



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.
President

February 7, 2017

Dear Professor Romero-Severson and Members of the Faculty Senate:

Thank you for sending on your resolution asking that the University of Notre Dame be designated a Sanctuary Campus. I'm grateful for the Senate's reflection on this matter and for its concern for our undocumented students, who are understandably feeling vulnerable now. Your concern is, I am sure, encouraging for these students. I am in full agreement with the Senate in its commitment to the pursuit of truth, justice, and human dignity, in its solidarity with migrants and refugees around the world and particularly in its concern that our undocumented students are supported at this time.

While the Senate no doubt recognizes that the practical import of declaring Notre Dame a *Sanctuary Campus* is limited, the resolution affirms that the term "carries considerable symbolic weight". I appreciate this point, but am concerned that such a declaration may give our students a false sense of security. The Senate's resolution itself recognizes that while the term "sanctuary" could be understood as a place "free from civil intrusion," the university must comply with subpoenas, court orders and warrants. We do not now, and would not, voluntarily provide information about any student without a clear legal requirement to do so, but we would comply with the law and so cannot promise a campus entirely "free from civil intrusion." I do not want to appear to make our students a promise on which we cannot deliver.

I am also mindful that a public declaration of our campus as a Sanctuary Campus could unnecessarily draw attention to these vulnerable students and provoke a reaction from authorities that we otherwise might avoid. As you perhaps know, key members of the Administration have either signaled or said that there are no plans to act aggressively against those with DACA status, and at this point it is perhaps best to simply monitor the situation.

I am encouraged that bipartisan legislation called the BRIDGE Act (Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy Act) is working its way through Congress. If passed, it would codify protection for our DACA students. Our time and energy right now, I believe, is best spent supporting the passage of this act. I have made my views known to our representatives on this, and I encourage faculty and students to do the same.

Professor Romero-Severson and Members of the Faculty Senate
February 7, 2017
Page Two

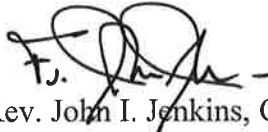
I do not believe, then, that it is best to declare Notre Dame a Sanctuary Campus at this time. Yet we will continue to provide support in various ways to these students. I made the following commitment in my reflections at an inter-faith prayer service last November 14th, and we have tried—and will continue to try—to live up to it:

I want to speak particularly to the undocumented students at Notre Dame. I assure you of our special concern for you at this time. The University will spare no effort to support you, just as we will do for every student at Notre Dame. You accepted our invitation to come to Notre Dame, you are now part of our family, and we will do everything we can to ensure that you complete your education at Notre Dame.

In addition to this public statement, I also met privately with a number of our DACA students to listen to their concerns and assure them of the University's support. There are a number of our University colleagues who are doing superb work in providing day-to-day assistance and guidance to these students during this difficult time, and I can assure you, we will continue to provide the University resources necessary to do so. We are also discussing ways to meet their financial needs, should they be unable to work during their time as students at Notre Dame.

Once again, thank you for your thoughtful deliberation on this matter and especially for your concern for our undocumented students. If we work together, we can, I believe, provide the help these students need at this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Jenkins", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.
President