

Faith Leaders Oppose H.R. 4760

"Securing America's Future Act"

Dear Members of Congress,

As **78** religious leaders and faith-based organizations from many traditions, we write today in strong opposition to the Securing America's Future Act (H.R. 4760). We urge you instead, support the Dream Act or other bipartisan proposals that provide a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers while upholding the value of family unity. We are heartbroken that immigrant youth are at risk of deportation due to Congress's failure to act. Every day that passes without a solution Dreamers lose their status and their ability to live, work, and attend school without fear of detention and deportation. Now is the time for immediate and compassionate bipartisan action that provides these aspiring Americans stability and opportunity.

The Securing America's Future (SAF) Act, led by Congressman Goodlatte, would separate families and deprive Dreamers of an opportunity to pursue a pathway to citizenship. This would create a permanent underclass in America, and threaten our national values.

Our churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples believe deeply in the sanctity of the family and stand against prolonged family separation. The family unit is the foundation of society and families hold our country together. We ask you to reject the SAF Act and any legislation that threatens family-based immigration.

Additionally, the SAF Act creates a new federal misdemeanor offense for those who violate any terms or conditions of admission and then establishes a requirement that any Dreamer seeking legal status must maintain an annual income above 125 percent of the poverty line. This means that if a Dreamer's income falls below the poverty line then they would be deemed inadmissible. Not only would this lead to detention and deportation, but this law effectively criminalizes those struggling with poverty. Finally, this bill proposes severe cuts to legal immigration and expands mass deportation of our immigrant neighbors. The SAF Act rejects the fundamental principle of a compassionate solution for those at the margins of our communities and fails to acknowledge the human dignity of our immigrant families.

We stand with the approximately 1.8 million Dreamers who arrived in this country as young people and would benefit from the Dream Act or similar legislation. They worship with us, contribute to our economy, and add their many talents to American society. Dreamers have been calling on Congress for

decades to pass legislation that provides a permanent solution and long-term stability in our communities. Congress has repeatedly failed to deliver.

Since DACA was terminated in September, 2017, more than 17,000 Dreamers have lost protection and are at risk of deportation. They are living in fear and time is running out. We affirm bipartisan negotiations which are happening in good faith, and include Dreamers' input, to resolve this crisis. As you continue negotiations, we ask you to remember that any solution must honor the core tenets of human dignity and family unity.

As communities of faith, we urge Congress to reject the SAF Act. We urge you to instead enact a compassionate, bipartisan solution that includes a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers - without undercutting other communities before February 8th.

Sincerely,

Rev. John Liotti, Able Works

Rev. Mike Castle, President of the Board, Alliance of Baptists

Nancy Runkle, Bellevue Presbyterian Church

Rev. Laura Beach, Boone United Methodist Church

Rev. David Beckmann, Bread for the World

Dawnielle Miller, Casa Chirilagua

Michelle Warren, CCDA

Marina Garcia, Centro Cristiano Emanuel

John-Mark Hart, Christ Community Church

Chauncey A. Shillow, Christ Community Church

Rev. Patricia E de Jong, Church World Service

Scott Wright, Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

Sherdren Burnside, Compassion Outreach of America

Patricia Villarreal, Convencion Bautista Hispana de Tejas

Pamela Fulbright-Scheyer, Crossroads at Park Place, Inc.

Rev. Jose Luis Casal, Director of Presbyterian World Mission- PC(USA)

Carey Franklin, East Central Ministries

Adriana Mondragon, Emmaus Church of Santa Ana

John Seel, Evangelicals for Social Action

Elias Gabriel, First Baptist Church South Gate

Melvin Valiente, First Baptist Church of Maywood

Sr. Margaret Magee OSF, Franciscan Action Network

Lisa Sharon Harper, Freedom Road LLC

Diane Randall, Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
Bruce Strom, Gospel Justice Initiative
Israel Alex Brito, Grand Rapids Center for Community Transformation
Victoria Carias, Iglesia Pentecostal
Christopher Kerr, Ignatian Solidarity Network
Zach Szmara, Immigrant Connection
Mariana D Lopez, Impacto de Fe
Deacon Nathanael Bacon, InnerChange
Michael Philip, InnerCHANGE and Avenue Church
Rev. Doug Mork, Interfaith Worker Justice
Diana Collymore, InterVarsity
Scott Lundeen, iSSACHAR Center For Urban Leadership
Melanie Lundeen, iSSACHAR Center for Urban Leadership
Andrew J. Krumsieg, Jubilee Community Church
Deborah A. Krumsieg, Jubilee Community Church
Carole Shinnick, SSND, Executive Director, Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Britt A. Fuller, Living Stones Church
Melanie Garcia, Living Stones Neighborhood Center
Ada Valiente, Mateo 25
Rev. Alexia Salvatierra, Matthew 25
Rev. Nathan Hedge, May Ave. Wesleyan Church
J Ron Byler, Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
Jeff Johnsen, Mile High Ministries
Ricardo Green, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
Rev. P. Jarrett Meek
Nancy K. Kaufman, National Council of Jewish Women
Rob Rutland-Brown, National Justice for Our Neighbors
Jimmy Martinez, Neighborhood Ministries
Dr. Kit Danley, Neighborhood Ministries Inc, Phoenix
Kathrin Meier, Neighbors in Action
Sr. Simone Campbell, SSS, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Crysta Imes, NETworX
Rev. Reginald Smith, Office of Social Justice, Christian Reformed Church in North America
Pastor Paul Campbell, Overflow Church
Erica Nellessen, Pasadena Mennonite Church
Christie Duncan-Tessmer, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Mindy Plick, Placentia Presbyterian Church
Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Dr. James C. Perkins, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
Tec Sun, Providence Network
Rich Sander, Pueblo Free Methodist Church
Shane Claiborne, Red Letter Christians
Rev. Kate Kooyman, Reformed Church in America
Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism
Pam Hinrichs, Ruling Elder, Bellevue Presbyterian Church
Jim Wallis, President, Sojourners
Bethany Anderson, Solidarity - Camino Immigration Services
Dr. Terry Johns, The Refuge
Rabbi Rachel Kahn-Troster, T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Ismael Ruiz-Millán, United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Larry W. Stoess, United Methodist Church of the Promise
Rev. Hannah Terry, Westbury United Methodist Church — Houston TX
Rev. Dr. James Moos, Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ
Rev. Glen Peterson, World Relief Southern California
Melissa Abbott, World Relief Spokane