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Arizona and New Mexico Catholic Bishops' Statement on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Youth

In light of increased tensions and speculation over the future of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival program (DACA), the Catholic Bishops of Arizona and New Mexico want to reiterate our strong and unwavering support for DACA youth so they do not have to live in fear of deportation. These young people entered our country as children and should have the opportunity to remain in our country to be educated here and to have opportunities to exercise their gifts for the enhancement of our nation.

Presently, DACA protects nearly 800,000 of these young people, while allowing them to live and work in our country without fear of deportation. Through DACA they have furthered their education, started small businesses and become integral members of our communities in Arizona and New Mexico.

While DACA is not a permanent solution, we support its continuance until a permanent solution can be found.

Accordingly, we urge our federal elected officials to move forward with permanent solutions that grant relief to these young people along with the chance to earn permanent residency and eventually to seek citizenship.

We ask that all people of goodwill join us in praying and advocating for governmental efforts to protect DACA youth and for reform of our broken immigration policies.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. John C. Wester

Archbishop of Santa Fe

Most Rev. Thomas J. Olmsted

Bishop of Phoenix

Most Rev. Oscar Cantú

Bishop of Las Cruces

Most Rev. James S. Wall

Bishop of Gallup

Most Rev. Gerald F. Kicanas

Bishop of Tucson

Most Rev. Eduardo A. Nevares

Auxiliary Bishop of Phoenix