



1020 19th St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036

(202) 331-8080

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Public Hearing on

**Resolution 22-448, Sense of the Council in Support of Legislative Action to Protect
Dreamers Resolution of 2017**

Thursday, November 2, 2017

Presented by Dr. John Cavanaugh, President and CEO

Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area

Chairman Mendelson, Members of the Committee, and staff, thank you for this opportunity to testify on a resolution aimed at supporting the District's "Dreamers." It is my privilege to be here today to testify in favor of PR22-448 in order to urge necessary government action to support these young people who are either already contributing to our community or seeking to educate themselves in order to better contribute to our society.

As you know, Chairman Mendelson and Committee members, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was initiated in June 2012 to address the uncertain status of thousands of young people brought to this country as infants or children by granting eligible recipients temporary permission to stay in the United States and obtain work permits. To qualify for DACA, applicants must pass a multi-faceted and rigorous test, including that they have arrived in the U.S. before reaching age 16, resided here continuously since 2007, be enrolled in or completed high school, not been convicted of a crime, and not present a threat to national security or public safety. Of the 800,000 young people of DACA status, 350,000 of them are enrolled in college, hundreds in the District of Columbia.

The Consortium of Universities has been an active partner in the Protect Dreamers Higher Education Coalition (www/acenet.edu/dreamers). Partnering with

numerous other higher education institutions and organizations, the Consortium has signed letters and participated in numerous events, most recently one held at Georgetown University, that have one message—to urge the Congress to pass bipartisan legislation as soon as possible to include all the protections currently provided under DACA and allow “Dreamers” to continue contributing to our society and economy by working, serving in the military or attending college.

We have been actively working on this issue for many years. Our efforts since September 5, 2017, when President Donald Trump announced that his administration would terminate the DACA program as of March 5, 2018 unless Congress took action, continue our work in support of the DREAM Act, the BRIDGE Act and related bills.

As noted in an October 19th letter sent by the Coalition to Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer:

“There is widespread support among your constituents and across the country on the need to protect these individuals. . . Colleges and universities have seen these remarkable people up close, in our classrooms and as our colleagues and friends. Despite the challenges they face, they have made incredible contributions to our country and its economy and security. **They should continue to be able to do so.**” (Emphasis added.)

We believe this sentiment is admirably reflected in PR22-448 which calls on the United States Congress to “act immediately in order to pass legislation that protects Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, also known as Dreamers.” (See Sec. 3 of the resolution).

As a result, we wholeheartedly endorse this resolution and stand ready to assist in its passage.

Thank you for your attention to this testimony. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about it.