

Democratic Party of New Mexico Press Conference on DACA Sept. 1, 2017

Senator Udall is sorry he couldn't be here in person, but he sent me to read a statement on his behalf – in support of the Dreamer program and the 8,000 New Mexicans whose lives hang in the balance right now.

Statement of U.S. Senator Tom Udall

Thank you to the Democratic Party of New Mexico for holding this press conference – and to the participants, especially Yazmin and Jazmin. I applaud and admire your courage and conviction to stand up not only for yourselves, but for the 800,000 Dreamers like you across our country.

Our government made a promise to Dreamers in New Mexico and across the country: if you come forward, we will give you legal status. The 800,000 young people who agreed to participate in DACA represent the best of our country. They are talented, patriotic young adults who want to finish their education and work so they can give back to their communities. The United States of America is their home, and the only country they have ever known.

DACA wasn't a perfect solution. It wasn't supposed to be. It was a compassionate compromise in hopes that we could soon come together as a nation and agree on comprehensive immigration reform. DACA did not give these young people citizenship. It didn't give them guaranteed federal benefits. But it did allow them a way to stay with their families and realize their dream of becoming teachers, doctors, engineers – of contributing to our economy and making our state and nation stronger. It has been a huge success – DACA works.

President Trump says he wants to show Dreamers “great heart.” We have a message for him – causing fear and uncertainty by putting children in jeopardy of deportation, ripping apart families, renegeing on our nation's promises – that isn't compassion. That is cruel ... not to mention a disaster for our economy. Ending DACA could cost us 700,000 jobs – as many as 30,000 lost jobs a month – and \$460.3 billion in economic output over the next 10 years. Medicare and Social Security contributions could drop by \$24.6 billion over the same time.

The United States of America that I love honors its commitments. And I will fight tooth and nail to defend our Dreamers and protect families.

We are here today to speak out because this issue isn't decided. There is still time to make your voices heard. So I urge everyone – from the leaders in Santa Fe to the families across our state and nation who know the contributions that immigrants make in our communities – stand up and speak out. Let President Trump know you want real solutions, true compassion, and a nation that keeps its promises.

U.S. Senator Tom Udall