DREAMERS MOVEMENT

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DREAMERS MOVEMENT BACKGROUND

August 2001

The DREAM (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) Act was first introduced in the U.S. Congress. The bill sought to grant undocumented immigrants who came to the country as children a pathway to citizenship. However, it eventually failed to get the necessary votes in the Congress.

March 2007

The DREAM Act was revived in Congress under the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act. This bill was going to be more extensive, but once again failed to pass.

2010

The DREAM Act bill failed in the U.S. Senate by a 55-41 vote. This time the Senate, where Republicans were in the majority, blocked this bill, arguing that would reward criminal behavior and foster unlawful immigration.

2010

A set of 'Hunger Strikes' in from of the building of Senator Charles E. Schumer calling on him to take action on a bill that will potentially provide a path to citizenship for DREAMers.

March 2012

"Coming Out of the Shadows" Rally in NYC Union Square Park. An event organized by the New York State Youth Leadership Council which allowed undocumented youth to share their stories.

DREAMERS MOVEMENT BACKGROUND

June 2012 — President Obama signed the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, allowing certain undocumented youth to apply for a temporary stay of deportation and work authorization.

November 2014 — President Obama announced his intention to expand DACA, which would have allowed many other to obtain this benefit. But many lawsuits impeded this from happening. Thus, this expansion was placed on hold and has not happened to date.

January 2017 — Donald Trump became President.

September 2017 — President Trump rescinded DACA.

November 2019 — DACA at the Supreme Court.

2013 — New York DREAM Act was first introduced and sponsor by Senator Jose Peralta.

2015 — IDNYC became effective in New York City. This card is free for all New Yorkers regardless of immigration status.

June 2015 — Cesar Vargas became the first undocumented attorney. Now DACA recipients are able to obtain a license to practice law in New York State.

January 2019 — New York DREAM Act is approved. Allowing undocumented students to apply for state-aid.
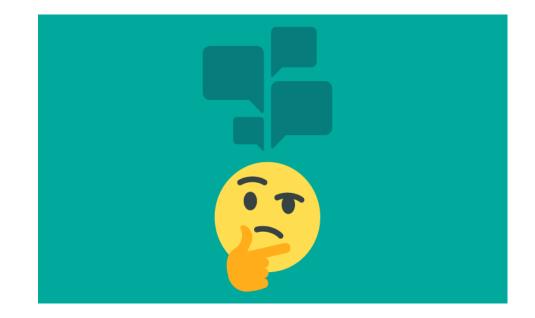
June 2019 — New York becomes the 13th state to grant driver's license to anyone regardless of immigration status. This law becomes effective on December 14, 2019.
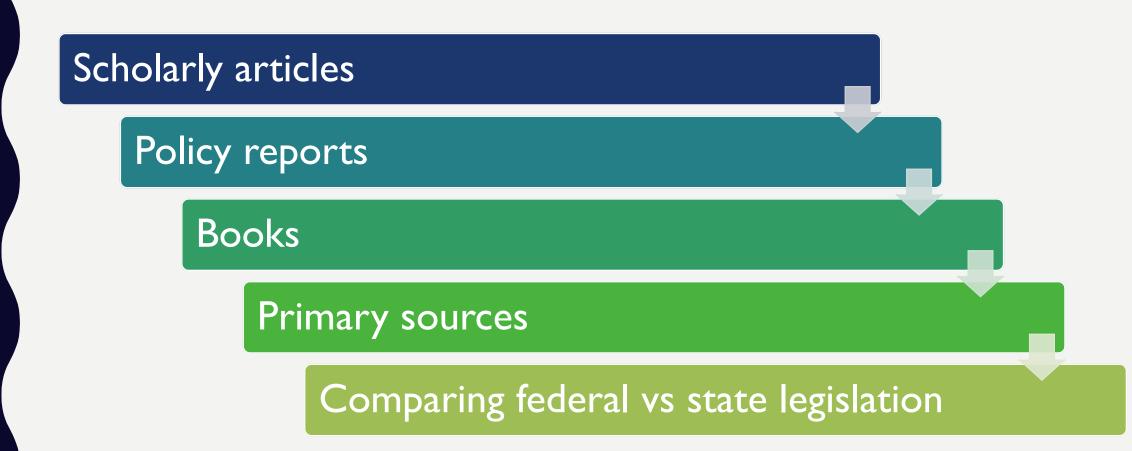
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What explains why the DREAMers Movement has failed to realize the federal DREAM Act while they have been more successful at the state level?

- How do resource mobilization theory and political opportunity theory explain these divergent outcomes?

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Scholarly articles

Policy reports

Books

Primary sources

Comparing federal vs state legislation

THESIS

Despite its beginnings in the early 2000s, the DREAMers Movement has failed to realize at the federal level in multiple capacities, while obtaining sporadic successes at the state level, as we have seen in states like New York. At the federal level, a lack of political opportunity is a factor that explains movement failure. Whereas at the state level, both the resource mobilization and political opportunity explains movement successes.

FEDERAL VS STATE (NY)

Federal level

- DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors)
- Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

State level

- NY DREAM ACT
- GREEN LIGHT NY
- NY is Home Act

FAILURE OF FEDERAL DREAM ACT

- Lack of political opportunity

- Changes in administration

- Benefits

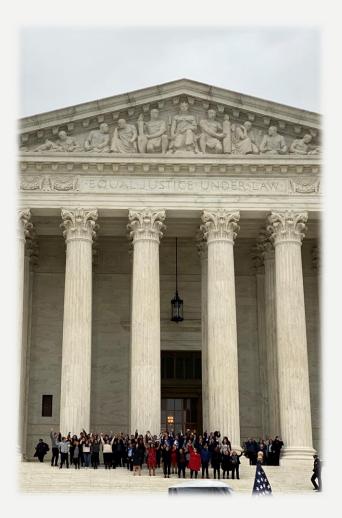- DREAMers aging out

SUCCESS IN NEW YORK

- Tactics used by DREAMers

- Grassroots organizations

- Political opportunity

WHERE IS THE MOVEMENT NOW?

FEEDBACK?

1. As a person who is involved in the movement, and works with immigrant youth (many who identify as DREAMers), I had trouble in putting my advocacy hat aside as I developed my research. What advice would you give in order for me to focus and develop a more cohesive and academic paper?

2. Do you think my thesis statement is a strong one, one that clearly explains what I am trying to argue?

3. For those familiar with the movement, what other theory would you have use to develop your research?

THANK YOU!