

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN  
LEGAL CENTER



ASIAN AMERICAN  
JUSTICE CENTER

ASIAN AMERICAN  
INSTITUTE



ASIAN  
LAW CAUCUS

MEMBERS OF  
ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER  
FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION  
MAY 11, 2011**

**CONTACT:**  
Rachanee Srisavasdi, Communications Director  
213-241-0227; rsrisavasdi@apalc.org

**ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER FOR ADVANCING JUSTICE SEES REINTRODUCTION OF  
DREAM ACT AS CRITICAL OPPORTUNITY FOR LASTING REFORM**

*Asian American groups applaud Sen. Dick Durbin, Reps. Howard Berman and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen for their leadership on a bill that would help thousands of youth earn legal status*

**Washington, D.C.** – The Asian American Center for Advancing Justice commends U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Reps. Howard Berman (D-CA) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (D-FL) for reintroducing the Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). The DREAM Act would allow young people a path to legal immigration status by meeting strict requirements, including completing two years of college or serving two years in the military.

"We applaud Senator Durbin and Representatives Berman and Ros-Lehtinen for their committed leadership on this issue," said Karen K. Narasaki, president and executive director of the Asian American Justice Center. "These young people are American in every sense except for paperwork, and passing the DREAM Act is just the first step in fixing our outdated immigration system."

"I'm about to graduate from college with a degree I can't even use if the Dream Act doesn't pass soon," said Catherine, a 22-year-old undocumented Filipina San Francisco Bay Area resident. "All I want to do is give back to the community I call home; I can't even remember my life back in the Philippines."

An estimated 65,000 students graduate from a U.S. high school every year without legal immigration status, many of whom are Asian Americans. "We are seeing more Asian American and Pacific Islander students get caught up in our broken immigration system," said Stewart Kwoh, president and executive director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. "It doesn't make sense for us to deport these young people when they have been an integral part of the fabric of our society."

Last December, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the DREAM Act and a majority of U.S. Senators approved it, but the measure was just five votes short of the 60 needed to overcome a Republican filibuster. "This bill has a long history of broad bi-partisan support and it would be a disappointment to see this common-sense bill get lost in party politics," said Tuyet Le, executive director of the Asian American Institute.

"We need lasting immigration reforms for our country and we hope the Obama administration will show

leadership and provide much needed administrative relief for these young people," said Titi Liu, executive director of the Asian Law Caucus.

*The Asian American Center for Advancing Justice ( <http://www.advancingjustice.org>) and its members -- the Asian Law Caucus( <http://www.asianlawcaucus.org>), Asian American Justice Center ( <http://www.advancingequality.org>), Asian American Institute ( <http://www.aaichicago.org>) and Asian Pacific American Legal Center ( <http://www.apalc.org>) -- strive to promote a fair and equitable society for all by working for civil and human rights and empowering Asian Americans and other underserved communities.*

###