

# Criticism of the DREAM Act

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April, 2012

After hearing from a Korean immigrant saying that her daughter got accepted to Julliard School of Arts but could not attend because she is undocumented and could be deported back to South Korea (a home that she is not familiar with), Richard Durbin introduced the DREAM Act. The bill would provide highly academic undocumented immigrants the help to not only go to college or join the military, but also the possibility of transitioning from an undocumented immigrant to a U.S Citizen. Nevertheless, the Dream Act was proposed in 2001 and recently the Act was defeated by a small margin of five votes. Why has the Act not yet been passed?

## Nationalism: California Representative Dana Rohrabacher

*"...Those voting for this so-called Dream Act are voting to relegate the position of non-minority American citizens to behind those who are now in this country illegally."*<sup>1</sup> -Dana Rohrabacher

*"Indians lost their country to foreigners. I'm not letting that happen to us w/out a fight. Which side are you and your friends on?"*<sup>2</sup> -Dana Rohrabacher

The nationalist's argument demonstrates that it is of grave concern to these people that undocumented immigrants, specifically Latinos, will become the majority in the United States. People like Rohrabacher fear that the Latino population will become the majority of the population, and feel extremely threatened for the future of the white race in this country. To prevent this, nationalistic politicians will try to block any act to help the Latino or minority groups by appealing to people's fear of foreigners, which in part explains why the Dream Act has not yet passed.

## Focus on Legal Immigration: Mitt Romney

*"I think people, whether they're Hispanic or non-Hispanic, I think people agree that we'll enforce immigration laws in part to secure legal immigration as an important pathway to this country...I want more legal immigration. But illegal immigration has to be stopped to make legal immigration possible."*<sup>3</sup> -Mitt Romney

Romney focuses on legal immigrants when talking about the DREAM Act. The legal immigration process already faces many problems and according to Romney, Passing the DREAM Act will hurt legal immigrants who may feel cheated because they followed the rules for coming to the country and becoming U.S citizens. Romney does not mention that DREAMers are just kids who didn't have a choice whether to come to this country legally or illegally, or that they won't just be granted immediate citizenship.

## DREAM 2.0: Marco Rubio's Republican Response to the DREAM Act

*"You can legalize someone's status in this country with a significant amount of certainty about their future, without placing them on a path toward citizenship."*<sup>4</sup> -Marco Rubio

Florida Senator Marco Rubio recently proposed an alternative version to the DREAM Act. Instead of being granted with permanent residence or citizenship, undocumented immigrants would instead be given non-citizen visas. His idea is legalization without citizenship. Although his proposal has met with severe criticism for putting undocumented youth in a life-long position of limbo in which they may never be able to achieve citizenship, he is gathering support among Republicans for this version.

## The Future: Competing DREAMs and Political Stalemate

*"Taking something like this [the Dream Act] on politically has just as many pitfalls as it has advantages"*<sup>5</sup> -Marco Rubio

Rubio's new proposal has not been officially announced to the public and there is a lot of speculation about what exactly it includes. His new proposal, as critics are calling it, is a "Dream Act without a Dream" or "legalized discrimination." If his bill puts undocumented immigrants in limbo without giving them any hope of citizenship, it should be avoided by both parties. However, if it is in balance with the legal immigration process by providing the pathway for undocumented immigrants to gain U.S citizenship, then we should put effort into seeing this act passed by the Senate. Nevertheless, until Rubio's bill is fully written and given to the public, it's impossible to make decisions about it one way or the other. Still, in an election year both sides remain at war over the question of immigration and, more importantly, the Hispanic vote this fall. Mitt Romney revealed this in a statement he made to donors recently overheard by a reporter: "We have to get Hispanic voters to vote for our party" he told them, since recent polling "spells doom for us."<sup>6</sup>

## Sources

1. <http://politicalcorrection.org/blog/201012090001>
2. <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/2642310/posts>
3. <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/01/04/romney-defends-dream-act-stance/>
4. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/28/opinion/a-dream-act-without-the-dream.html>
5. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/27/us/politics/with-gops-ear-marco-rubio-pushes-dream-act-proposal.html>
6. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/27/us/politics/with-gops-ear-marco-rubio-pushes-dream-act-proposal.html>

And if you want to know where your representatives stand on the DREAM act or immigration, check out this website: [www.ontheissues.org/Background\\_Immigration.htm](http://www.ontheissues.org/Background_Immigration.htm)