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September 7, 2017

The news regarding the rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program as you know has a major impact on our state. The Florida College System serves close to 800,000 students including almost half of which are minority students. The impact of this decision, and the failure of Congress to resolve it, will have an overarching impact on the future workforce in Florida currently being educated and trained at our great 28 state and community colleges. We urge your support to codify the DACA protections granted these students.

In February 2017 the Florida College System Council of Presidents passed a resolution regarding DACA. That resolution stated: *“At present, we are proudly serving the needs of those students who were not born in the United States but who have lived in Florida, graduated from a Florida high school and seek to join the ranks of productive citizens by obtaining a postsecondary credential. These students – collectively referred to as “DACA students” – are permitted to enroll in the Florida College System and to attend courses paying the same as other Florida high school graduates. We supported and assisted in getting this beneficial legislation passed.”*

More recently, the national Association of Community College Trustees released a statement as follows: *“DACA is of great importance to thousands of community college students throughout this country, and we are dismayed regarding the decision to terminate this program. Community colleges are open-access institutions whose mission is to educate and empower students to achieve their academic and career goals. DACA is an important asset that facilitates this mission, providing stability and economic opportunity. Terminating DACA undercuts our efforts to serve this population by creating additional barriers to postsecondary access, including the ability for some students to receive in-state tuition. It would also prevent those students in whom we’ve invested from obtaining legal work in this country. These students were brought to the United States at young ages, and none of them willfully violated the law in order to immigrate to this country. To revoke educational and other life opportunities for reasons beyond their control is undeserved.”*

These two statements more than describe the position of the Association of Florida Colleges as well. Our members - the faculty, advisors, administrators, trustees, and professionals, know the

potential effect on these young peoples' lives. It is vital that you support our young Floridians and the diversity that makes Florida so unique, as well as the workforce future of our state.

I urge your quick action in Congress this fall to resolve this matter once and for all with a permanent codification of the DACA tenets into law.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Brawer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Brawer, CEO  
Association of Florida Colleges

cc. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell  
House Speaker Paul Ryan  
Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer  
House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi