

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House
H-232, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
232 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

BIPARTISAN LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM FORMER EDUCATION SECRETARIES

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, Democratic Leader Pelosi and Democratic Leader Schumer:

We write out of deep concern for approximately two million Dreamers, undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children.

Over the past five years, hundreds of thousands of these young people came forward in good faith to participate in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. They registered with the government, passed extensive background checks, and worked tirelessly to get on the right side of our country's laws. They chose to take part in DACA so that they could move forward with their lives, realize their potential, and become full-fledged participants in America's civil society. They have been able to obtain driver's licenses, pursue higher education, secure employment, create new companies, serve in our military, and become contributing taxpayers.

Their contributions have already made our country stronger. DACA recipients are sharpening their minds in school, accelerating innovation by developing new technologies, teaching the next generation of leaders in our public schools, treating patients in our hospitals, and contributing to rescue efforts in Houston. Pursuant to a recent survey of DACA recipients, 45 percent are currently in school, with the vast majority pursuing a bachelor's degree or higher; 91 percent are working; and most of the nation's top 25 companies—including Walmart, Apple, General Motors, Amazon, JPMorgan Chase, Home Depot, and Wells Fargo, among others—currently employ DACA recipients.

President Trump, however, has just announced a termination of DACA, effective in 6 months. Terminating DACA administratively without a legislative solution would cause hundreds of thousands of young immigrants to lose their jobs, their legal status and their protection from deportation. It would trigger a chaotic reversal of the gains achieved by these Dreamers over the last five years, undermine faith in our country's immigration system, and make it harder to enforce our laws. It would create a gaping hole in our economy, disrupt our communities, and

make it infinitely harder to strengthen our immigration system and protect our country. We owe ourselves and our country's Dreamers a better way forward.

For most of these young people, the United States is the only home they've ever known. They grew up here, went to school here—studied and learned in our public schools, made friends and built lives here. They are American in every way but their paperwork.

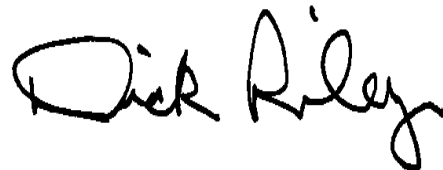
Taking away DACA without a legislative path forward isn't just bad for the country. It would violate a promise our nation made to these earnest young people. A nation of laws must honor its pledges, and that means finding a fair way forward for Dreamers.

DACA was always a temporary fix, a band-aid designed to hold until Congress acted. That time has come. As you well know, bipartisan legislation known as the DREAM Act has been introduced every Congress since 2001 to address this issue. The DREAM Act would create a path for these young Americans to earn legal status and eventually citizenship, like generations of hardworking immigrants before them.

We must not, we cannot, let these children down. The stakes are too high for them and for the future of our country. We call on you, the leaders in Congress, to put politics aside and do what's right. These Dreamers are our children and our future. We believe in them as sincerely as they believe in America.



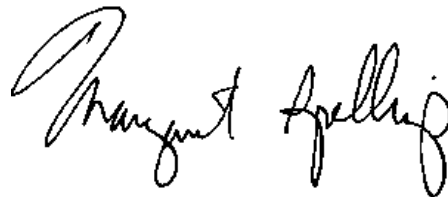
Arne Duncan, Former Secretary of Education, President Barack Obama



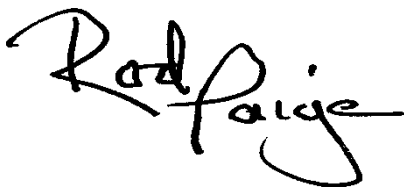
Richard W. Riley, Former Secretary of Education, President Bill Clinton



John King, Former Secretary of Education, President Barack Obama



Margaret Spellings, Former Secretary of Education, President George W. Bush



Roderick Paige, Former Secretary of Education, President George W. Bush