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**TEXAS' LEADING HISPANIC BUSINESS ORGANIZATION JOINS  
CONGRESSMAN HENRY CUELLAR IN STATEWIDE COALITION'S CALL  
FOR FEDERAL DREAM ACT LEGISLATION**

*Texas Opportunity Coalition and TAMACC Partner To Protect Texas Economy and Dreamers*

**AUSTIN, TX** - Today, the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC) and the Texas Opportunity Coalition (TOC) joined Congressman Henry Cuellar (D-TX) to call for Senate passage of legislation that will provide Dreamers - undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children - with the right to work, pursue higher education, and have the opportunity to obtain permanent legal status. TAMACC serves as the organizational umbrella for Hispanic chambers and business organizations statewide, and now joins more than 100 others business leaders, chambers of commerce and higher education institutions across the state who are advocating for a federal Dream Act that will protect Texas's 204,000 Dreamers as part of the Texas Opportunity Coalition.

**Cuellar**, a co-sponsor of the American Dream and Promise Act, joined the *Latino Business Case for a Federal Dream Act* event, stating: "The people of Texas want an immigration system that honors our values and protects Dreamers, who have long been a vital part of our communities and our economy. I voted to pass H.R. 6 because it is a historic and commonsense piece of legislation that ensures DACA recipients can continue to pursue their American dream as they strengthen, enrich and contribute to our nation. I urge the Senate to grant Dreamers the permanent protection they so rightly deserve - leading them to live, work, and start businesses right here in Texas."

The event featured Texas businesses leaders **J.R. Gonzales**, Executive Vice Chairman, TAMACC; **Woody L. Hunt**, Senior Chairman of the Board, Hunt Companies, Inc.; **Eddie Aldrete**, Senior Vice President, IBC Bank; **Cindy Ramos Davidson**, CEO, El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, **Jorge Lima**, Vice President, Stand Together, and **Moni Contreras**, business owner and a DACA Recipient. The panelists highlighted the multiple ways that Dreamers improve the Texas economy, and why the Latino business community should engage in discussions about a federal Dream Act.

"Texas Dreamers have approximately \$3.2B in spending power, money that will flow through our state's businesses, restaurants, schools and hospitals," said **J.R. Gonzales**, Executive Vice Chairman, TAMACC. "Texas should not be left behind as our country's economy rebuilds, and in order to remain competitive we need to protect those who are on the front lines and have continued to show up to work during a pandemic. Passing federal legislation that grants a permanent pathway to lawful status for our Dreamers will strengthen the Texas economy and eliminate some of the roadblocks Texas's Hispanics face when starting or growing their businesses."

Texas Dreamers are essential to the state's economy, with 96 percent of them either in school or employed. In fact, there are currently more than 58,000 Dreamers in Texas colleges and universities, but many of them will have trouble entering the workforce unless Congress is able to find a solution to the DACA issue before graduation season begins. Additionally, more than 8,400 Texas Dreamers have started their own business, creating jobs and contributing directly to their community's economy.

"This Coalition represents an incredibly diverse group of business leaders and organizations who truly believe that now is the time for Congress to pass a federal DREAM Act," said Juan Carlos Cerda, **state director of the Texas Business Immigration Coalition**. "Data shows that 75 percent of Americans favor legal status for young children brought to the U.S as children, and Texas representation should recognize and reflect these values when the American Dream and Promise Act is introduced on the Senate floor in the coming months."

The Texas Opportunity Coalition is a joint initiative spearheaded by the Texas Business Leadership Council (TBLC) and Texas Business Immigration Council (TBIC) which launched in February with the support of Senator John Cornyn (R-TX). A statewide advocacy effort is underway to ensure Senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz vote in favor of a DREAM Act that adheres to the TOC's guiding principles. These principles can be found by visiting <http://www.txopportunity.org/policy>.

For more information about the Texas Opportunity Coalition, or to become a member, please visit <http://www.txopportunity.org/join-the-coalition.html>.

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