are in crisis. This is the lowest number ever in the history of this country—actually, since 1980. Gen. John Kelly, the President's Chief of Staff and former Homeland Security Secretary, said that he wishes the number of refugees we would admit into our country were between zero and one.

I want to be clear. I have an incredible amount of respect for the men and women of the Department of Homeland Security, who each day leave their homes, committed to doing the work of keeping our homeland secure. It is noble and important work, and their mission is critical. I believe the vast majority of those frontline agents are doing their jobs honorably and effectively, but it is troubling when the White House has encouraged frontline agents to "take the shackles off." In fact, the Acting ICE Director has said:

If you're an immigrant in this country illegally . . . you should be uncomfortable. You should look over your shoulder.

When you look at these independent acts, there is a clear constellation that has formed. This enforcement surge is a barely disguised purge. This is not leadership. Leaders should not be in the business of inciting fear and sowing hate and division. Instead, leaders should be about creating smart public policy based on facts. So here are some of the facts.

It is a fact that there are 700,000 DACA recipients, 200,000 of whom are in California alone.

It is a fact that the Dreamers have been extensively vetted before they have qualified for DACA. They have gone through a process. They have turned over copious amounts of paperwork with incredible detail. They have gone through background checks. They have given personal information about the circumstances of their arrivals. They have answered questions that seek to figure out whether they have committed crimes. If they applied and they received DACA status, we determined that they were not threats in that regard to our public safety. We asked questions that sought to figure out if they have graduated high school. Are they living lawful and productive lives? It is only when they cleared that extensive vetting that they qualified for DACA status and received DACA status.

Let's be clear. These Dreamers who receive DACA status study in our colleges, serve in our military, and work in Fortune 100 companies. They are contributing to our economy in a way that we all are benefiting. If DACA recipients were to be deported, it is estimated that California would lose \$11 billion a year. The U.S. economy as a whole would lose an estimated \$460 billion over a decade.

It is also a fact that these young people have stood in classrooms and stood in line in many places and have placed their hands over their hearts, pledging allegiance to the flag of the United States—a flag that many of us wear on our lapels, a flag that represents the best of what we are in terms of the ideals upon which we were founded. We must be true to those ideals and consistent in the way that we approach so many issues as applied to this issue about what we do with these DACA kids. We must keep our word and our promise to them and guarantee what we promised, which is that we would not share their personal information with ICE and that they would not be deported if they continued to follow the rules.

In my experience, it is also true that many who have opinions or who have expressed opinions or who have the opportunity to make decisions about this issue have never met a Dreamer. We cannot fault them, but what we can ask is that those who have the power to make a decision on this issue make it their business and make an effort to really understand who we are talking about. Senator DURBIN talked about it, and Senator CARPER talked about it. My colleagues will be talking about who these Dreamers are, who these young people are.

I have to say that I have been a bit troubled when I have had this conversation. I remember when I had a conversation many months ago with the then-nominee to head up the Department of Homeland Security, Gen. John Kelly. I asked him if he had ever

met a Dreamer, and he said that he had not. When I asked him if I could arrange a meeting, he then went on to say: How about if I could take a meeting, instead, with their representatives? That is disheartening.

Before our colleagues make a decision about where they stand on this policy, I believe that it is only fair—it is only the right thing to do—that they make an effort to sit down and talk with Dreamers and get to understand who they are, the circumstances of their arrivals, and how they are contributing to our country.

There are going to be hundreds of Dreamers here tomorrow on Capitol Hill. I want to thank them for their leadership and their tireless advocacy because their stories will change hearts and minds. Let me just speak of a few. My colleagues have shared some; I will share some others.

I met Yurianna Aguilar, whom I took to the President's joint session address this February. Her parents brought her here from Mexico when she was just 5 years old. She grew up in Fresno, CA. She attended public schools, and she attended UC Merced. She was the first DACA recipient to earn a Ph.D. and now is a biomedical researcher in Chicago who is focused on the human heart. She is doing everything that she can to improve the condition and the lives of the people in our country because of the work she has done and the research she has done.

