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October 26, 2017

Ben A. Heller
University of Notre Dame
Faculty Senate
343 O Shaughnessy Hall
Notre Dame, IN 46556-5639

Dear Ben,

Thank you for contacting me regarding your views on The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. I appreciate the time you have taken to inform me of your thoughts on this issue.

I understand immigration is an issue which inspires a great deal of passion and strong feelings on both sides of the debate. America has always been known to be the melting pot of the world, and immigrants have long enhanced the fabric of our society, bolstered our economy and benefited our national interests in numerous ways. As you may know, the DACA program was established under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) by President Obama in 2012 through Executive Order. DACA was implemented unilaterally despite legal concerns that such an action was inconsistent with the Constitution's separation of powers. President Trump's decision to rescind the DACA program with a 6-month sunset period enables Congress to fulfill our responsibility to pass legislation and to provide these individuals who are woven into our communities, the reassurance that they will be able to continue living their lives as they always have. Sending them back to countries they are not familiar with is not the solution and President Trump has indicated his agreement with this sentiment.

The President has reaffirmed that immigration enforcement priorities remain unchanged. The enforcement focus remains on criminals, security threats, recent border-crossers, visa overstays, and repeat violators. The President released in a statement that he has advised the Department of Homeland Security that DACA recipients are not enforcement priorities unless they are criminals, are involved in criminal activity, or are members of a gang. As Congress moves forward with legislative proposals, I look forward to working with my colleagues to solve the immigration challenges we face as a nation. Our current system is broken and reforms are urgently needed. I believe that a robust and spirited debate on the merits of individual proposals is vital to tackling this complicated and emotional issue. And that is why I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 1468, the Recognizing America's Children Act (RAC Act) introduced by Rep. Carlos Curbelo from Florida. This legislation grants eligible individuals a conditional legal permanent resident status for five years, during which they would work toward employment, higher education, or military service. After those five years, if the individual is in good standing they would be eligible for permanent legal status. I am pleased that this bill seeks to take immediate and concrete action toward providing certainty to DACA beneficiaries and other eligible immigrants. The RAC Act is one of many proposals to address the immigration challenges we face. Immigration on the whole remains a significant priority for the whole House of Representatives. I look forward to further discussions on the complexities and challenges of immigration policy. Please know as more proposals come through the House for consideration I will certainly keep your thoughts in mind.

Thank you again for contacting me. Your thoughts and opinions are of critical importance to me as I work to represent Indiana's 5th District in Congress. I sincerely appreciate your comments and look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan W. Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and a long, sweeping underline.

Susan W. Brooks
Member of Congress