

August 4, 2017

The Honorable Elaine C. Duke  
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528-0075

Dear Secretary Duke:

We were grateful to hear that the Trump Administration reversed course on the President's campaign promise to terminate the DACA program. DACA – “Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals” – allows young immigrants brought to this country as children to live, work and study in the United States legally. These young people, often referred to as “Dreamers,” contribute so much to our communities. If anything, we should be looking for ways to help them become fully recognized legal citizens of this country – not threatening to send them back to countries many barely remember, if at all.

Before DACA was established in 2012, more than 700,000 Dreamers in the United States were living with the constant risk of deportation, forcing them to live behind a veil of secrecy in the country they considered to be their home. Now, they are able to work and study freely without fear of punishment for something they had no control over.

Immigrants are a vital part of our country's history – and its future. If we were to revert back to prosecuting these promising young individuals meeting the eligibility requirements of DACA, we would be limiting our potential as a nation. America's future success depends on having an educated, dynamic workforce and our nation needs skilled immigrant workers now more than ever.

It's important to note that in order to enroll in the DACA program, all applicants must undergo a thorough vetting process. This includes a criminal background check void of any felonies and confirmation of enrollment in school or certificate of completion from high school. These young people have their lives ahead of them, and DACA gives them the opportunity to succeed and participate in the American Dream.

While we are heartened by the Administration's softening of their position on DACA, we really do need more action from Congress to fully address our nation's immigration system.

Sincerely,

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