

□ *Washington, D.C. (June 15, 2012) – Today, Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) released the following statement following President Obama’s announcement to halt under executive order deportations of certain young people who were brought to the United States as children and do not present a risk to national security:* □□□□□

“Today, I am heartened by the exemplary leadership shown by President Obama in halting the deportation of young, law-abiding immigrants and allowing them the chance to pursue the American dream. Our immigration enforcement should prioritize real threats, not the deportation of students and other hard-working young men and women who have been in the U.S. since childhood. Young immigrants, many of whom who know no other home and have no recollection of the parent’s native country, ought to have the chance work and contribute to our economy - despite their lack of official documents.

Under President Obama’s executive order, almost 800,000 young people will be eligible to apply for work authorization and protection from deportation. I commend the appropriate steps taken by President Obama and Secretary Janet Napolitano, in the absence of congressional action, to ensure our nation’s law is sensibly, not blindly, enforced. This is a historic opportunity for young immigrants who have been unduly punished for their situation.

Many of the challenges plaguing our nation’s immigration system remain unsolved, but this action is an important down payment. Eligible young people currently in the country should be given a pathway for citizenship and our immigration policies need to be comprehensively reformed. Congress should respond to the President’s action by finally passing the DREAM Act, of which I am a cosponsor. We must create a mechanism by which people who have been here without documents can come out of the shadows, go to college, serve in the military, and start on a path toward full citizenship.”

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