

PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

Talking Points for the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration

Why the Presidents' Alliance? Why now?

We are an alliance of college and university leaders dedicated to increasing public understanding of how immigration policies and practices impact our students, campuses and communities. We support policies that create a welcoming environment for immigrant, undocumented and international students and scholars on our campuses.

Our immigration laws are in desperate need of being modernized to account for all the changes in education and the economy that have occurred since they were last revised. The structure of our current immigration law was first written in the 1950s, and the pace of change and interconnectedness has accelerated since then, particularly in the past decade. We need immigration laws that both reflect our values as a nation of immigrants and first Americans, and that propel us to advance our nation into the future by permitting talented individuals to learn and create knowledge together.

Although our U.S. colleges and universities are viewed as world-class and remain the premier destination for individuals seeking the best learning and scholarship opportunities in the world, we face increasing competition from abroad. If we are to continue to serve our students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in today's interconnected society, we must update our immigration laws and policies.

Will this take away resources or focus on our domestic students?

Absolutely not. Our commitment is to serve *all* students who seek to better themselves and our communities through education. Our focus on immigration is because we recognize two key factors:

- 1) Our nation is at our best when we provide equal opportunity to all. As higher education leaders, our goal is to provide students with the education needed to succeed in today's and tomorrow's globally connected society and workforce. We cannot do that effectively without immigration. Immigrants have always made this nation strong, and immigration has been a key part of how we have built this nation's economy and created good jobs.
- 2) None of us operate in isolation. Our colleges and universities must compete with higher education institutions from around the world to attract the best talent to teach our students, and we need updated immigration laws to do that effectively.

What do you hope to achieve?

Our most urgent priority is to urge Congress to find a legislative solution for Dreamers affected by the repeal of DACA. These outstanding young people were brought to the United States as children, and have come forward in good faith to do everything asked of them. They deserve the opportunity to pursue an education and to contribute fully to our society. Our campuses have gotten to know these remarkable people up close, in our classrooms and as our colleagues, neighbors, and friends.

Despite the challenges they face, they have made incredible contributions to our country. They should continue to be able to do so. It's not an option to shut the door on an entire generation of leaders to seek to contribute their best to our great nation. We urge Congress to act now.