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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
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November 18, 2010

Somerville Board of Aldermen  
c/o Board of Alderman President John Connolly  
Somerville City Hall  
93 Highland Avenue  
Somerville, MA 02143

Dear President of the Board Connolly:

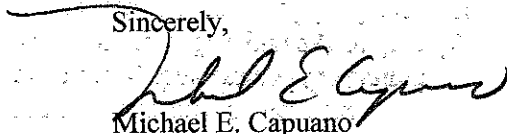
I appreciate the Somerville Board of Aldermen's writing me regarding the DREAM Act, known in the U.S. House of Representatives as H.R. 1751, the American Dream Act. I am pleased to be informed of the Board of Aldermen's unanimous endorsement of the bill, and I share that same support for this legislation.

The American Dream Act would give children of undocumented immigrants wider access to college education by making them eligible, as several states already do, for in-state tuition at public colleges and universities. The bill also permits such young persons to apply for conditional permanent residency provided that, among other criteria, they entered the United States before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, have lived here for at least five years before passage of the bill, and have been admitted to a college or university. The most important purpose of this legislation is that it preserves intergenerational upward mobility – one of the hallmarks of the "American dream." We must work to keep this dream a realistic possibility for today's hardworking immigrant families. I see this as a matter of justice for young persons who have done no wrong. I also believe we will all benefit from their talent and energy as educated adults.

I am a cosponsor of the American Dream Act, though I am concerned about the unintended consequences of this legislation. While fair and reasonable in providing opportunity to children brought here illegally but through no fault of their own, it could provide an incentive for other families to violate our immigration laws. In past Congresses, when we failed to pass comprehensive legislation on immigration, the American Dream Act has been seen as a partial solution, an investment in the future of young people who have done nothing wrong. It is my hope, however, that we will enact comprehensive immigration reform, and this act will become unnecessary.

Thank you again for the Board of Alderman's letter. As always, I send my best wishes.

Sincerely,

  
Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress