



Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island

For Immediate Release: March 22, 2018

RE: Immigrant Coalition Supports legislation that would protect DACA recipients

The Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island, a statewide network of 25 community-based advocacy and service provider organizations dedicated to supporting all Rhode Islanders, writes in strong support of Representative Maldonado (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) and Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) legislation that would continue to protect Rhode Island's undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as minors.

The announcement that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival Program, "DACA") would be terminated, placed nearly 800,000 DACA recipients in jeopardy of being deported from the only country they know and call home. Last September, the Department of Homeland Security announced that the program was to be phased out over six months, ending March 5, 2018. On January 9, 2018, a U.S. District judge ordered that DACA recipients be allowed to continue submitting renewal applications while a permanent solution for these individuals is debated in Congress.

Senate Majority Leader McCaffrey and Representative Maldonado's legislation (2018-H 7982, 2018-S 2678) would continue the status quo relating to operator and chauffeur's licenses and limited work authorization to approved recipients under the DACA program. Rhode Island is home to nearly 3,000 individuals who are eligible for deferred action; however, only around 1,200 were able to sign up before the program was terminated. Since the enactment of DACA, recipients have been able to lawfully work, study and pay taxes. Annually, DACA recipients have paid \$3,842,000 in Rhode Island's local taxes, and have bolstered the housing market by buying the wave of homes coming on the market as baby boomers retire. Their positive contributions are critical to the success of Rhode Island as a whole.

The Immigrant Coalition of Rhode Island, commends Representative Maldonado and Senate Majority Leader for introducing this legislation which will allow our family, friends and neighbors to continue living and working in Rhode Island - the only state they call home.

###