



A Resolution in Support of Permanent Protections for DACA Students and Their Right to Higher Education

S-03-02-25G

Sponsor: Indiana University Bloomington

Co-sponsors: University of Wisconsin–Madison

1. *Whereas*, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, established in 2012, provides temporary relief from deportation and work authorization for undocumented individuals brought to the United States as children, allowing them to contribute to the economy, pursue higher education, and strengthen communities;
2. *Whereas*, in January 2025, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the Biden administration's efforts to protect DACA recipients, upholding a 2023 lower court decision that found the program legally deficient;
3. *Whereas*, the Higher Education Act of 1965 prohibits DACA students from accessing federal financial aid, including Pell Grants, federal student loans, and work-study programs;
4. *Whereas*, states such as Indiana and Wisconsin have enacted policies (Indiana Code § 21-14-11, Wisconsin Act 9, 2011) that deny undocumented and DACA students access to in-state tuition and state financial aid¹;
5. *Whereas*, as of April 1, 2024, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) increased the DACA renewal fee by 22% for paper filings, adding to the financial burdens that make it harder for DACA students to afford and complete their higher education²;
6. *Whereas*, since returning to office in January 2025, the Trump Administration has renewed efforts to dismantle the DACA program;
7. *Whereas*, on January 20, 2025, President Trump issued Executive Order 14159, "Protecting The American People Against Invasion," which rescinded the Department of Homeland Security's protected areas policy, thereby permitting U.S. Immigration and

¹Higher Ed Immigration Portal, *State Policies on Tuition, Financial Aid, and Licensure for Immigrant Students*, www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/states/

²U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), *Frequently Asked Questions on the USCIS Fee Rule*, <https://www.uscis.gov/forms/filing-fees/frequently-asked-questions-on-the-uscis-fee-rule>

Customs Enforcement (ICE) to conduct enforcement actions in schools, increasing the risk of deportation for both undocumented and DACA students³;

8. *Whereas*, the uncertainty surrounding the termination of DACA has severely impacted the approximately 141,000 DACA recipients and eligible students enrolled in higher education nationwide, leading to increased stress, financial instability, and barriers to completing their education⁴;
9. *Whereas*, without a permanent legislative solution, DACA students face continued uncertainty due to shifting policies and legal challenges;
10. *Therefore, be it resolved*, that the Association of Big Ten Students (ABTS), as the collective voice of over 810,000 students, calls on all legislative and executive bodies to enact a permanent legislative solution for DACA recipients that provides a clear and secure pathway to citizenship, ensuring that these students can pursue higher education and professional careers without fear of deportation while recognizing their invaluable contributions to the nation's society and economy; and
11. *Be it further resolved*, that ABTS calls on its member student governments to take immediate action by advocating to their respective elected officials for policies that expand access to in-state tuition, financial aid, and scholarships for DACA students but also strengthen legal protections, campus resources, and institutional support systems that ensure their safety, stability, and full participation in higher education, regardless of immigration status; and
12. *Be it finally resolved*, that ABTS reaffirms its unwavering commitment to standing in solidarity with DACA students of the Big Ten community, emphasizing that any failure to protect their rights and access to education is a direct threat to the principles of equity, opportunity and academic excellence that define our institutions.

Vote: In Favor 11 Opposed 0 Abstentions 2

Therefore, the bill: **PASSES** FAILS

³The White House, *Executive Order 14159: Protecting The American People Against Invasion*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/protecting-the-american-people-against-invasion/>

⁴American Council on Education (ACE), *Protect Dreamers Higher Education Coalition*, <https://www.acenet.edu/Policy-Advocacy/Pages/Immigration/DACA-and-Dreamers.aspx>