



Talking Points: Rubio DREAM Act

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Sen. Marco Rubio is publicly promoting the idea of a Republican DREAM Act amnesty. After weeks of public and media appearances, he has yet to produce a bill and he still refuses to disclose specifics about what is likely to be in the bill. Although Rubio denies that his plan is amnesty, it would allow illegal aliens who arrived in the United States prior to age 16 to gain legal status and remain in the U.S. indefinitely. Rubio has also indicated that his DREAM Act would **not** preclude beneficiaries from gaining citizenship at some future time.

Rubio's efforts have one clearly stated objective. Republicans believe that introducing their own version of the DREAM Act will help attract Latino voters.

Why the Rubio DREAM Act is bad policy

- **The DREAM ACT is a broad and unjustified amnesty.** However Senator Rubio packages it, his DREAM Act will be an amnesty because it will grant legal status to illegal aliens. And, although Rubio originally suggested that his bill would not grant citizenship to illegal aliens, he has walked back from those statements, suggesting that his bill will allow DREAM Act beneficiaries to somehow obtain citizenship through the operation of existing law.
- **The Rubio DREAM Act rewards those who have violated our immigration laws.** Rubio's DREAM Act, like the Democrats' bill, rewards people who violated our immigration laws through their children. The inevitable result will be millions more people bringing their children into the U.S. illegally (or even sending them to the U.S. by themselves) in the expectation that they too will be rewarded.
- **The Rubio DREAM Act will likely lead to chain migration—the very reason Rubio opposed the 2010 DREAM Act.** Although Rubio has not disseminated specific legislative language, he has suggested that — under his bill — DREAM Act beneficiaries would be precluded from sponsoring their parents and other family members to live legally in the U.S. However, it is highly questionable whether legislation that prevents DREAM Act beneficiaries from sponsoring their relatives is constitutional. Under the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution all citizens must be treated equally. Thus, once DREAM Act beneficiaries become citizens, Rubio's DREAM Act would lead to eventual legal status for a broad range of relatives, whether they reside in or outside of the United States.

- **Rubio’s Current Attempt to Resurrect the DREAM Act is the 2012 version of the “Grand Bargain.”** In 2007, Democratic and Republican leaders went behind closed doors and emerged with what they described as the “Grand Bargain” on amnesty and attempted to force-feed the legislation to Members of Congress and the American public. Rubio’s secrecy and his refusal to disclose details indicated that a similar sell-out agreement is afoot.
- **Rubio’s DREAM Act will likely be expanded through the amendment process.** Illegal alien advocates and their supporters in Congress have repeatedly indicated that they will not be satisfied with a watered-down version of the DREAM Act. It is possible, even likely, that Rubio’s version of the DREAM Act would be expanded significantly through the amendment process before a final vote in the Democratic controlled Senate.

Why the Rubio DREAM Act is bad politics

- **Amnesty for illegal aliens will not win Republicans more Hispanic votes.** Hispanic voters consistently rank immigration far below basic bread and butter issues on their list of priorities. Hispanic voters, like other voters, are looking for viable plans to improve the economy, put Americans back to work, and close government deficits. However, amnesties, like the DREAM Act, will hurt Republicans—especially with independents.
- **Rubio’s DREAM Act will not impress voters who want amnesty.** The small segment of the electorate that is likely to base their votes on amnesty for illegal aliens is unlikely to be impressed by a watered down version of the DREAM Act when the other party is offering the unadulterated version.