



HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

P.O. Box 1011 | Washington, D.C. 20013-1011
www.hbadc.org

March 27, 2017

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Dick Durbin
United States Senator, Illinois
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
United States Senator, South Carolina
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for DACA Recipients and DACA-Eligible Individuals that would Benefit by the BRIDGE Act

Dear Senators Durbin and Graham:

The Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”) writes to express its steadfast support for Senate Bill (S.B.) 3542, the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy (“BRIDGE”) Act. The HBA-DC has long supported efforts for comprehensive immigration reform that include a pathway to citizenship. We understand the urgent need to protect more than 700,000 individuals who have been protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) program, and the many more who are eligible for it, from the threat of deportation. We laud your efforts and urge you to move the BRIDGE Act legislation forward, as part of a long term strategy passing comprehensive immigration reform. The BRIDGE Act is a necessary first step in a longer path towards addressing our broken immigration system and the people negatively impacted by it.

Since the introduction of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (“DREAM”) Act in 2001, legislators from both parties and chambers have given their support to protect DREAMers, youth who came to the United States by no fault of their own. When President Barack H. Obama launched the DACA program in 2012, it provided for a temporary work authorization and offered reprieve from the threat of deportation to hundreds of thousands of young people, allowing them to fruitfully contribute to society. Since then, DACA recipients have prospered. Many have sought educational opportunities, others have become homeowners or started businesses. In a short time, DACA recipients have become pillars of their communities.

The HBA-DC is proud that there are DACA program recipients among our membership of over 600 attorneys and law students in the Washington, D.C. area. For those members and the thousands of others for whom the United States is their home, the BRIDGE Act is crucial legislation to ensure that they can continue to contribute to our country. These courageous and enterprising youth should not be penalized for complying with the DACA program. Please

include the HBA-DC on the long list of organizations who stand in support of DREAMers and the BRIDGE ACT. We thank you for your leadership on this pressing issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Richard V. Rodríguez', with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

Richard V. Rodríguez
President-Elect
Hispanic Bar Association
of the District of Columbia
president-elect@hbadc.org