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JESUIT SCHOOLS NETWORK



Statement calling on U.S. Senate to Pass the Dream Act of 2019

We welcome today's Supreme Court ruling on the fate of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which leaves in place protections for DACA recipients and other qualified immigrants at risk of deportation. However, this ruling does not prevent this or future administrations from ending the program, nor does it provide a permanent solution for those who arrived to the U.S. as children. For this reason, the Jesuit Provincials of the United States, the Ignatian Solidarity Network, the Jesuit Schools Network, and the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities renew our call on the U.S. Senate to pass a clean Dream Act in order to provide DACA recipients with security and a pathway to citizenship.¹

DACA recipients are part of our Jesuit family. They attend our parishes, schools, and universities. They are on the staff of our institutions. We thank those senators, especially those educated in Jesuit schools, who have long been strong proponents of legislative relief for DACA recipients. We appeal to the entire Senate to look past partisan divisions in order to ensure that these young men and women, who have lived their lives in this country, are no longer faced with the possibility of deportation.

Passing the Dream Act is not only the right thing to do, it is also a practical choice which benefits our country, especially during this time of crisis. According to an analysis of survey data by the Center for American Progress, an estimated 29,000 DACA enrollees work in healthcare provider and support occupations. Another 200 are in medical school or participating in residencies.² Jesuit schools are proud to count some of these individuals among our students and alumni. The American healthcare system was strained even before the current crisis began. The Institute of Medicine projects that 3.5 million more healthcare workers will be needed by 2030.³ The United States can ill afford to lose young people who have so much to offer in these and other professions.

DACA recipients have demonstrated talent, hard work, and commitment to this country. They are integral and irreplaceable members of our schools, parishes, workplaces, families, and communities. In this moment of crisis, we have an opportunity to rise above the usual divisions and act for the common good. We therefore ask all U.S. senators to work together to pass the Dream Act of 2019.

¹ The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Dream and Promise Act (H.R. 6) last year, but the Senate has yet to bring the Dream Act of 2019 (S. 874) to a vote.

² <https://ampr.gs/2UCpKGq>

³ <https://wapo.st/2US3rLM>

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