

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

June 19, 2018

Urgent Call to Congress: Bring to a Vote Bipartisan Immigration Bills that Will Permanently Protect Dreamers and Uphold our Values

This week, the House of Representatives is considering a vote on two partisan immigration measures. After careful review, we cannot support either. Both proposals fall far short for our Dreamer students and alumni, while incorporating provisions that would radically alter our immigration system in ways that do not serve our nation's long-term interests or the demands of its innovation-driven 21st century economy. We respectfully urge members of Congress to reject both proposals and re-dedicate themselves to pursuing a bipartisan approach that narrowly deals with the urgent need to provide a legislative solution for DACA recipients and other Dreamers that is humane and reasonable, including providing a pathway to citizenship for these hardworking and talented people who are Americans in every respect but their status. Their communities and employers demand and expect nothing less.

As a nonpartisan alliance of over 365 presidents of public and private colleges and universities from across the country, we were very appreciative of the effort in the House this past month to bring four immigration bills to the floor for debate and vote, including bipartisan measures. Both the *Uniting and Securing America (USA) Act of 2018*, which included border security measures, and the *Dream Act of 2017* were bipartisan, narrowly tailored approaches that addressed the urgent issue of Dreamers in the manner we believe is needed. We are very disappointed that such measures – which reflect ideas for which a majority of Americans and members of Congress have expressed approval – cannot be brought forth.

In contrast, the *Securing America's Future Act of 2018*, a partisan bill, only offers a temporary fix for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, along with provisions that would severely reduce legal immigration, terminate the diversity visa program, dismantle the asylum system, eliminate protections for unaccompanied children, and lead to increased detention of children, all while spending budget-breaking amounts to dramatically increase border enforcement. While the other draft partisan legislation, the *Border Security and Immigration Reform Act of 2018*, offers slightly more protections for Dreamers, the possibility of a pathway to citizenship is dependent on continued border funding, would be available to Dreamers only after decades in temporary status, and would likely exclude far too many individuals due to its eligibility being based on a convoluted, untested points system. This proposed legislation too would reduce legal immigration, terminate the diversity visa program, dismantle the asylum system, eliminate protections for unaccompanied children, and lead to increased detention of children.

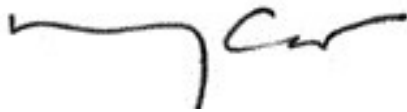
Unfortunately, both bills fail the basic tests of measures that uphold our values and heritage as a nation of immigrants, a nation that has stood as a beacon of hope and welcome for those

“yearning to breathe free,” who come here seeking a better life for themselves and their children, as well as for refugees and asylees.

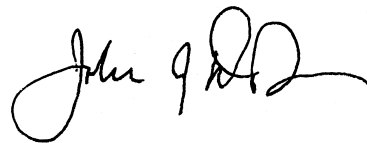
These ill-considered changes could bring great harm to our country. Congress needs to fully weigh the short and long-term impacts on our economy, campuses, communities, and country of measures that would drastically change our nation’s immigration policies. A significant revamping of our immigration system should be undertaken only in a thoughtful, bipartisan manner with a genuine opportunity for public study and input, including the benefits of public hearings and testimony, where the measures’ human and economic consequences can be fully assessed.

The absence of such an approach in the case of the two measures headed to the House floor, leads us to further conclude these are measures we cannot support.

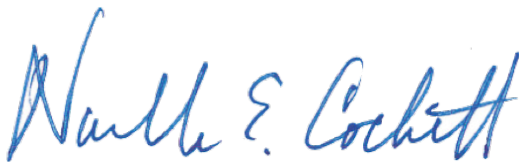
As the Steering Committee for the Presidents’ Alliance, we again urge the leaders of both Houses to come together to craft a bipartisan legislative solution that narrowly addresses the urgent situation created by the rescission of the DACA program in September 2017. We recognize that compromise is core to this process, and are ready to work with you to achieve a result that makes sense to a majority of Americans.



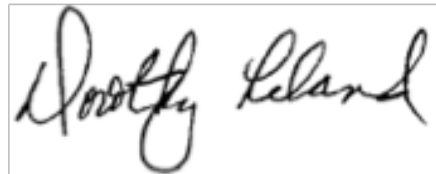
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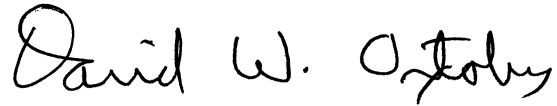
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