

# Immigration Alert: Senate Vote on DREAM Act Imminent

9/17/2010

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has announced the inclusion of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act in a bill that will come up for a vote on the Senate floor on **Tuesday, September 21, 2010**. If passed, the bill would create a path to Lawful Conditional Permanent Residency (CPR) status for the approximately 65,000 undocumented youth currently living in the U.S.

The DREAM Act is a piece of proposed, bipartisan legislation that has been offered as a solution for certain undocumented immigrant students who have successfully completed high school, have no criminal record, and plan to attend college or serve in the U.S. military for at least two years.

To qualify under the DREAM Act as currently worded, an undocumented immigrant student **MUST**:

- be between the ages of 12 and 35 at the time the DREAM Act is enacted into law;
- have entered the U.S. before the age of 16;
- have resided continuously in the U.S. for at least five (5) consecutive years subsequent to their arrival;
- hold a U.S. high school diploma, or an equivalent General Education Diploma (GED);  
and
- otherwise be of good moral character.

Under the Act, a student that meets these criteria would be granted a period of six (6) years of lawful status in the U.S. Within that period of time, the student must either obtain a post-secondary degree from a U.S. institution, or complete at least two (2) years of a bachelor's or higher degree program. In lieu of a degree, a student may also qualify by serving at least two (2) years in the U.S. armed services, and upon close of their service receive an honorable discharge. Any alien in CPR status seeking to benefit from the DREAM Act will be immediately returned to their prior immigration status if they fail to meet the conditions of the Act within the prescribed six (6) years.

The DREAM Act will be offered as an amendment to the much larger, and already contentious, Defense Authorization bill. Many view this as appropriate however, as the U.S. Department of Defense has long supported this legislation, first introduced in 2001, as a means to improve military preparedness. A host of university presidents, business leaders, and religious authorities also support the Act as a pathway for thousands of students in the U.S. to go to college, join the military, or seek employment.

If you wish to make your voice heard in favor of the DREAM Act, please act before Tuesday by clicking on the [attached link](#), or by calling the Senate offices at 1-888-254-5087.

If you have questions related to the upcoming DREAM Act debate, or about any other immigration-related matter, please do not hesitate to contact your Mintz Levin attorney.

---

*For assistance in this area please contact one of the attorneys listed below or any member of your Mintz Levin client service team.*

**Susan J. Cohen**

*Chair, Immigration Section*

(617) 348-4468

[SCohen@mintz.com](mailto:SCohen@mintz.com)

**Jeffrey W. Goldman**

*Manager, Immigration Section*

(617) 348-3025

[JGoldman@mintz.com](mailto:JGoldman@mintz.com)

**Reena I. Thadhani**

(617) 348-3091

[RThadhani@mintz.com](mailto:RThadhani@mintz.com)

**Lawrence D. Bastone**

(617) 348-1671

[LBastone@mintz.com](mailto:LBastone@mintz.com)

**William L. Coffman**

(617) 348-1890

[WCoffman@mintz.com](mailto:WCoffman@mintz.com)

**Molly Carey**

(617) 348-4461

[MCarey@mintz.com](mailto:MCarey@mintz.com)

**Brian J. Coughlin**

(617) 348-1685

[BJCoughlin@mintz.com](mailto:BJCoughlin@mintz.com)

**Lorne M. Fienberg**

(617) 348-3010

[LFienberg@mintz.com](mailto:LFienberg@mintz.com)

**Marisa C. Howe**  
(617) 348-1761  
[MHowe@mintz.com](mailto:MHowe@mintz.com)

**Marvonne Kline**  
(617) 239-8498  
[MKline@mintz.com](mailto:MKline@mintz.com)

**Bethany S. Mandell**  
(617) 348-4403  
[BSMandell@mintz.com](mailto:BSMandell@mintz.com)

**Timothy P. Rempe**  
(617) 348-1621  
[TRempe@mintz.com](mailto:TRempe@mintz.com)

*[For a complete list of our Immigration attorneys please click here.](#)*