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PRESIDENT

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President Morton's Statement of Support for DACA

As I have watched events of the past few weeks unfold after President Trump's decision to phase out Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, I had hoped to see more clarity about the future of possible legislation before officially adding Warren Wilson College to the growing list of colleges and universities expressing concern about the potential discontinuation of this important program. DACA provides access to higher education and the ability to work in the U.S. for young people who were brought to the United States as children. Congress is now tasked with creating legislation to make this measure into law within six months, but disappointingly little progress seems to have been made to date.

Many of these young people have little recollection of their country of origin, and some do not speak the language of their home country. The threat of deportation looms large and has caused much insecurity for them, but also, we in higher education value access to education and consider all faculty, staff and students to be citizens of our communities.

Warren Wilson College is dedicated to the creation of a learning community committed to environmental responsibility, cross-cultural understanding, and the common good. Civic identity is at the heart of our uniquely integrated education in work, service and community engagement. Collective Action based in the "demonstration of empathy through compromise civility and mutual respect" is a critical outcome in our educational programs. Surely, as a nation we can find a way to create permanent legislation to protect these young people from deportation and provide them with access to higher education.

I credit the students of Warren Wilson College in keeping this issue at the forefront of my attention. They have engaged in civic action locally and nationally, and correctly insisted that our institutional commitment to social justice and civic identity demands that we make a statement in support of DACA Dreamers. As president of Warren Wilson College, I have worked to build relationships with our representatives in Congress in recent weeks. I urge our lawmakers to create legislation that allows the dream to go forward. I join my voice to the many others in higher education who believe in educational access for all, and that supporting access and diversity makes us better and stronger.