

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 15, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Duke
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Duke:

We write to express concern about reports that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has rejected renewal requests for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) that were received after the application deadline due to U.S. Postal Service processing delays. We urge you to allow individuals whose DACA renewal applications were rejected because they were received after the October 5, 2017, deadline to resubmit their applications and to notify such applicants of this opportunity.

As you know, on September 5, 2017, the Administration terminated the DACA program, leaving less than a month for certain recipients to file for renewal. We have heard from many young people across the country about the tremendous burden this short time frame placed on them to collect the application fee and navigate the application process.

We are deeply troubled that despite the best efforts of many DACA recipients to submit their applications to DHS before October 5, the Department has rejected thousands of DACA renewal applications that arrived after the deadline. Although the Postal Service has acknowledged that a mail processing delay affected some unknown number of DACA renewal applications,^[1] the Department still refuses to accept those applications. We encourage you to weigh the life-changing consequences many will face in the absence of action by the Department.

In the five years since implementation, DACA has empowered approximately 800,000 individuals to come out of the shadows to pursue opportunities such as obtaining access to higher education and necessary skill sets, finding work, and serving in the military. As a result of the Administration's abrupt decision to terminate DACA, many young people are now left with deep uncertainty about whether they will be able to stay in school, keep working and contributing to our economy, or remain in their communities.

^[1] Robbins, Liz. "Post Office Fails to Deliver on Time, and DACA Applications get rejected." The New York Times, November 10, 2017. Web at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/10/nyregion/post-office-mail-delays-daca-applications.html>

We believe that this situation merits immediate action by the Department and urge you to reverse your decision to reject renewal requests for DACA that were received after the deadline due to mail delays. The lives DACA recipients have built here in the United States reflect the very best of America and the consequences of inaction are too great. This sensible approach will ensure that these young people who are American in every way won't have to live in fear and can continue to contribute to the only nation they call home.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



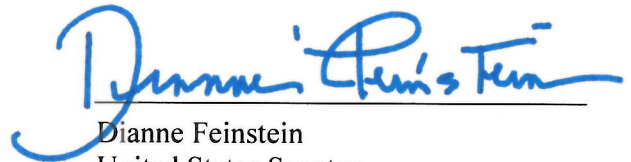
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United States Senator



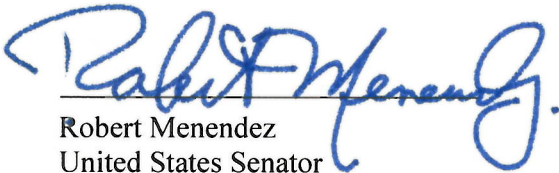
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



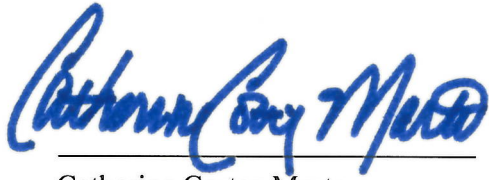
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United States Senator



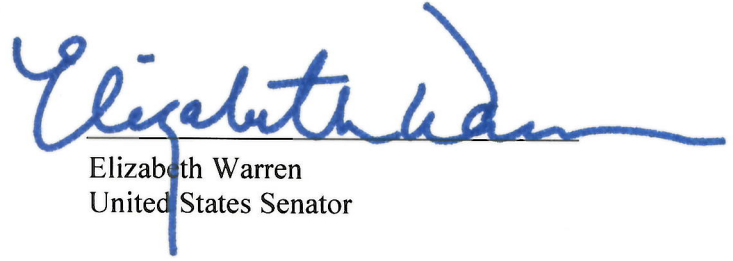
Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



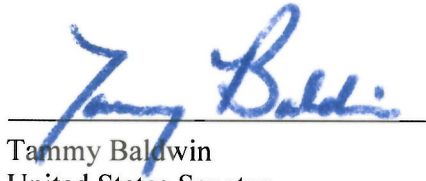
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



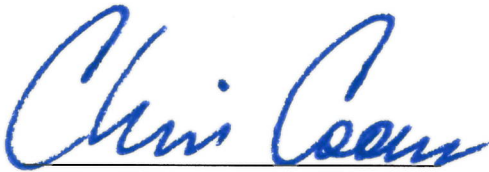
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
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Al Franken
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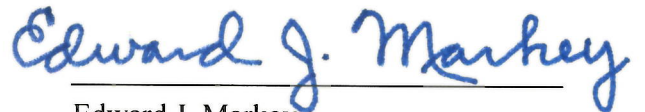
Christopher A. Coons
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United States Senator



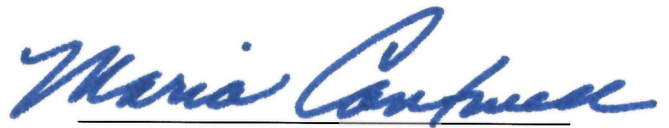
Jeanne Shaheen
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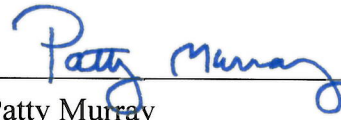
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



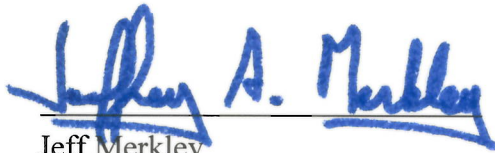
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



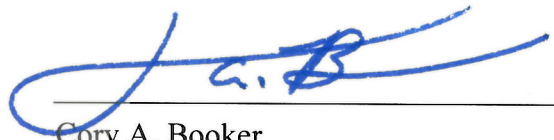
Jeff Merkley
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