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November 29, 2010

Senator Robert Bennett  
431 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510-4403

Dear Senator,

We are writing to ask for your support for the DREAM Act when it comes up for a vote this week. The ACLU of Utah has been working closely with immigrant rights advocacy groups and Hispanic/Latina allies on a number of issues for several years. Through that work we have become very familiar with college students who benefit currently from Utah's own act and with the issues attendant to it. We believe that it is essential that there be a federal DREAM Act for the following reasons.

- This bill is critical to promoting fundamental fairness in access to public higher education for talented, high achieving young people who are able to gain admission to our public colleges and universities, regardless of their immigration status.
- Denying these students access to affordable college education is shortsighted because they are likely to remain in the United States and may well regularize their immigration status under current or future federal laws.
- Reducing the cost of education at public colleges and universities for high school graduates promotes economic growth and increases opportunities. College graduates who are likely to remain in the state earn higher wages, and therefore generate significantly more in income, sales, and property taxes. Their increased earning power and disposable income stimulate growth in the economy. A better-educated population also increases competitiveness in the global economy.
- Denying higher education access to undocumented students means failing to capitalize on the government's investment in their K-12 education. Many of the undocumented students already educated in the K-12 public school system come from impoverished backgrounds and would not otherwise be able to attend college or university without in-state tuition.

We urge you to support the DREAM Act.

Sincerely yours,

  
Karen McCreary  
Executive Director

  
Marina Lowe  
Legislative and Policy Counsel