

National Headquarters
8415 Datapoint Drive, Suite 400
San Antonio, Texas 78229
210-692-3805 (voice) 210-692-0823 (fax)
www.hacu.net



May 12, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Nebraska Ave. Center, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Kelly:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to request that you clarify throughout the U.S. Department of Homeland Security the still existing protections offered under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. There has been to date no executive action to rescind this program and, indeed, President Trump has spoken sympathetically about “DREAMers” and their situation and you have yourself spoken publicly about “DREAMers” not being targeted for deportation.

However, widely published incidents of DACA holders being deported or detained and threatened with deportation (see, for example, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/04/18/first-protected-dreamer-deported-under-trump/100583274/>, <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-daca-deportations-20170419-story.html>, <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-dreamer-seattle-20170328-story.html>) have contributed to understandable anxiety among DACA recipients, many of them students in our colleges and universities.

Many of us were among the forty national associations and organizations participating in an April 26 Summit organized by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. The Summit addressed both the legislative need for a BRIDGE Act, or better a DREAM Act, which would put DACA protections into law, and the more immediate need to provide access to legal, financial, and counseling resources to students impacted by the uncertainties about DACA. While we would like to be able to offer our students the reassurance to “rest easy” as the President has suggested, we also do not want to offer them false hope.

The incidents referenced above seem to indicate that while DACA recipients, or DREAMers, are not an official priority, there is still a large element of local discretion in enforcement that belies the official position. Consequently, we urge you to make clear throughout the Homeland Security enforcement arms, and to cooperating local and state law enforcement, that the United States means what it says when it offers thoroughly vetted individuals the promise of “deferred action.”

We want to be able to encourage students to seek or renew DACA status but we cannot do so in good conscience without the conviction it will make a positive difference for them.

We concur with statements that you have made in the media that the final resolution of this issue is a matter for Congress to address in enacting a fair and reasonable immigration law, including a just disposition of young people brought to the United States as children. However, until that

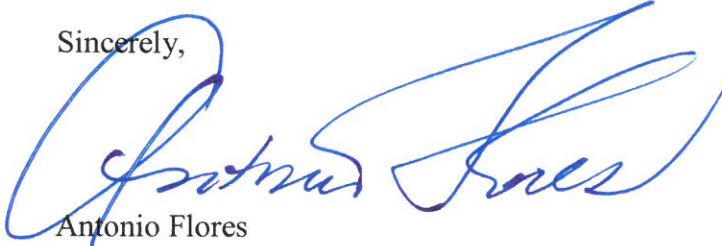
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time, assuring consistent implementation of existing DACA provisions is the responsibility of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. We have every confidence in your ability to make this happen.

Sincerely,



Antonio Flores
President & CEO

Additional organizations signing on to this letter:

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
ACPA—College Student Educators International
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)
American Association of University Professors (AAUP)
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice – AAJC
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU)
Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
ASPIRA Association
Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)
Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI)
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCCU)
Council for Opportunity in Education (COE)
Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA)
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU)
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National Immigration Law Center (NILC)
University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA)