



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

April 6, 2009

Honorable Richard Durbin
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

I hope this finds you doing well. I just wanted to express how grateful I am to you for introducing, along with Senator Lugar, the "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors" or DREAM Act, S. 729. Your legislation, if enacted, would permit undocumented students of good moral character who arrived in the United States at age 15 or younger, lived in the United States for at least 5 years, graduated from high school, and serve in the military or attend college for at least two years to become permanent residents.

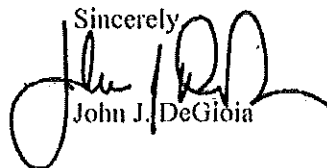
This legislation acknowledges that these young people had no choice about their legal status having come to the United States with their parents at a very young age, and it recognizes that the young men and women who would be covered are American in virtually every sense of the word.

I have taken a particular interest in this legislation because of a young man who came to Georgetown as a transfer student last September, Juan Gomez. Juan and his brother came to the United States with their parents in 1990 when Juan was just two years old. An uncle and two cousins had been victims of the violence in their native Colombia which led his parents to come to the United States. While his parents sought political asylum, Juan and his brother grew up in Miami. One of his high school teachers commented that Juan was "one of the best students ever to graduate from Killian" (his Miami high school).

Fortunately for Juan and his brother, a private bill has been introduced in the Senate (and in the House) that will effectively protect them from deportation, but the DREAM Act as you and your cosponsors have proposed will ensure that other young people who came to the United States not under their own volition and who have been raised as Americans can continue their lives here through military service or college attendance.

As I am sure you are aware, earlier this year, *The Washington Post Magazine* published a cover story about Juan's situation. So you know, I am sharing that article with other Georgetown alumni in the Senate (and in the House) in the hope that it will lead them to join you and your colleagues in cosponsoring the DREAM Act.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely

John J. DeGioia

Enclosure