

PHOENIX, Ariz.—U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., released the following statement today in response to the Obama Administration's decision that effective immediately, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will halt the deportations of certain young people who were brought to the United States as children and do not present a risk to national security or public safety.

"I commend the Obama Administration's decision to grant relief to undocumented young people who are already positively contributing to our communities and country," Pastor said Friday. "These individuals have been raised and educated in the United States, and are talented, driven young people who have much to offer and should not be punished for the actions of others. Due largely to opposition to related legislation, such as the DREAM Act, the Obama Administration's announcement serves as a positive step forward, allowing these young people to continue to contribute and give back to the country they call home. This is an encouraging move and it gives me hope that we can now work in a bipartisan manner towards a permanent solution, such as comprehensive immigration reform."

Under the directive from DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, those who meet the criteria will be eligible to receive deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal, and will also be eligible to apply for work authorization.

Deferred action, while not permanent legal status or citizenship, has long been available on an individual basis. Yet under the DHS directive announced today, this form of relief from removal will now be offered to young people between the ages of 15 to 30 who came to the United States before the age of 16 and have been in the country for at least five years; are currently in school, have graduated from high school or served in the military; have no criminal history; and are in the country today.

Beginning Monday, individuals may call the hotline for the U.S Citizenship and Immigration Service at 1-800-375-5283 with questions or to request more information.

More information related to this announcement is also available at <http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/20120612-napolitano-announces-deferred-action-process-for-young-people.shtm>

-30-

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Media Contact: Maura Saavedra Cordova, 602-252-2653, maura.cordova@mail.house.gov