

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 27, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We respectfully request that you use your executive authority to the greatest extent possible to protect the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

As you know, DACA provides temporary relief from deportation to immigrant students who arrived in the United States as children if they register with the government, pay a fee, and pass criminal and national-security background checks. These young people are known as Dreamers. They came to the United States as children and are American in every way except for their immigration status. We have already invested in them by educating them in American schools. It makes no sense to squander their talents by deporting them to countries they barely remember.

Approximately 790,000 Dreamers have come forward and received DACA, which has allowed them to contribute more fully to their country as teachers, nurses, engineers, and small business owners. According to the conservative CATO Institute, deporting DACA recipients would cost over \$60 billion and would result in a \$280 billion reduction in economic growth over the next decade. The nonpartisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that the 1.3 million young people enrolled in or eligible for DACA pay \$2 billion each year in state and local taxes.

Following your inauguration, we were heartened when you said the following about the Dreamers: "We're going to work something out that's going to make people happy and proud. They got brought here at a very young age, they've worked here, they've gone to school here. Some were good students. Some have wonderful jobs. And they're in never-never land because they don't know what's going to happen." The following month, on February 16, you said: "We are going to deal with DACA with heart." We greatly appreciate that you have been true to your word and have kept the DACA program in place.

However, DACA now faces a grave threat. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and nine other states have challenged your authority as President and threatened to sue you if you do not rescind the memorandum that established DACA and announce that your Administration will not renew or issue any new DACA permits. Ironically, these states never sued President Obama over the DACA program. If this threat is successful, it would undermine your ability to set immigration policy for your Administration and put hundreds of thousands of talented young people at risk of imminent deportation.

While we appreciate your commitment to DACA, we are concerned that some members of your Administration have taken a different position. As a United States Senator, Attorney General Jeff Sessions was the Senate's most vocal opponent of the Dreamers. While he is now a member of your cabinet, the Attorney General has refused to defend your position on DACA. On April 19, the Attorney General said the following about DACA: "We can't promise people who are here unlawfully that they're not going to be deported." In an interview that aired on April 23, you said the following about the Attorney General's comments: "The Dreamers should rest easy." However, the Attorney General contradicted you again days later when he was asked if he agreed that Dreamers should rest easy, saying, "Well, we'll see. I believe that everyone that enters the country unlawfully is subject to being deported." Remarkably, in a June 30 interview the Attorney General even welcomed the states' threat to sue you, saying, "I've got to tell you, I like it that our states and localities are holding the federal government to account, expecting us to do what is our responsibility to the state and locals, and that's to enforce the law."

We urge you to respond to this threat to your executive authority by directing the Attorney General to use all legal options to defend the DACA program and thereby allow a generation of young immigrants with great potential to continue contributing to our society and economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response.

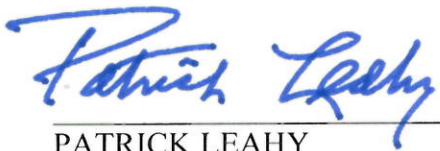
Sincerely,



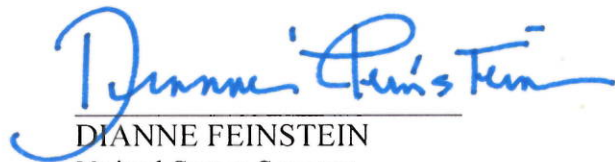
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PATRICK LEAHY
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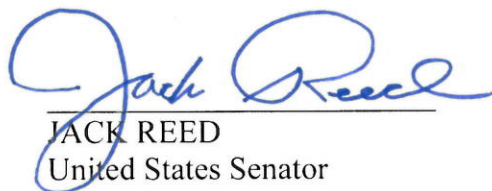
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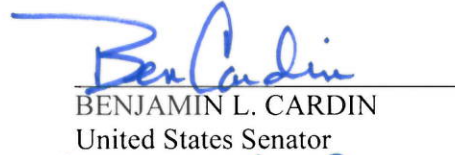
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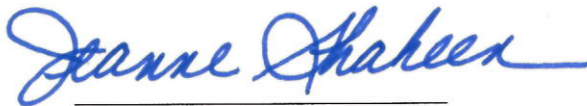
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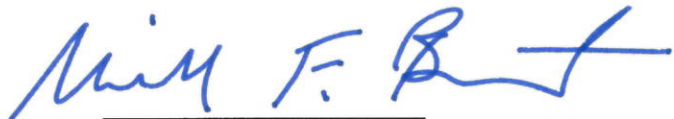
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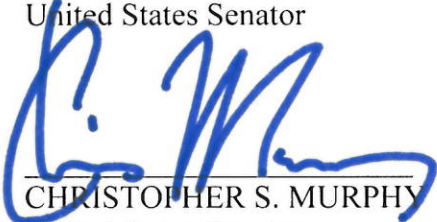
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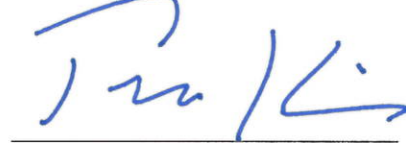
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United States Senator



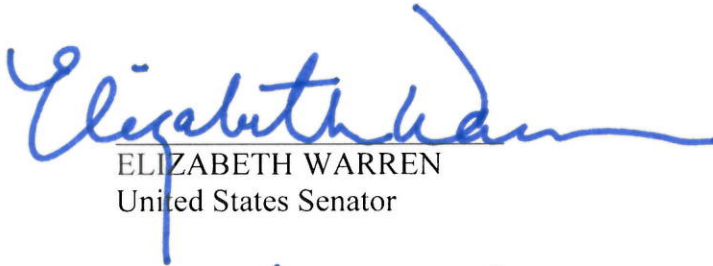
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