

For Immediate Release

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Undocumented Youth and Community March Over 70 Miles Charlottesville to Richmond Calling For Permanent Protection Dignity and Respect

Following rumors that the Trump Administration plans to repeal DACA (Deferred Action For Early Childhood Arrivals) as early as this week, undocumented youth and community members launched a 4 day march calling for permanent protection for all 11 million undocumented immigrants.

Richmond, VA August 28th, 2017- Today, Dreamers of Virginia and the immigrant community concluded a 4 day walk from Charlottesville to Richmond, entitled #RiseUpVA. The walk comes as a response to increased threats against the immigrant community, including the repeal of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and TPS (Temporary Protective Status) by the Trump administration. Ten state attorneys general have requested that the administration phase out DACA in a letter that set a deadline of September 5 for the administration to announce its path forward.

A repeal of DACA would put over 22,000 undocumented students and working professionals in Virginia under the threat of deportation. Additionally, close to 1,300 current students of Virginia colleges would likely be unable to continue studies due to the ripple effects of a DACA repeal.

“We cannot continue to sit, wait and watch politicians use our future as a bargaining chip. We won’t wait to be granted the dignity, respect and permanent protection that we deserve, while having our families hide in the shadows. We need our brothers and sisters, undocumented and not, to step up and demand that we all be recognized and protected,” said Jacky Cortez, co-founder of DOV, lead organizer, and current UVA student.

“For too long the immigrant community has not been seen or treated as first and foremost humans,” said Lizzette Arias, a co-founder of Dreamers of Virginia. “This is why we organized the #RiseUpVA walk.” #RiseUpVA aims to send a message of urgency for all immigrants to join the fight for protection from deportation, given the the escalating attacks against immigrants and communities of color. Walkers began their 4 day march in Charlottesville, where clergy and counter-protesters stood up to white supremacists.

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Photos, video, and interviews available upon request