

# Rutgers University – Newark Students’ “No Dream Deferred” Rally Invited Remarks

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I am honored to be here at the *No Dream Deferred* rally and to stand in full solidarity with its purpose. Indeed, Rutgers-Newark stands in full solidarity with our Dreamers and members of our community with Temporary Protected Status, for whom we hold deep respect. We all recognize that in one way or another, none of us would be here as “Americans” if those who travel here to find a new life, a new community, and to raise new generations of citizens had not been allowed to do just that, in generations past. I surely wouldn’t be here if my grandparents – who each came as young people from Russia – couldn’t have stayed to raise my father, enabling him to raise me. All our histories require that we pay forward to these next generations of strivers, the same respect and opportunity accorded to those who came before us and cemented our futures.

I have one very simple message to convey today, and that is to underline the remarkable and irreplaceable contributions that those who do dare to dream, who stand for core principles of our democracy, make to our community. I want to say thank you. Thank you to all of our RU-Newark Dreamers. Thank you to our community members with Temporary Protected Status who found a safe harbor here. Thank you to their families and to our colleagues at Rutgers-Newark who support them in and outside the classroom. Thank you to our elected officials like Mayor Baraka and Senators Menendez and Booker. Thank you to our neighbors in Newark and beyond, for your resilience, courage, and talent. Thank you all for how you build and create community, day in and day out ... in this state of NJ (where 40% of residents are proudly either immigrants or children of immigrants), in this sanctuary city (enriched by waves of migration and immigration), at this university where the stories of all of our *Newest Americans* shine, all benefit from your energy, values, and forthright action – as we put a stake in the ground for what we are supposed to stand for – *e pluribus unum*, out of many, one; out of many, community.

It is precisely the diversity, the many roads travelled, the multiple identities and cultures and languages that make us smart, make us strong, and make us safe, ready to enter a complex 21<sup>st</sup> century knowledge economy changing as we speak – demographically, socially, culturally, economically – change that can be an amazing opportunity (decidedly not a threat), change we need to rise to with all the human capital strength in our midst – with these fabulous dreamers and strivers showing us the way.

And, the way forward, is together – as it has always been across generations in this country. We cannot succumb to a zero-sum approach to our future – we cannot pit groups – we must stand together, work together, and live together, to make a more just and prosperous future for the whole of us. Again, thank you to all of our courageous and committed immigrants, for whom no dream should be deferred.