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Sandherr of AGC urges Senate to pass measure to protect status of over 100,000 construction workers

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Arlington, VA The chief executive officer of the Associated General Contractors of America, Stephen Sandherr, released the following statement in response to the passage in the U.S. House of Representatives of the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019, a measure to offer conditional green cards and extend work authorizations to individuals who are in the United States under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Action for Children Arrivals (“Dreamers”) programs:

“Members of the House of Representatives have wisely chosen to approve a measure that will protect the legal status of over 100,000 people currently working in the U.S. construction industry, among other individuals. The men and women covered by this measure are making essential contributions to economic development and infrastructure projects across the country.

“Moreover, this measure represents an important first step in reforming the nation's broken immigration system. Indeed, this association has long championed, and continues to advocate for, broader reforms to our immigration system that include enhanced border security measures and market-based guest worker programs.

“We urge Senators to also act to protect workers in the country under the TPS and Dreamers programs either in a stand-alone measure or as part of broader, and much-needed, reforms to our immigration system. Failure to act will remove tens of thousands of men and women from the domestic construction workforce at a time when a vast majority of contractors report difficulty finding qualified workers to hire.

“Without these workers construction projects in many parts of the country, particularly in regions with a large presence of so-called dreamers and individuals with temporary protected status, are likely to be significantly disrupted. That is why this association made the House measure one of its Key Votes and that is why we and our members will take every possible step to ensure that Senators understand how essential immigration reform is to the nation's continued economic growth.”

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