June 4, 2019

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA) and its more than 400,000 members, I write to urge you to support H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act. This legislation will provide a critically-needed path to legal status and citizenship for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) recipients and other deserving young immigrants (collectively “Dreamers”).

H.R. 6 is consistent with American ideals of fairness and opportunity. Children should not be punished for the acts of their parents. Most of the young people who would be eligible to earn permanent legal status were brought to this country as children by family members, through no choice of their own. They have grown up here, gone to school, and been active in their communities; for many, it is the only home they have ever known. To force these young people to remain in or return to the shadows, unable to contribute to our society and our economy, or worse, to spend our limited immigration enforcement resources to deport them, is unconscionable and against our national interests.

The American public clearly agrees. Numerous polls have demonstrated strong and broad support for Dreamers that cuts across both geographic and political party lines. Over the years, this and similar bills also have been endorsed by a lengthy list of government officials, military leaders, and educational institutions and associations, as well as business, civil rights, and religious groups. There is simply no reason why this critical step should not be taken immediately.

While H.R. 6 should be passed immediately, much more needs to be done. Congress should act on this bill and then turn its attention to working toward comprehensive immigration reform that fairly and realistically addresses the undocumented population, protects refugees and asylum-seekers, recognizes the need for immigrant labor and the value of family reunification, and provides for an effective and humane immigration enforcement strategy that respects our fundamental principles of due process and the rule of law.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Carlson