I met Eric Yang, who came from South Korea. He grew up in Irvine, CA, and is now studying business economics at UC Irvine, where he works to help other students.

My husband and I recently attended a play in Los Angeles. It is a great program at which there is free entertainment in the community park, and families show up and have a wonderful evening outdoors with each other in fellowship. I met a young woman who came up to me. She was with a group of friends.

Her friends said: Tell her. Tell her.

I looked at this young woman. She looked as if she was about maybe 19 years old.

I said: Tell me what? Tell me what is going on.

She looked at me, and she spoke so quietly that I didn't hear what she had said, so I asked her to repeat herself. She looked at me, and she started crying.

She said: I am DACA.

She was trembling as she cried, absolutely in fear of what her future may hold.

I suggest that before we take a position on this issue, we take a moment, each one of us as colleagues and each one of us as individuals, to see these young people, to truly see them—to see them not through a lens that is about partisanship or politics, not through a lens that is ideological, but based on who they really are and the practical realities of the lives they lived that brought them to this country, the cir-

cumstances that brought them to this country, and the lives they are living every day now.

These are incredible young people who are doing everything that we hope and pray will epitomize the American dream—work hard, be respectful, play by the rules, contribute to your community, have dreams and aspirations about how you can be productive. That is who these young people are.

Let's reject the fearmongering. Let's also understand that this is an imminent issue and that this is something we must address immediately. Let's agree that each day in the lives of these young people is a very long time. Each day that they go to sleep at night and are worried about a knock on the door at midnight that might tear them away from their families is a very long time. Let's not wait. Let's not wait to help them.

Let's reject those folks who say that there is no crisis, the folks who say that this is not an emergency. Let's understand that for these 700,000 Dreamers who cannot concentrate at school or at work and who are terrified of that midnight knock, this is an emergency. Let's think about the classmates and the coworkers and our neighbors and family members who have these children who are terrified that this protected status will be stripped and taken away. For them, this is an emergency.

Let's think about the 122 Dreamers who are losing their DACA status every single day, 851 of them every week, over 11,000 of them since September. Let's agree that this is a crisis, that this is an emergency. It has been 91 days since this administration ended DACA, and we cannot wait a single day longer.

Let's reject the fearmongering. Let's find a bipartisan consensus to act in the way that we know we should and can. Let's put the Dream Act to a vote today. I believe it could pass and would pass if everyone looked in their hearts and looked at the facts.

Today, 35 House Republicans signed a letter, writing that they want a DACA fix before the end of the year. It included Members from California and Texas and Florida and Utah and Pennsylvania and New York. Earlier today, my colleague, the junior Senator from Arizona, said:

We don't need to make a statement. We need to make a law.

I could not agree more. Let's give these Dreamers a future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I thank the Presiding Officer for presiding today.

I thank the Senator from Illinois, DICK DURBIN, for organizing all of us this afternoon to speak on behalf of these Dreamers. His leadership has been critical in this fight for the dignity and recognition of hundreds of thousands of wonderful young people

who know no other home than the United States of America.

For 5 years, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals—or DACA—Program, has created security and opportunity for young immigrants around the country, but now the futures of some 800,000 young people—7,900 of them in Massachusetts—are needlessly in jeopardy because President Trump has coldheartedly repealed DACA.

DACA has been a hugely successful program. It has provided so many young immigrants safety, security, dignity, respect, and opportunity. These are young people who study, who work, who live next-door to us every single day. They are our friends, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

I would like to speak for a few minutes about one of these DACA beneficiaries. She is 28-year-old Paola Sanchez, who came to the United States from Bolivia when she was 14 years old. Paola's father passed away when she was just 8 years old. Her mother was in a wheelchair and was unable to work. With her family facing hardship, Paola came to America to live with an aunt and uncle in New York. There, Paola worked in the manufacturing industry while she attended high school full time. She often got home late at night and grabbed a few hours of sleep before getting up to head to school to do it all over again.

