

# Caller Times

## **CORNYN SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO GIVE LEGAL STATUS TO CHILDREN OF UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS**

*By John C. Moritz Austin Bureau USA TODAY NETWORK  
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AUSTIN — U.S. Sen. John Cornyn joined a coalition of business organizations and immigrants rights activists Tuesday in support of federal legislation that would allow children who entered the country with undocumented adults an opportunity to obtain legal status.

Cornyn, a Republican elected in November to his fourth term, said key elements of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, implemented by executive order by then-President Barack Obama, should be codified into law by Congress. Children covered by Obama's order are often called "Dreamers."

"Despite all the ways these young men and women strengthen our country and our communities, they're living in a constant state of uncertainty about their futures," Cornyn said in a recorded message announcing the formation of the group called the Texas Opportunity Coalition.

"We must take action that will give DACA recipients the certainty they deserve, and the only way to do that is through legislation."

Among those who spoke live during the virtual news conference was El Paso businessman **Woody Hunt**, veteran Republican strategist Karl Rove and two adult children of parents who entered the United States without legal documentation.

Rebecca Shi, who was born in China and is now executive director of the Texas Business Immigration Coalition, said passing what has become known as the Dream Act would signal an end to the hardline immigration policies pursued by the now-ended Trump administration.

The U.S. Supreme Court in June blocked Trump from ending Obama's DACA policy. The decision was 5-4.

"This effort is about moving past politics and showing members the economic and financial benefits they are leaving on the table every time they decide not to pass a federal Dream Act," said Shi, who was 10 when her parents came to the United States. "Texas is among the states that stand to lose the most, and the coalition wants to make sure Texas' business community has a seat at the table and,

we hope, the chance to positively influence negotiations."

The Texas Opportunity Coalition said Dreamers in Texas generate more than \$400 million in state and local taxes and pay \$440 million in federal taxes.

"To continue to grow our economy, Texas must retain its existing workforce and talent," said **Hunt**, senior board chairman of the Hunt Companies. "With 96% of DACA recipients working or in school, they are some of our state's highest achieving and most talented assets."

These organizations are among those joining the coalition:

- Austin Chamber of Commerce
- Center for the United States and Mexico - Baker Institute at Rice University
- El Paso Chamber of Commerce
- El Paso Community College
- El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Grayson College
- Greater Arlington Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Dallas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce
- HMS
- IBC Bank
- Irving Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- North Texas Commission
- San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- SWBC
- Tarleton State University
- Texans for Economic Growth
- Texas Association of Business
- Texas Association of Manufacturers
- Texas Business Immigration Coalition
- **Texas Business Leadership Council**
- Texas Lutheran University
- Texas Restaurant Association
- Texas State University
- Texas Woman's University
- The Borderplex Alliance
- United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce
- University of North Texas
- University of North Texas at Dallas
- University of Texas at Dallas
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
- University of the Incarnate Word