

“I, Too, Have a Dream” Letter

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Dear Editor,

I have never taken the time to write a letter to the editor, but something happened that lit a fire in me. Last week, as my best friend Areliss and I headed to class, a group of college protesters blocked our path. Their signs read “GO HOME” and “ILLEGALS LEAVE.” They shouted, “Send them home!” These protesters couldn’t have known what Areliss felt as they shouted and waved pamphlets in our faces like tattered flags. But, I know **their words were bullets to Areliss’s heart**. I wanted to fire back to the protestors: *Where are your ancestors from?*

Areliss came to the United States illegally, but she didn’t do it intentionally. She was a baby. Her parents, seeking a better life, failed to follow the established immigration procedure, and they slipped into our country undetected. Once here, they raised Areliss, who would grow up never knowing any other home but America.

Under DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), Areliss has been granted the temporary opportunity to remain here while she completes her college education. DACA ensures, at least for a while, that she will not be deported to a country she has never visited in her entire life.

The term “DREAMers” refers to an act that would have protected these immigrant children if they attended college or served in the military. The DREAM Act did not pass, but its name has remained. DACA recipients have a dream: they dream that their lifelong contribution to the United States will one day be recognized, and they will be permitted to stay in the country they have always called home.

Now, DACA is ending. Those who oppose DACA say it encourages illegal activity, weakens our borders, and goes against the Constitution. I understand their concerns. In an era of heightened security, we must do our utmost to keep this great nation safe. That includes establishing a healthy monitoring system for immigration.

But, those who oppose DACA, who wield protest signs and who want to build walls, have never felt the dreaded doom of deportation. They forget that our long and colorful history has been built by many immigrants—including the immigrants who fought for and founded our country. They forget that Lady Liberty stands as a beacon, asking for the tired, the poor, and the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. We have a responsibility to them.

To send DREAMers away is to deny that responsibility. Programs like DACA exist to keep the American dream alive.

Yes, Areliss is a DREAMer. But I, too, have a dream. My dream is that DACA will be reinstated. My dream is that Areliss will be invited to stay in the country she was born in and live out her dreams in the country she loves.

Sincerely,

Brittany Taylor