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**Statement of Most Reverend José H. Gomez
Archbishop of Los Angeles
Chairman, USCCB Committee on Migration
On
The Announcement of Deferred Action for DREAM eligible youth**

June 15, 2012

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I welcome the announcement by President Obama today that, consistent with his executive authority, he will grant deferred action on a case-by-case basis to youth who entered the United States by age 15 and have not committed certain offenses. Many of these youth would qualify for immigration relief under the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act.

This important action will provide protection from removal and work authorization for a vulnerable group of immigrants who deserve to remain in our country and contribute their talents to our communities.

These youth are bright, energetic, and eager to pursue their education and reach their full potential. They did not enter our nation on their own volition, but rather came to the United States with their parents as children, something all of us would do.

We call upon the President also to review Administration deportation policies and more aggressively pursue the policy of prosecutorial discretion for other populations, a policy which was announced last year. Families continue to be deported and separated, causing undue suffering.

The action by the President today is no substitute for enactment of the DREAM Act in Congress. We encourage our elected officials of both parties to take this opportunity to work together to enact this important law, which would give these youth a path to citizenship and a chance to become Americans. We also renew our call for bipartisan efforts to enact comprehensive and humane reform our nation's broken immigration system.