

March 20, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold “Jerry” Nadler
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doug Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2142 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Chairman Nadler, and Ranking Member Collins:

On behalf of the undersigned higher education associations, I write in support of H.R. 6, the Dream and Promise Act of 2019. We are pleased that Reps. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Nydia Velázquez, and Yvette Clarke have introduced this important legislation and we urge the House to pass this legislation as soon as possible.

The Dream and Promise Act of 2019 would allow some undocumented young people, who have already invested in our country and in whom the country has already invested, to earn lawful permanent residence in the United States and a path to citizenship. Brought to our country as children, many of these “Dreamers” do not even remember the country they came from and consider America to be their only home. Through no fault of their own, they are unable to pursue their dreams and contribute more fully to our nation.

First, the legislation would establish ten-year conditional permanent residency status for those who were brought to this country as minors, have been here at least four years as of the enactment date, graduate from a U.S. high school, obtain a GED credential or have been admitted to higher education, and meet other requirements. They also cannot have committed a felony or other serious crimes and can pose no threat to our national security or public safety. Dream-eligible individuals may qualify for permanent residency and pursue U.S. citizenship after ten years by completing at least two years of higher education or military service, or having been steadily employed.

Second, the Dream and Promise Act of 2019 would restore the ability of states to grant in-state tuition to undocumented students on the basis of residency, though it does not require them to take any particular action in this area. It would also allow Dreamers to be eligible for Title IV federal student aid programs. This provision, in combination with the rest of the bill, serves as an important tool for achieving our national goal of returning the United States to global leadership in higher education attainment.

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This bill is designed to focus on the special case of undocumented young people who came to this country because of the actions of their parents. They are educated, English-speaking, and aptly suited to contribute to our nation's economy and security. They grew up with American values and traditions, making them American in every way except for their immigration status.

These bright and talented young people often have to overcome significant barriers to graduate from high school, and we should do all we can to remove them from an unacceptable political and legal limbo. They work and pay taxes. They serve in the military and teach in our schools. And tens of thousands of Dreamers have or are striving to earn a college degree.

In October 2017, the American Council on Education submitted a letter to Congress signed by more than 800 college and university presidents urging Congress to pass a permanent legislative solution protecting Dreamers. Similar support has been expressed by hundreds of business and industry leaders and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Protecting Dreamers is not controversial among the general public, either. A June 2018 Gallup survey found that 83 percent of Americans, including 75 percent of Republicans, favor or strongly favor allowing Dreamers the chance to become U.S. citizens.

Finally, the Dream and Promise Act of 2019 would also extend protections to immigrants with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) who have seen their status terminated and left in uncertain limbo. Many of our institutions also have students and employees who have lived, worked, and studied while under TPS and DED, and we support the efforts to include protections for this population in this legislation.

When the president revoked DACA in September 2017, he called on lawmakers to pass legislation to protect Dreamers. It is clear that in Congress, and across the nation, there is widespread and bipartisan support for doing just that. We strongly urge you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,

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

Ted Mitchell
President

Cc: The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
The Honorable Nydia Velázquez
The Honorable Yvette Clarke

March 20, 2019

On behalf of:

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 College Health Association
American Council on Education
APCA- College Student Educators International
APPA- Leadership in Education Facilities
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Educational Testing Service
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA- Association of International Educators
NASPA- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
The College Board
UPCEA