February 19, 2021

The Honorable Richard Durbin
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Graham:

On behalf of the 27 U.S. member institutions of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU), I write to express my strong support for S.264: The bipartisan Dream Act of 2021. This legislation will help provide a path toward citizenship for hundreds of thousands of individuals who call America their home, including students at Jesuit colleges and universities.

Our support for the Dream Act of 2021 builds upon our years of advocacy for Dreamers, DACA, and undocumented students. In 2016, AJCU stated:

“Grounded in our Catholic and Jesuit mission, we are guided by our commitment to uphold the dignity of every person, to work for the common good of our nation, and to promote a living faith that works for justice. We see our work of teaching, scholarship and the formation of minds and spirits as a sacred trust.

That calls us to labor for solidarity among all people, and especially with and for the poor and marginalized in our society. That trust calls us to embrace the entire human family, regardless of their immigration status or religious allegiance. And experience has shown us that our communities are immeasurably enriched by the presence, intelligence and contributions of undocumented students, as well as of faculty and staff of every color and from every faith tradition.”

Dreamers on Jesuit campuses (and beyond) have long considered the U.S. their home—indeed, many of them know no other country of residence. It is here where they have grown up, made friends, learned to read and write, enrolled in college, served in the military, and been steadily employed. Over the past year, many Dreamers and DACA recipients have held positions on the frontlines during the pandemic, working tirelessly in healthcare and public service to help keep our country safe. We cannot imagine not wanting these individuals to remain a part of our nation.

Under the provisions of S.264, those who qualify to remain in the U.S. cannot have committed a felony or other serious crimes, nor can they pose a threat to national security or public safety. The individuals who will benefit from your
countless ways. They have lived their lives as Americans, with the exception of the legal status that they so deserve. Please know that we stand with you to remedy this injustice, and are committed to helping secure passage of the Dream Act of 2021.

We thank you for your bipartisan leadership on this bill, and look forward to working with you to secure its passage.

Sincerely,

Rev. Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.
President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities