



Into the Light to Realize the Dream

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey is absolutely delighted and encouraged by the administration's decision to suspend the deportation of certain unauthorized immigrants, on a case-by-case basis, who were brought here as children.

The suspension of deportation under this executive policy action may affect up to 60,000 immigrants in New Jersey, all 30 years of age and younger. Those who qualify will have the opportunity to step out of the shadows and into the light without fear of reprisal. While there is no promise of a pathway to citizenship under this policy action, we can only wonder at how liberating it must feel for these immigrants to openly integrate themselves into society, pursue an education, earn a drivers license, work legally, and yes - pay taxes.

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey continues to strongly advocate for passage of the proposed DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act, which would prevent young undocumented immigrants from being deported if they meet certain requirements regarding age, criminal background, and education or military service. A new study conducted by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University found that 80 percent of New Jerseyans support the provisions of the proposed DREAM Act, which is totally in step with the League's position on immigration.

There are some who believe this latest executive action to suspend deportation on a case-by-case basis is nothing more than a political ploy implemented by a political campaign to garner support for the upcoming election. Regardless of its intention, it is the positive result of the action that must be appreciated and valued above all, and the League feels that, at the very least, suspending the deportation of these young people is appropriate and long overdue.

We urge all candidates and sitting members of Congress to put aside their partisan differences and focus on enacting and supporting the kinds of laws and policies that have built this country, that respect the innocence and acknowledge the plight of these young immigrants and, in doing so, continue to enshrine the core creed of our Constitution.

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