In 2007, Paola graduated from high school and moved to my State of Massachusetts, where she has lived ever since. She now works 30 hours a week as a case manager while attending Bay State Community College full time. She has been a model student, earning a 3.9 grade point average, and she hopes to enter nursing school in January.

Paola has been a DACA recipient since 2013, but her current status expires next year. This means that unless Congress acts and saves the program, Paola and thousands like her will have to leave the United States for countries they do not really know and no longer consider to be home.

Paola's case, like many others, is even more difficult because she has a 4-year-old son—a child who is an American citizen by birth and has never known any other home than the United States.

All Paola wants is to stay here with her son, get her nursing degree, get a good job, and give back to the country so much more than she has been given. Instead, Paola and countless other young people and families across the United States face uncertain futures. Instead of going to sleep tonight knowing they will be able to live their lives in peace and plan for the future, they are left with uncertainty, vulnerable to deportation, and unable to work legally. This is a human tragedy in the making. It is heartbreaking, it is unjust, and it is just plain wrong. We should not punish these young people who have no other home than the United States of America. We should not go back on the word we gave when

we told these young people to come out of the shadows.

These Dreamers are engineers, police officers, teachers, future nurses, and students, many in our great Massachusetts colleges and universities. They serve bravely in our military. They are our best and brightest and are making the most of the opportunities that the United States has always provided to immigrant communities.

The ball is in the court of the Republican leadership in the House and Senate. Speaker PAUL RYAN and Leader MITCH MCCONNELL can listen to a growing chorus of their own colleagues and to business CEOs, including those at Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, General Motors, and to academic leaders, countless college and university presidents, all of whom support DACA—or they can side with the forces of intolerance and injustice.

Congress should pass the Dream Act so that people, like Paola, who were brought here at a young age and who have served in the military or pursued higher education can earn citizenship.

I urge everyone to listen to DICK DURBIN, to listen to this chorus of voices from around our country. Protect these 800,000 young people. Protect them because they deserve it, and America will be the beneficiary of these great Americans who are serving our country right now.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Thank you very much, Mr. President, and I thank my colleague from Massachusetts for his eloquent words just now. I also thank Senator DURBIN for his leadership on this critically important issue.

As many of my colleagues have stated, we must protect Dreamers and allow them to continue to be vital members of communities in New Hampshire and across the Nation. The energy, hard work, and innovation of Dreamers are critical components of our economic future. These are hard-working young people who have so much to offer and who deserve our support and our urgent action.

They are people like a young man from the Seacoast area of New Hampshire, who recently met with my staff. This young person was brought to the United States when he was in elementary school. His parents emigrated from Indonesia, joining members of the New Hampshire community who had left their country because they were fleeing religious persecution. For years, members of this community have worked, paid taxes, and raised their families on the Seacoast. Now the Trump administration is engaging in misguided efforts to prioritize their deportation—efforts that I urge this administration to stop immediately.

The Dreamer I am talking about this afternoon had never known that he was undocumented until he wanted to get

his driver's license. But he said his life was changed after President Obama unveiled the DACA Program. This young man was able to get a job, attend community college, and eventually enroll at the University of New Hampshire, where he is working toward his degree. His story makes clear why there is so much at stake and why it is critical that our colleagues work together in order to support these young people.

Granite Staters, like all Americans, recognize the value of hard work, the importance of unleashing the talent and energy of each and every individual, and they demand and expect that their elected leaders act with fairness and with common sense, which is all that the Dream Act represents.

We must pass the bipartisan Dream Act now and protect those who have so much to offer to the future of our great country.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Thank you, Mr. President.

