




Office of the President

To: My Colleagues on the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Board (NJCC)

From: R. Barbara Gitenstein 
President, The College of New Jersey

Date: September 13, 2017

RE: A Statement Regarding The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

On September 5, 2017, the Trump Administration announced its intent to “wind down” the DACA program and it charged the United States Congress to devise a legislative solution to address the circumstances of this population. Since I will not be able to attend the October 3, 2017 Board meeting, and after conversation with President Thomas Bracken, I am submitting a written statement articulating my rationale for requesting that the NJCC make a statement regarding the DACA registrants.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) allowed certain undocumented immigrants to the United States who entered the country as minors to apply for deferred action and eligibility for work authorization and international travel. In order to be registered with DACA, these young people were required to submit official documentation to the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) verifying that they

1. Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012,
2. Came to the United States before reaching the age of 16,
3. Continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007,
4. Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012,
5. Had no lawful status at that time,
6. Are currently in school, have graduated from high school, are the recipient of a certificate of completion of high school or a GED or have been honorably discharged from the armed services,
7. Have no felony convictions, significant misdemeanors or three or more other misdemeanors,
8. Are not a threat to national security or public safety.

In other words, these young people have been seriously vetted by the USCIS.

They are contributing to the societies in which they live and they pay their fair share of taxes. Many of these “Dreamers” are also furthering their education at institutions of

higher education across the country. As a consequence, the higher education community has been a strong advocate for DACA since its inception in 2012. Beginning last fall, higher education publicly advocated for DACA with a series of public statements from national organizations (including the American Council on Education [ACE] and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities [AASCU]) as well as statements from individual universities and colleges (including TCNJ, Rutgers and Princeton University). Immediately upon the announcement by the Trump administration of its intent to “wind down” DACA, national higher education organizations (ACE, AASCU, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA] and the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education [NADOHE]) and individual campuses have again expressed support for DACA.

These statements all urged the Congress to accept the charge of the Trump administration to craft a legislative remedy for addressing the situation of these individuals, and to do so expeditiously. It is important to remember that many of these young people have no memory whatsoever of the country in which they were born. They have lived, worked and studied in the United States for most of their lives.

The business community across the country has also expressed strong support for DACA and they have done so for business reasons. Early on, the tech industry expressed its support. On the day of the Trump administration announcement, the business community made strong statements in support of a legislative solution for DACA registrants. First, a letter was signed by more than 400 CEOs including the CEOs of Microsoft, Amazon, Apple, Google, Hewlett-Packard, Lyft, Netflix, Twitter, Facebook, Verizon, IBM, Uber and Y Combinator. Second, the US Chamber of Commerce promulgated the following statement:

The original DACA program announced in 2012 was premised on sound public policy, and unlike DAPA, it was not challenged in court. Individuals enrolled in good faith and became ingrained in our communities and the nation’s economy. To reverse course now and deport these individuals is contrary to fundamental American principles and the best interests of our country.

With approximately 700,000 DACA recipients working for all sorts of businesses across the country, terminating their employment eligibility runs contrary to the president’s goal of growing the U.S. economy.

We ask that the administration and the Congress work together to quickly find a legislative solution before the program expires.

With respect, I request that the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce adopt a statement advocating for a timely legislative remedy for the DACA population, individuals who have been so productive to their communities and our country.

Thank you for your consideration.