

## ACTION STEPS



## **PRESIDENT OBAMA YOU CAN END OUR PAIN**

Dear President Obama,

Please stop playing with the lives of children, youth and their families. The Department of Homeland Security practices towards DREAMers and families are inhumane and un-American.

With the stroke of a pen you have the power to grant an increase in the use of deferred actions and give temporary relief to those that have U.S. citizen children and are DREAM Act eligible.

I, the undersigned, urge President Obama to take a stand and use his Executive power to grant deferred action to families with U.S. citizen children and DREAM Act eligible youth.

Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Zip/Postal Code:

To sign the petition follow this link: <http://bit.ly/fGgW8j>



## 365 Day Fast in Solidarity with the DREAMers

- Join a spiritual fast to support DREAM Act students and their call for federal and state legislation addressing needs of migrant youth in the US.
- Express your faith through this act of personal commitment and public advocacy for migrant rights
- Speak out and act to make visible the crisis situation of thousands of migrant youth across the country, and to pressure for immediate Administrative Relief by President Obama and Secretary Janet Napolitano, and federal legislation offering migrant students options for legalization.

In December, 2010, as the fate of the DREAM act was debated by Congress, a group of United Methodists began a 365 Day Fast in Solidarity with DREAM students. [See Facebook Page “365 Day Fast in Solidarity with the DREAMers; <http://on.fb.me/ouQCIO>. *This fast continues and you can join in by selecting at least ONE DAY you will pray and fast for the rights of migrant youth and make your action public through Facebook.* Some have chosen to fast the same day every month. Please help make the fast visible nationally: join the fast; post to social media networks; enlist the participation of others; and advocate for action for the rights of migrant youth.

### Why a Fast?

Prayer and fasting is a religious act in many faith traditions. It recognizes the power of prayer and self-sacrifice linked to action for justice in bringing about a just world. It recognizes that for societal change to take place we need change to happen both internally, through personal acts of prayer, reflection and witness, and systemically, by addressing policy and systemic practices. Thus, as people of faith we come together across faith traditions to make a personal witness through prayer and fasting; and a public witness through advocacy.

### What are We Calling For?

1. Administrative Relief: The Obama Administration can act NOW, without legislation, to change enforcement policies as they apply to migrant youth and all detainees. They can cease detaining and deporting migrants based on immigration status.
2. Pass the federal DREAM Act. This has been reintroduced by Senator Dick Durbin [D-IL] in the Senate and by Rep. Howard Berman [D-CA] in the House. This bi-partisan bill would enable a path to legalization for migrant youth without documents, brought into the U.S. as children, if they enroll as students or serve in the military for two years.
3. Pass state bills that would enable migrant youth to attend college with in-state tuition, health care, transportation and other support that citizen youth have in a given state.

### How the Fast Started

In November, 2010, a group of University of Texas students in San Antonio fasted for more than 20 days in support of the DREAM Act, then being debated by Congress. On November 29, 12 students, a professor, a pastor and a former city councilwoman did civil disobedience, sitting in



Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's San Antonio office, urging the Senator to support the DREAM Act. When the protestors ultimately left the site, the Rev. Lorenza Andrade-Smith, a United Methodist Pastor, opted to go to jail instead of leaving voluntarily. She spent a week in jail, where she fasted, prayed, and provided pastoral support for many inmates. On leaving jail, she agreed to end her own hunger strike as others offered to participate in an ongoing fast for the DREAMers, to keep their issues visible and to build pressure for policy changes. The Facebook page was created, and United Methodist Women and United Methodist Deaconesses were the first to respond, with many others joining the fast. The fast is now expanding nationwide, with the support of many faith groups and DREAM student organizations across the country. Though the fast was initiated by DREAM students in San Antonio, it has been continued by faith groups across the country. It is a Faith-based initiative, and is open to all. Please post on your Facebook page if your organization would like to endorse the fast. The fast will continue until the DREAM Act is passed and detention and deportation of DREAM Act students has ended.

### **What Can We Do?**

- 1. Join the Facebook group "365 Day Fast in Solidarity with the DREAMers". Share with friends. Post on your organizational website.***
2. Have your organization, church, synagogue or mosque endorse the Fast. Post to your organizational website.
3. Participate in the fast and enlist others to participate. Tell people what you are doing and why you are doing it. Use this as an opportunity to talk about the stories of migrant youth affected by current immigration policy and to advocate for policy changes.
4. Sign the on-line pledge at "United We DREAM" calling on President Obama to take administrative action to end detentions and deportations of migrant youth:  
[http://wfc2.wiredforchange.com/o/8496/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=365](http://wfc2.wiredforchange.com/o/8496/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=365)
5. Advocate for state and federal legislation in support of DREAM students. Let your elected officials know of your views. Tell them you have joined the fast and will continue to pray and act on behalf of DREAM students.