



November 22, 2016

President-elect Donald J. Trump
1717 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear President-elect Trump:

Congratulations on your election to the presidency of the United States of America.

The membership of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) includes 218 public research universities and university systems across the country, and we want to work with you on common priorities that will advance the interests of our nation. As I know you appreciate, America's public universities through their higher education, research, and community engagement missions are critical to achieving the ambitious economic growth and social mobility goals you have discussed. I look forward to discussing these priorities with your team and working together to advance them.

I write today about the fundamental fairness of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order. This executive order, in brief, provides deferred status to children who were brought to this country by others, who have been in the U.S. continuously at least since 2007, and who have applied for and received the deferred status.

Many young people with DACA status are attending universities and colleges in this country. Unfortunately, these students are now living in great fear that not only will DACA be revoked, but that as a result of having put their trust in the U.S. government and providing their information to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), they and their families will be focused on by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). APLU universities report to me that student support offices are handling a significant number of requests for assistance by distressed DACA students who are trying to quickly understand what a change in administration means for their status.

As a matter of fairness, I urge that the DACA program continue. These young people were brought here as children by others. For many of them, America is the only home they can remember.

Regardless of one's view of the executive action at the time it was issued, we are now faced with an untenable situation for students. Those who applied for DACA status came forward and in good faith provided their information to the U.S. government based on a promise that they would be protected. They are studying at our institutions because they want to be productive and successful people. The work authorization that comes with DACA allows them to make immediate contributions.

I appreciate your most recent comments that immigration enforcement should focus on undocumented immigrants who have committed serious crimes. I urge that in fairness to undocumented students who were brought to the United States at an early age, you allow DACA to continue and ensure that applications submitted to USCIS are not used for enforcement against them or their families. As you will appreciate, this would be the appropriate, fair, and compassionate policy.

I look forward to the opportunity to discuss this and other critical issues of importance to our nation and America's public universities with your transition team and administration. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter McPherson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "M".

Peter McPherson
President
APLU