I have been sitting on the floor for a while, listening to other Senators tell amazing stories about young people who came to this country as children and how they have thrived, how they have become woven into a part of the American fabric. These are stories of courage, stories of hope, and it is inspiring to listen to these stories.

Tonight I want to add another piece to this story, and that is about why law matters—why it matters that we have a Dream Act. This photo portrays Reina Guevara. She is a Massachusetts resident. She is a student now at UMass Boston. When Reina was 11 years old, she fled from El Salvador and settled with her mother in Everett, MA.

Reina is a model student. After completing high school and graduating with high honors from Bunker Hill Community College, she won a scholarship and transferred to UMass Boston, where she currently has a double major in philosophy and in public policy.

Until DACA came along, Reina had to live in the shadows, and living in the shadows wasn't easy. She worked long hours in a restaurant where she was subjected to sexual harassment. Knowing that she didn't have legal status, Reina's boss frequently propositioned her to have a sexual relationship with him and threatened to report her to immigration authorities if she didn't go along with what he wanted. So instead of giving in to her boss's advances, Reina quit her job, even though her boss refused to pay her for the work that she had already completed.

DACA changed the world for Reina. It meant protection. It meant that she could go to work without the fear of being sent back to a country that she barely knew. It meant that she had access to more jobs, where she wouldn't have to face exploitation, humiliation, and sexual harassment. It meant that

Reina could pay instate tuition and become the first person in her family to complete college, opening up even more doors of opportunity.

Right now we are in the middle of a long overdue discussion about sexual harassment and sexual assault. Women are bravely coming forward to tell their stories about powerful men who have abused their power to hurt others. Sexual assault isn't just happening in Silicon Valley or in Hollywood or in legislative chambers. It happens all across America at hotels, fast food restaurants, and convenience stores. If you are a woman without official status, you have yet another barrier to speaking out.

When the DACA Program started, we made a promise to young people like Reina. We promised them that if they came out of the shadows, they would have an opportunity to live and to work and to go to school without the fear of deportation. We promised to protect them. Donald Trump broke that promise when he ended DACA.

But there is something that Congress can do to help Reina and people like her, young kids who have spent their lives reaching for their dreams. We can pass a clean Dream Act, a bipartisan bill that would give young people like Reina status and a path to citizenship, a bill that protects those young people without subjecting their parents or their siblings to deportation. We could do that, but time is running out.

Soon DACA recipients will begin losing their status and will be subjected to deportation. We can stop that from happening, but we have to act soon. I am ready to vote and many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle are ready to vote. So I have one question for MITCH MCCONNELL: What is stopping you?

We are ready to pass this bill. Just get it done.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I am rising to engage in the conversation about getting the Dream Act passed. I thank my good friend and colleague from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, for his passion and for his unrelenting commitment to protecting our American Dreamers. He has been on this floor day after day, month after month, advocating that we have to address this situation in which individuals came to the United States as small children; they have grown up here, they speak English, and they have been totally immersed in making our community stronger, our States stronger, our Nation stronger. We need to make sure

that we treat them fairly, with respect, and that we ensure that we are able to benefit from their presence here, just as they benefit from being here in the United States. There are 800,000 Dreamers across our country. I know they all very much appreciate his leadership.

The young men and women who came out of the shadows to be part of the DACA Program—Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals—were made a promise that they would be all right if they did so; that their information would not be used then to deport them. So they took a gamble that the United States would stand by the commitment it was making to them, and now they are wondering what happened because their futures are dangling by a thread. The program has been abandoned by the President, and if it is not replaced by legislation done right here in this room, they basically will be subject to being deported to places where they don't speak the language, they don't understand the culture—they are unfamiliar with it—and they don't have any network. They are really kind of stateless individuals who are in a very tough condition.

One person like this from Salem, OR, is Diana Banda Palacios. In 1993, Diana, who is shown here in this picture I have in the Chamber, came to this country from Mexico as a 3-year-old toddler. She has lived her entire life since then, here in America.

