



**IMMIGRANT  
DEFENSE  
PROJECT**



**The Fortune Society**  
*BUILDING PEOPLE, NOT PRISONS*

### **In the Fight to #DefendDACA**

We stand with the young people who are now at risk due to the Trump Administration's shameful September 5 announcement that it will end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and with all immigrants who face deportation. In the absence of a path to legalization, DACA provided critical opportunities and stability for over 800,000 young people by affording protection from deportation.

As organizations that defend the rights of people at the intersection of the criminal legal and immigration systems, we are committed to ending the mass deportation that continues to tear apart communities and families, and the dehumanizing racism and criminalization at the core of these systems. We call for a reinstatement of DACA and for Congressional immigration reform that divests our society from the highly punitive and costly mass detention and deportation systems and instead invests in human rights, housing, healthcare, and community well-being. We call on state and local leadership to advance protections for the rights, safety and dignity of all communities.

Years of advocacy and organizing calling for an end to harsh immigration policies of mass exclusion and exile, with young people often putting themselves on the frontlines, put pressure on the Obama Administration's to implement DACA. We will continue this fight until we end the large-scale imprisonment, exile, and criminalization of our communities.

#### **Alisa Wellek, Executive Director, Immigrant Defense Project:**

Those most directly impacted by harsh immigration policies have guided us with their resourcefulness, resilience and willingness to take risks. They did not stop once approved for DACA, but instead continued to fight for their undocumented parents, for their siblings and friends who didn't qualify because of a conviction, and for justice for all immigrants. The Trump administration's assault on DACA has been and will continue to be met by fierce resistance. We stand steadfast in the struggle to uphold the human rights of all immigrants.

#### **Khalil Cumberbatch, Associate Vice President of Policy, David Rothenberg Center for Public Policy, The Fortune Society Inc.:**

At the Fortune Society, the heart of our work is to support formerly incarcerated people tackle the many challenges that they face to successfully reenter into society. DACA has provided, in a similar way, a means for 800,000 young people to act on their potential despite being marginalized for lack of immigration status. As someone who came to the United States at the age of 4 years old, I personally can attest to the tremendous opportunities that have been granted to me because I had legal status. We must continue to hold Congress accountable to provide viable solutions that continue to keep families together, provides a path for citizenship, and embrace an authentic realization of core values that we must hold as a country—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.