

September 14, 2017

Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
House Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
H-232 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
H-204 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, House Democratic Leader Pelosi, and Senate Democratic Leader Schumer:

We write on behalf of the governing board members of America's public and independent colleges and universities to urge you to lead the Congress in approving legislation that will protect the nearly 800,000 individuals affected by the Trump administration's recent decision to rescind the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, and ensure the ongoing viability of this important program.

Our organization, the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), serves more than 1,300 governing boards and 40,000 individual board members who, as fiduciaries of our nation's colleges and universities, assume ultimate authority for these institutions' policies and success. In addition to serving as officers of the AGB Board, each of us also serves as a board member of a higher education institution. We understand the impact that rescinding this policy will have on our institutions and the DACA students they enroll, as well as on our communities.

Those registered under DACA have passed rigorous tests and are already working and contributing to states and communities in which they live. Those eligible for DACA do not present a threat to national security or public safety—they are hardworking and bright young people. In addition, thousands of "Dreamers" are currently enrolled in colleges and universities across the country.

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College and university board members are ultimately responsible for the success of the students who are enrolled in the institutions they serve. And board members are community leaders—they are physicians, teachers, clergy, and business owners. In these roles, they see the positive impact of DACA on their institutions and in the broader communities in which Dreamers live and work.

Dreamers are making substantial contributions to our nation, the only country they have ever considered home—and in many cases, the only country they have ever known. They are students at our nation's colleges and universities, enriching our campuses despite being ineligible for Pell Grants and federal student loans. They pay taxes and contribute to our economy as employees and consumers, but do not receive federal welfare benefits or health care tax subsidies. They serve in the nation's military, protecting U.S. citizens and advancing American ideals throughout the world, yet their own legal protection has been taken away by the administration. The social, civic, and financial contributions of DACA recipients are significant, and their loss would be acutely felt—reducing the nation's economic growth by \$280 billion in the next decade, according to a study by the Cato Institute.

Now, more than ever, Congress must enact a permanent, legislative solution to assist these young people and ensure that our nation continues to benefit from their knowledge, skills, and involvement. On behalf of our nation's college and university trustees, we urge you—as congressional leaders—to work with President Trump on developing a permanent, bipartisan legislative solution to protect our nation's Dreamers. We stand ready to work beside you in achieving this important goal.

Sincerely,



David W. Miles  
Chair, AGB Board of Directors  
Board member (and former Chair), Drake University



Charles A. Shorter  
Vice Chair, AGB Board of Directors  
Board member, City University of New York



Angel L. Mendez  
Secretary, AGB Board of Directors  
Board member, Lafayette College



Joyce M. Roché  
Vice Chair, AGB Board of Directors  
Board member (and former Chair), Dillard University



Richard D. Legon  
AGB President  
Board member, Spelman College

cc: U.S. Senator Dick Durbin  
U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham