



### ACTION ALERT

**Demand that Your Congress Member Oppose the Addition of More Youth Criminalization Provisions to the American Promise and Dream Act!**

#### What is happening with HR6, the American Dream and Promise Act?

On May 22, 2019, the House Judiciary Committee passed the DREAM and Promise Act, a bill intended to provide much-needed protections to immigrant youth as well as TPS and DED holders. Unfortunately, the original version of HR6 was changed by adding damaging provisions that detract from the protections envisioned by the bill. The changes to the bill

further criminalize immigrants, undermine criminal legal system reform, and sets a dangerous precedent for future bills.

HR 6 is headed to a vote on the House floor this week, and the vote could take place as early as Tuesday, June 4th.

### **What are our concerns with this bill?**

The new HR6 added many new - and unprecedented - grounds of exclusion for people who apply for Dream Act relief. Specifically, the following individuals could be excluded from Dream Act relief:

- those who have juvenile delinquency adjudications (which are not convictions and should not carry the consequences of such)
- those who fall within an expansive definition of “public safety” threats
- those who the government labels as participating in gang offenses

These exclusion bars will compound the complicated and harsh barriers to relief if an applicant has had any contact with the criminal legal system without accounting for the systemic inequities which result in the over-policing, profiling and labeling of black youth and youth of color. Moreover, these bars utilize a “guilty until proven innocent” approach, and will force applicants to repeatedly prove that they do not fit within the systemic criminalizing labels placed onto them.

### **What is the problem with these new bars?**

These additional criminal exclusions are gross overkill given that our immigration laws are already draconian and punitive. Moreover, the justification for these bars have their roots in a poisonous narrative of racialized fear of black and brown immigrant youth.

Many of our groups opposed the additional exclusions added to the original bill (see our [Statement for the Record](#)) and we continue to oppose any other efforts to expand the criminalization already within this bill. We call on Congress to ensure these bars do not become the standard for future immigration proposals.

### **What should we do?**

Call and urge your member of Congress and Leadership to oppose any efforts to expand the criminalization already within this bill and ensure these bars do not become the standard for future immigration proposals.

## **How do we contact Members of Congress?**

[Contact](#) your Congressional Representative and tell them:

“We ask that you oppose any further efforts to criminalize youth and ensure the criminal bars already added to HR 6 do not become the standard for future immigration proposals. The American Dream and Promise Act is critically important legislation, but we believe that it should not treat certain individuals as disposable and undermine years of youth justice and criminal legal reform efforts.”

### **More background below:**

- [Joint Statement for the Record submitted to House Judiciary Committee on Dream Act and American Promise Act opposing the added criminalization provisions](#)
- [ILRC Resources on HR 6](#)
- [Letter from Youth Justice Organizations to House Judiciary Committee opposing H.R. 2820, the Dream Act of 2019 based on the added criminalization provisions](#)