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April 4, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell Majority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham United States Senate 290 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Charles E. Schumer Minority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin United States Senate 711 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Senator Graham, and Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations, I write in support of the Dream Act of 2019. We are pleased that Senator Graham and Senator Durbin have reintroduced this important legislation in a bipartisan manner and we urge the Senate to pass it as soon as possible.

The Dream Act would allow some undocumented young people, who have already invested in our country and in whom the country has already invested, to earn lawful permanent residence in the United States. Brought to our country as children, many of these individuals do not even remember the country they came from and consider America to be their only home. Through no fault of their own, they are unable to pursue their dreams and contribute more fully to our nation.

First, the legislation would establish an eight-year conditional permanent residency status for those who were brought to this country as minors, have been here at least four years as of the enactment date, graduate from a U.S. high school, obtain a GED credential or been admitted to higher education, and meet other requirements. They also cannot have committed a felony or other serious crimes and do not pose a threat to our national security or public safety. Dream-eligible individuals may qualify for permanent residency after eight years by completing at least two years of higher education or military service, or having worked lawfully for at least 3 years.

Second, the Dream Act would restore the ability of states to grant in-state tuition to undocumented students on the basis of residency, though it does not require them to take any particular action in this area. This provision, in combination with the rest of the bill, serves as an important tool for achieving our national goal of returning the United States

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to world leadership in higher education attainment. It has been estimated that 65,000 Dream-eligible students graduate from American high schools each year.

This bill is designed to focus on the special case of undocumented young people who came to this country because of the actions of their parents. They are educated, English-speaking, and aptly suited to contribute to our nation. They grew up with American values and traditions, making them American in virtually every way except for their immigration status.

These individuals often have to overcome significant barriers to graduate from high school, and we cannot afford to stymie their aspirations to continue their education and contribute to our economy and society.

We strongly urge you to advance this important legislation so that the Senate can pass the Dream Act as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Ted Mitchell President

On behalf of:

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Council on Education

American Dental Education Association

American Indian Higher Education Consortium

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of American Universities

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities

Association of Community College Trustees

Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Association of Research Libraries

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources

Council for Advancement and Support for Education

Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

Council for Opportunity in Education

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Council of Graduate Schools Council of Independent Colleges Educational Testing Service EDUCAUSE

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities NAFSA: Association of International Educators

NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

National Association for College Admission Counseling

National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education National Association of College and University Business Officers

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

National Collegiate Athletic Association

National Council for Community and Education Partnerships