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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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ABQ Leaders and Supporters Echo the Call of Thousands at Supreme Court and Across Nation to Unblock DAPA and Expanded DACA

Denounce Governor Martinez' Anti-Immigrant Position on Immigration Relief Programs

ALBUQUERQUE – Today, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral argument on President Obama's deferred action initiatives, DAPA and expanded DACA, which have been held up in the courts since Texas and 25 other states –in their majority Republican governors and attorneys general, sued the administration in December, 2014. Demonstrations in support of DACA (expanded) and DAPA are being held in over 20 cities across the nation.

At a press conference outside of the U.S. Federal District Court organized by El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos, a local immigrants' rights organization, Albuquerque families, elected officials, and legal experts showed their support for the president's immigration executive actions which would provide relief from deportation for approximately 5 million immigrants.

Bertha Campos, an Albuquerque small business owner and mother of five has lived in the U.S. for the past 28 years, and like most immigrants lives in a mixed status family "I dream of a day when my family doesn't live with the constant fear of being separated," she said. "This isn't only about what is good for me, or my family, or immigrant families across the nation. Expanded DACA and DAPA would benefit all of us because we would have the chance to live up to our full potential."

Recognizing the enormous benefit of the executive actions, many New Mexico-based organizations and elected officials, including Congresswoman Lujan Grisham, Congressman Lujan, and Attorney General Balderas, signed on to amicus briefs (friend of the court briefs) in support of the executive actions. Participants expressed disappointment that Governor Susana Martinez signed on to amicus brief in opposition to the programs and pointed out this is one among many actions that demonstrate her anti-immigrant agenda.

{Quote from Javier Martinez}

“The message by Gov. Martínez is clear, she does not recognize the contributions of our immigrant community, and does not embrace diversity and opportunities for integration for all New Mexico families,” said ().

DACA expanded, as the name says it, is an expansion of the already implemented DACA 2012. This program has provided an immigration relief for over 1 million people across the nation, by allowing them to obtain a work permit that is renewable every 2 years. “(Quote from DACAdemented)” Advocates and experts are confident that having a precedent, such as DACA 2012, provides a background that demonstrates just how impactful this type of immigration relief and the positive impact it has in the social, economic, and cultural fabric of American society.

The thousands of demonstrators hold high hopes that the Supreme Court will rule in favor of the immigration programs that president Obama announced due to the inaction by Congress to pass any form of comprehensive immigration reform. “We know that DAPA and expanded DACA stand on the right side of the law. The Supreme Court has a real chance to promote justice and overcome the politics of hate,” said Isaac De Luna, communications organizer for El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos.

It’s expected that the Supreme Court will be making a decision on the future of the immigration initiatives by June 30. According to the latest survey by the Center for American Progress, over 5 millions people nationwide could see the benefits of these initiatives. The implementation of these programs would create an economic growth estimated to be at over \$230 billion over a decade after implementation. In the state of New Mexico, it is estimated that over 36 thousand people could benefit from the immigration initiatives, creating an economic stimulus of over \$1 billion during the following decade after implementation.

"New Mexico Immigrant Law Center was proud to join an amicus brief along with EI CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos and over 300 other groups urging the Supreme Court to permit DAPA and expanded DACA to move forward. We are gratified that the Supreme Court heard the case today, and we are confident that this summer the Supreme Court will find that the actions of the Administration were permissible. Tens of thousands of New Mexicans to be able to find the stability that comes with being able to remain with their family members and lawfully work," said Lauren Garrity, attorney at New Mexico Immigrant Law Center.