

Evangelicals urge Congress to address Dreamers plight

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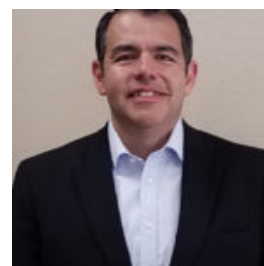
More than 2,800 evangelical Christians called on the U.S. Congress to act promptly to address the situation of Dreamers who benefited from the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program but now find their legal status imperiled.

A [letter drafted by the Evangelical Immigration Table](#) highlighted the dilemma faced by young adults who were brought to the United States as children.

About 616,000 of these individuals—often called Dreamers—live and work legally in the United States under DACA, but a recent court decision jeopardizes their legal status. It also blocks the program from accepting new applicants who otherwise would be eligible.

Dreamers “should be offered an expedited process to apply for permanent legal status and eventual citizenship,” the letter stated.

More than 250 Texas evangelicals—including some prominent Texas Baptists—signed the letter.



Jesse Rincones

Jesse Rincones, executive director of the [Hispanic Baptist Convention of](#)

[Texas](#), asserted a permanent DACA solution would offer many benefits to the state—and the nation—in general.

“The almost 1,100 Hispanic Baptist churches in Texas are at the forefront of promoting the values that give Texas and America a hopeful future—faith, family, education, leadership and justice,” Rincones said.



Gus Reyes

“Providing a permanent DACA solution is the most pro-family, pro-education, pro-economy and pro-faith step that Congress and the president can take on this issue. Their failure to do so will have effects that reach far beyond the more than 100,000 DACA recipients in Texas.”

Gus Reyes, director of Texas Baptists’ Center for Cultural Engagement and the [Christian Life Commission](#), voiced concern both for “the vulnerable among us and our civil authorities’ responsibility to promote both civil order and the common good.”

“Therefore, it is of vital importance our members of Congress work together to fix our broken immigration system,” Reyes said. “I am particularly concerned with the situation facing our Dreamers, whose futures have been imperiled for far too long. Now is the time for Congress to act.”

The Evangelical Immigration Table letter, called on lawmakers to forge “a bipartisan consensus on immigration policy,” voicing support for restitution-based immigration reform that honors the law while also

prioritizing family unification.

“Reforms to our federal immigration laws are long overdue, and we see the negative impacts of a broken immigration system on the immigrant families within our congregations and our communities,” the letter stated.

“Guided by biblical principles, we believe that our immigration system should both facilitate legal immigration—including to protect those fleeing persecution, to reunite families and to strengthen our economy—and ensure secure borders. We can be both a welcoming nation and a safe nation.”



Myles Werntz

Myles Werntz, director of the Baptist Studies Center at Abilene Christian University, emphasized the biblical mandate to welcome the stranger.

“Those fleeing for their lives and seeking to be a part of a new people should not be turned away but should be welcomed, assisted and enabled to flourish,” Werntz said. “This is the biblical vision of immigration—that the outsiders should be welcomed in and treated as though they always belonged here.”