



September 21, 2017

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 170,000 members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I write to urge you to pass a clean Dream Act, a bipartisan bill that would offer a path to legal status to young individuals who entered the United States before the age of 18, passed important security checks, and met other criteria, including enrolling in college. The Dream Act would also include protection for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients who recently learned that their status will expire in the coming six months.

For the past five years, the DACA program has made it possible for many to attend school, go to work, and become full participating members in our community without fear of deportation. Nearly 800,000 individuals across the United States have legal status because of DACA. Ninety-seven percent of DACA recipients are either in school or employed.ⁱ One-quarter are enrolled in institutions of higher education while another third are in high school and considering their options for postsecondary education and career training.ⁱⁱ In particular, while 51 percent of all DACA applicants in 2015 were women,ⁱⁱⁱ they represented 40 percent of all DACA-eligible workers and are more likely to hold higher-skilled jobs than their male counterparts. DACA-eligible women represented 80 of those employed in the health-care support industry, 71 percent of those working in education, training, and library occupations, and 67 percent of health-care practitioners and technical workers.^{iv}

The President's decision to end the DACA program is both morally and fiscally irresponsible. For over 135 years, AAUW has advocated for increasing access to higher education. The DACA program has opened the doors to higher education to thousands, resulting in an increase in the number of skilled-workers prepared to complete in the global economy. The President's action to end DACA erases the path for these students to achieve the American Dream. Congress must take immediate action address this critical issue.

Dreamers and DACA recipients are an integral part of our education system and overall community. We urge you to take immediate action to pass the Dream Act without amendment. Cosponsorship and votes associated with this issue may be included in the AAUW Action Fund *Congressional Voting Record for the 115th Congress*. If you have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact me at 202/785-7724.

Sincerely,

Anne Hedgepeth
Interim Vice President of Public Policy and Government Relations

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- ⁱ Center for American Progress. (2017). “DACA Recipients’ Economic and Educational Gains Continue to Grow”. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/08/28/437956/daca-recipients-economic-educational-gains-continue-grow/>.
- ⁱⁱ Migration Policy Institute. (2017). “The Education and Work Profiles of the DACA Population”. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/education-and-work-profiles-daca-population>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ United We Dream. (2015). “A Portrait of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Recipients”. <http://unitedwedream.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/DACA-report-final-1.pdf>.
- ^{iv} Migration Policy Institute. (2017). “The Education and Work Profiles of the DACA Population”. <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/education-and-work-profiles-daca-population>.