

July 9, 2019

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

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
332 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Graham, and Ranking Member Feinstein:

On behalf of the undersigned health professions organizations, we urge you to pass legislation that would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented young people and those approved for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). We are pleased that the House of Representatives passed the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019 (H.R. 6) and that Senators Graham and Durbin have reintroduced the Dream Act of 2019 (S.874). We urge the Senate to pass either bill as soon as possible.

H.R. 6 and S. 874 would ensure that members of the health care workforce approved for DACA and other undocumented young people are able to continue their employment, education, training, and research in the health professions. By providing a legal pathway to citizenship for undocumented Americans who came to the U.S. as children, Congress can help our country produce a diverse and culturally responsive health care workforce to meet the needs of underserved populations and promote health equity.

With the nation's population growing and becoming increasingly diverse, it is crucial that the health professions workforce respond to the changing demographics of the country to mitigate racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic health disparities. Research demonstrates that diversity in the health professions leads to improvements in access to care for underserved communities, and some studies have shown that patients report greater satisfaction with clinical care when they are treated by providers from the same racial/ethnic background. Diverse health professions school classes also enhance the ability of the entire workforce to provide culturally competent care to individuals regardless of their background.

Health professions students who are undocumented encompass a diverse, multiethnic population, who are often bilingual and more likely to practice in underserved communities. Legislation that grants lawful status in the U.S. to DACA recipients and other undocumented young people would enhance our workforce and create certainty to health professions schools and residency training programs. Moreover, these individuals often overcome significant barriers to complete health professions training, and we should not squander this investment in the U.S. health workforce nor stymie their ability to contribute to our economy and society.

Our organizations are dedicated to promoting a culturally competent, diverse, and prepared health and biomedical workforce that leads to improved care and health equity. A permanent legislative remedy would help us achieve this goal. As such, we strongly urge you to pass S. 874 or H.R. 6 as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Anatomy  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training  
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American Dental Education Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Medical Association  
American Medical Student Association  
American Neurological Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Student Dental Association  
Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association  
Association for Prevention Teaching and Research  
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries  
Association of Air Medical Services  
Association of American Indian Physicians  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Association of Anatomy Cell Biology Neurobiology Chairs  
Association of Bioethics Program Directors  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors

Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of Professors of Dermatology  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions  
Association of University Anesthesiologists  
Association of University Professors of Neurology  
Association of University Radiologists  
Council of Residency Directors in Emergency Medicine  
Council on Social Work Education  
Emergency Medicine Residents' Association (EMRA)  
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality  
Health Professions Network  
HIV Medicine Association  
Institute for Healthcare Improvement  
Latino Medical Student Association  
National Association of Hispanic Nurses  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Council for Diversity in the Health Professions  
National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National League for Nursing  
National Medical Association  
National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
Physician Assistant Education Association  
Pre-Health Dreamers  
Society of Academic Associations of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine  
Society of Emergency Medicine Physician Assistants (SEMPA)  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Student National Medical Association