

September 12, 2017

Representative Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

Last week, the Trump administration rescinded the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy that provided temporary protection for the “Dreamers,” outstanding young people brought to our country as children. On behalf of the undersigned higher education associations, I write to urge Congress to pass legislation as soon as possible to permanently protect these individuals.

At present, nearly 800,000 individuals are registered under DACA. To qualify, applicants must have passed a rigorous, multi-faceted test. They must have arrived in the United States before age 16, resided here continuously since 2012, be enrolled in or have completed high school, have not been convicted of a crime, and not present a threat to national security or public safety. The United States is the only country they know: They are Americans, just like their classmates and friends, in every way but immigration status.

Preserving their status is the humane way to respond to the situation these innocent young people are facing. Children brought to the United States at a young age did not have a choice in the matter. It remains in America’s best interest to enable them to use their knowledge, skills and energy to make the strongest possible contribution to our country.

These bright and talented young people are working, serving in the armed services, or studying at colleges and universities. Because they now have work permits, they are making contributions to our society and our economy. They are paying taxes and buying cars, homes and consumer goods, which generates economic activity and increases tax revenue for federal, state and local governments. While they contribute significantly to our economy, they are ineligible for federal means-tested welfare benefits, Pell Grants and federal student loans, and health care tax subsidies. According to a recent study by the CATO Institute, deporting those currently in DACA would cost over \$60 billion in lost tax revenue and result in a \$280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next decade.

In the 16 years since the Dream Act was first introduced, a number of bills have been introduced in Congress to address the uncertain status of these individuals, including various versions of the Dream Act, which the higher education community has long supported. We urge Congress to

pass bipartisan legislation as soon as possible that will include all the protections currently provided under DACA and allow these young people to continue contributing to our society and economy by working, serving in the military or attending college.

Colleges and universities have seen these remarkable people up close, in our classrooms and as our colleagues and friends. Despite the challenges they face, they have made an incredible mark on our country and economy. They should continue to be able to do so. If we are unable to protect these Dreamers, we will be shutting the door to an entire generation of individuals who only seek to contribute their best to America. We stand ready to work with Congress in a bipartisan manner to address this issue as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Mitchell".

Ted Mitchell
President

CC: United States Senate
United States House of Representatives

On behalf of:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western Association of Schools and Colleges

ACPA—College Student Educators International

ACT

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Association of University Professors

American College Health Association

American Council on Education

American Dental Association

American Dental Education Association

American Indian Higher Education Consortium

American Psychological Association

APPA, Leadership in Educational Facilities

Association for Biblical Higher Education

Association for Student Conduct Administration

Association of American Colleges & Universities

Association of American Law Schools

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of American Universities

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of College and University Housing Officers- International
Association of College Unions International
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Teacher Educators
Career Education Colleges and Universities
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities in New York
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Conference for Mercy Higher Education
Consortium on Financing Higher Education
Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Council on Social Work Education
Educational Testing Service
EDUCAUSE
Graduate Management Admission Council
Great Lakes Colleges Association
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Institute for Higher Education Policy
Joint National Committee for Languages–National Council for Language and International Studies
Law School Admission Council
Mennonite Education Agency
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
Modern Language Association
NAFSA-Association of International Educators
NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Adult Learner Coalition
National Association for Campus Activities
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of College Stores
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

National Association of System Heads
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of University Research Administrators
Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities
NODA-Association for Orientation, Transition and Retention in Higher Education
Online Learning Consortium
Society for College and University Planning
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
The College Board
University Professional and Continuing Education Association
WASC Senior College and University Commission
Yes We Must Coalition