



The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Dirksen Senate Office Building SD- 455
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Corker
Dirksen Senate Office Building SD- 425
Washington, DC 20510

August 15, 2017

Dear Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker,

As members of the Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition, we write you to express our support for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. The Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition is a diverse group of civil rights and education advocacy organizations whose goal is to build a shared advocacy agenda to address achievement and opportunity gaps for students across the state. We write you to respectfully request that you support the DACA program and that you urge President Trump to keep the DACA program intact until a legislative solution is passed.

One of the guiding policy principals for the Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition is that all students in our state deserve equitable and appropriate resources and supports. We believe that every child - regardless of their age, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity or documentation status - deserves to have an excellent education. We support DACA because research shows that having a path to higher education and employment increases student achievement, graduation rates, and participation in higher education. We advocate for all students to be able to reach their postsecondary and career dreams, and DACA provides an opportunity for over 8,000 students in Tennessee to do just that.

DACA recipients are young people who were brought to the United States as children - some not even school age - through no fault of their own. They proudly call America home, and consider themselves Tennesseans. To be clear, DACA recipients are not just children - they are doctors, lawyers, engineers, and educators. DACA recipients in Tennessee, and across the country, pay taxes and contribute to economic development.

As educators and civil rights leaders, we urge you to stand with these Tennesseans and support the DACA program. Eliminating DACA will not fix our broken immigration system, instead it will leave over 800,000 young adults across the country without a viable opportunity to contribute. Without DACA, as a country we would lose over 433 billion dollars in GDP over the next 10 years. Eliminating DACA will also cause the state of Tennessee to lose over 8,000 workers. Protecting DACA is not only the right thing to do, but it is the smart thing to do for the economic advancement of the state and the country. Keeping DACA will keep thousands of Tennessee K-12 students in schools. We must continue investing in all our students and their futures to ensure that we remain the fastest improving state in the nation in education.

From Memphis to Morristown, and in all corners of our state, our Coalition members are committed to partnering in efforts to advance the achievement for all students in Tennessee. We

urge you to do everything in your power to protect the more than 8,000 DACA recipients in our state. We look forward to seeing your leadership in defending the future of young Tennesseans, and the future of Tennessee.

Respectfully,

The following members of the Tennessee Educational Equity Coalition:

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