Growing up in America, Diana dreamed of becoming a first responder, so much so that during her high school years, she volunteered for Red Cross and for her community emergency response team, but that dream was thrown into doubt during her senior year when she was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. She has fought that cancer, and she has beat that cancer. She graduated from high school more determined than ever to pursue her vision of how she could contribute to the community, and she has contributed. She enrolled and put herself through the firefighting and paramedic program at her local community college, and now she has made a career for herself as an emergency medical technician, an EMT. Every day, she is working literally to save lives, and we are threatening to kick her out of the country—the only country she has ever known.

Diana said a few years back when the DACA Program was first being discussed:

America is my home. This is the place I love, where everyone and everything I know

is. I know nothing outside the United States. Whatever punishment I must pay I am willing to do. All I ask is for a chance. Better yet I beg for a chance to prove that I am not a criminal, that I have much to offer this beautiful place.

That is, in her words, her vision, her desire to be able to fully participate in our society.

Just recently, over Thanksgiving, I led a delegation to Burma. Burma has had horrific circumstances occur because they have a population of Muslims called the Rohingya, and the Rohingya have been in Burma for generations. Many of them came 200 years ago, and they came because they were imported for labor. They have farmed the rice paddies, they have fished in their boats off the coast, but they have never really been accepted by Burma. Burma recognized in their 1982 law 135 minorities, but they didn't recognize the Rohingya because the adjacent Rakhine minority is in kind of a hostile relationship with them. They have always been treated as second-class citizens, so much so that in the middle of Rakhine State, there are about 120,000 people living in camps. They are not allowed to leave the camps. They are not allowed to fully participate in society. They are not given citizenship rights. In northern Rakhine State, in that area, the military went in and burned some 300 villages, engaged in systematic rape, proceeded to shoot people as they fled their villages, and now 600,000 people have gone into Bangladesh.

The reason I raise this is not a parallel situation, but there is, at its core, a similar issue, and that issue is whether a nation thrives by entertaining the situation of having a stateless population. Burma had a stateless population that it did not recognize, did not allow to be fully engaged. They weren't even second-class citizens because they weren't allowed citizenship.

Well, we have now a tremendous population of young folks who have grown up in America. They are culturally American. Many of them had no idea they were born abroad, and they are ready to be full participants if we will let them. Won't we be so much better off to enable them to rise to their full potential, to make their full contribution, to have a full measure of participation in our society?

We have Diana's story, but multiply that times 800,000 people. What a fantastic reservoir of talent, ability, energy, and passion waiting to be fully contributed to being part of the United States of America.

While we delay, these 800,000 young members of our communities are in limbo. They are waiting for us to act. They know they took a gamble by joining the DACA Program, and they now know the Federal Government has all of their information to track them down and deport them. Wouldn't that violate completely the spirit under which we established the DACA Program to begin with? Let's get this DREAM Act done.

Earlier today, I was here on the floor, listening to a conversation from some of my colleagues, and they were saying: Well, let's get it done by March. I would say to my colleagues across the aisle: Let's not wait until March. Let's not wait until February. Let's not wait until January. Let's engage in this conversation now. Let's get it done by the end of the year. These young folks have waited a long time. They have waited too long. So let's address it, and let's maintain in our hearts the spirit that has animated our Nation.

All of us, unless we are 100 percent Native Americans, either came from foreign lands or our parents or our parents' parents, our forefathers and foremothers came from other lands. We know what that is like. It was difficult many times, but our families found their place. Let's enable these young folks, these Dreamers to find their place. It will be far better for them and far, far better for us.

Thank you.

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#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:26 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at 10 a.m.

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#### CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate December 5, 2017:

##### GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

EMILY WEBSTER MURPHY, OF MISSOURI, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF GENERAL SERVICES.

##### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

KIRSTJEN NIELSEN, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

##### FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

GLEN R. SMITH, OF IOWA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION BOARD, FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION, FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 21, 2022.