



JEWISH COUNCIL FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), which represents 16 national Jewish agencies and 125 local Jewish community relations councils, we write to strongly urge you to reject the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act and the Securing America's Future (SAF) Act (H.R. 4760), which would harm immigrant families fleeing violence, endanger vulnerable children, and worsen the family separation crisis.

Our Jewish faith teaches us to “welcome the stranger” and treat all people with dignity and respect. These bills do neither. Both make it harder for families and vulnerable people to seek protection in the U.S. by gutting legal immigration and terminating legal pathways for U.S. citizens to reunite with family members, penalizing immigrants who have “waited in line” for green cards for years, even decades.

Neither bill provides a viable pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, young people who grew up in the U.S. without legal status. The SAF Act provides only temporary legal status that current DACA recipients can renew every three years, meaning their legal status will remain uncertain, while the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act would subject Dreamers to an untested point system that harkens back to the most exclusionary anti-immigrant policies of the past century. Dreamers who do not have enough “points” will be locked out of a path to citizenship. Moreover, if the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) uses certain funds for any purpose other than building a wall, the path to citizenship for all Dreamers will be permanently eliminated.

Some have claimed these bills will end family separation. They will not. Nothing in either bill would overturn the “zero tolerance” policy of criminally prosecuting all adults who cross the border, which forces authorities to separate children from their migrant parents because existing law prevents them from jailing these children for long periods of time. These bills seek to overturn protections so that DHS would be able to imprison children alongside their parents.

Since the policy’s enactment, DHS has separated over 2,700 children, including some infants, [causing irreparable psychological trauma](#). JCPA has denounced this cruel and inhuman practice. Shifting from separation to detention of children is not the answer.

For over 70 years, JCPA has worked to ensure that the U.S. immigration system upholds family unity and family-based immigration, protections for unaccompanied minors, and access to due process and justice. We know that effective enforcement can only be accomplished as part of comprehensive immigration reform that balances security standards with the protection of civil and human rights, and upholds American values of refugee protection, family reunification, and economic opportunity.

We urge members of Congress to only support bipartisan legislation that would provide a viable pathway to citizenship for Dreamers, and reject unvetted bills that cut legal immigration and increase border enforcement without comprehensive reform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Fishbein', written in a cursive style.

Cheryl Fishbein
Chair
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bernstein', written in a cursive style.

David Bernstein
President and CEO
Jewish Council for Public Affairs