

Abstract

This thesis describes DREAM Act, a legislative proposal discussed in the US Congress between 2001 and 2011. The Act proposes a pathway to legal citizenship for children of undocumented immigrants. The thesis aims to find whether the children of illegal immigrants should be held accountable and face deportations, even though they were not responsible for entering the U.S. illegally? It also discusses whether implementation of the DREAM Act is a convenient solution of governmental reform of the broken immigration system. The first chapter describes the DREAM Act in greater detail and compares it to the presidential executive order DAPA, a similar program to DREAM Act providing deferred action on deportation for these children. The second chapter focuses on impact of immigrants, their legal consciousness and tells stories of undocumented children who crossed the U.S. border and describes their lives in the U.S. The third chapter's focus is on impact on the U.S. society, mainly discusses the economic potential of the DREAM Act implementation. Last chapter provides an analysis of DREAM Act in the State of New York and activities of undocumented students fighting for its enactment. The thesis concludes that the children should not be punished for decisions of their parents as they bring many benefits for the U.S. society. The DREAM Act enactment is an important a step towards a complex immigration reform.