



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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USCCB CHAIRMAN EXPRESSES ONGOING SUPPORT FOR DACA; CALLS ON ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS TO ENSURE PERMANENT PROTECTION FOR DACA YOUTH

July 18, 2017

WASHINGTON— Over 750,000 youth have received protection from Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) since its inception by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2012. While DACA provides no legal status, it does provide recipients with a temporary reprieve from deportation and employment authorization for legal work opportunities in the United States.

In response to the recent petition to the U.S. Department of Justice to terminate DACA, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, Chair of the Migration Committee and Bishop of Austin, Texas, expressed support for DACA once again, stating:

"The Catholic Bishops **have long supported** DACA youth and **continue** to do so. DACA youth are contributors to our economy, veterans of our military, academic standouts in our universities, and leaders in our parishes. These young people entered the U.S. as children and know America as their only home. The dignity of every human being, particularly that of our children and youth, must be protected.

I urge the Administration to continue administering the DACA program and to publicly ensure that DACA youth are not priorities for deportation.

However, DACA is not a permanent solution; for this reason, I also call on Congress to work in an expeditious and bipartisan manner to find a legislative solution for DACA youth as soon as possible. My brother bishops and I pledge continuing efforts to help find a humane and permanent resolution that protects DACA youth. Additionally, I note the moral urgency for comprehensive immigration reform that is just and compassionate. The bishops will advocate for these reforms as we truly believe they will advance the common good.

Lastly, to DACA youth and their families, please know that the Catholic Church stands in solidarity with you. We recognize your intrinsic value as children of God. We understand the anxiety and fear you face and we appreciate and applaud the daily contributions you make with your families, to local communities and parishes, and to our country. We support you on your journey to reach your God-given potential."

Keywords: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, USCCB, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, Migration Committee, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Catholic bishops, economy, veterans, academia, human dignity, children, youth, families.

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