

February 24, 2023

Re: Yes to HB 2957, Dreamers Belong Act.

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Prisila Sanchez and I live in Portland, Oregon. I write to you in support of HB 2957, Dreamers Belong Act and I respectfully ask for your support on HB 2957.

On June 15, 2012, my life was completely transformed. That fateful day, I was awakened by a phone call from a family friend who wanted to share some good news. A life-changing policy had just been passed. My first reaction was to run to the living room and turn on the news. I could not believe what I had just heard. After all these years, my prayers had been answered. I was in disbelief. I was ecstatic.

Most 17-year-olds are eagerly anticipating their 18th birthday, when they officially become an adult. But for me, that day had always been a source of fear. Nevertheless, the dreaded day finally arrived, and I was somehow no longer under the care of my legal guardians. I was officially an adult.

For many undocumented workers, finding a job that pays well or offers benefits is a challenge. The vast majority of jobs I had applied for turned me away, leaving me with no future ahead of me. No options. No chance of obtaining a driver's license, opening a bank account, owning a car, pursuing a career or degree, voting, owning a home, or traveling. You know, the things 18 year olds look forward to. For me, all of these things were not possible. Just because I was born in Mexico.

DACA made the impossible possible for me! And for all the young adults whose parents brought them here as children! Without question, DACA has been life-changing for more than 835,000 thousand young people who have qualified for its work authorizations and protections from deportation. But did you know that DACA beneficiaries have contributed \$11.7 billion to the U.S. economy each year? That is more than \$120 billion dollars in the past decade.

The Center for American Progress analysis finds that DACA-recipient households pay \$6.2 billion in federal taxes and \$3.3 billion in state and local taxes each year. A decade later, research has consistently shown that DACA beneficiaries have positively affected the economy. So, yes, I benefit from this policy and so does every American, whether they were born here or not. As the numbers show, DACA-recipients like me make a huge positive impact across the country. Just like any other Oregonian, I want to contribute. I want to continue to work hard to make Oregon a better place, to provide for and move my community forward, to further my education, to improve my circumstances, freely, legally, without fear. Just like every Oregonian. Just like every American.

Thank you for your time.

Prisila Sanchez