



Open Letter to Senator Sinema

**The Honorable Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510**

Dear Senator Sinema,

As higher education leaders, business leaders, employers, and Arizona voters, we are greatly encouraged by your efforts with Senator Tillis to find a bipartisan solution for our nation's two million Dreamers and to ensure an orderly, safe, and secure border. (see: [The Washington Post, December 5, 2022](#)).

As recently demonstrated with passage of Proposition 308, which allows Arizona Dreamers to pay the same in-state tuition as their peers, Arizonans are ready for common sense solutions that protect Dreamers and strengthen our economy.

With the recent federal court rulings on the DACA program, Dreamers and those who employ them are bracing ourselves for a new reality. If the program is struck down, it will cause untold devastation not only for Dreamers and their families, but also for the industry sectors that have come to rely on their hard work. There are about two open jobs for every person out of work. Taking hundreds of thousands out of the labor force will further fuel inflation, exacerbate supply chain challenges, and tip the economy into recession.

Arizona is in a global contest to attract and retain talent. To that end, providing permanent legal status to Dreamers makes sound economic sense. Our policies must allow us to compete for the workers we need to fuel our economy and retain the young talent that already exists here but lacks the security of permanent legal status.

Dreamers are a critical and integral part of our state's economy and workforce. In Arizona alone, there are close to [10,000](#) Dreamers pursuing higher education. DACA's success has unleashed the economic potential of almost [37,000 Arizonans](#), allowing them to contribute to our economy, start families, buy homes, build businesses, and bring their talents to the industry sectors where they're most needed.

Over the past year and a half, more than three quarters of DACA recipients in the workforce—343,000—were employed in jobs deemed essential by the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Of this, 34,000 were healthcare workers providing patient care. Another 11,000 individuals were working in healthcare settings keeping these facilities functioning.

For more than a decade, DACA participants, their employers and employees, have been vulnerable to government indecision that has sown anxiety, instability, and legal limbo in their lives—and in our nation's workforce.

At a time of widespread labor shortage and rising food and gas prices, we wholeheartedly support your efforts to find common sense solutions. Improving border security and providing a pathway to citizenship for Dreamers is not only morally right; it is also absolutely crucial to addressing labor shortages, reducing food prices and creating jobs for all American families.

Sincerely,

Michael Crow, President, Arizona State University
José Luis Cruz Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
Kimberly Britt, President, Phoenix College
Charles Gregory, President, Benedictine University
Senator Bob Worsley, CEO, Zenni Home
Tyler Montague, President, Yes on 308
John Graham, Chairman and CEO, Sunbelt Holdings
Kathleen Graham
Mike Hoover, President & CEO, Sundt
David Adame, President and Chief Executive Officer, Chicanos Por La Causa
Heather Carter, Executive Vice President, Greater Phoenix Leadership
Todd Sanders, President and CEO, Greater Phoenix Chamber
John Giles, Mayor, Mesa
Rusty Bowers, Speaker, Arizona House of Representatives
Kimber Lanning, CEO, Local First Arizona
David Lujan, President and CEO, Arizona Center for Economic Progress
Joe Garcia, Executive Director, Chicanos Por La Causa Action Fund
Stephanie Parra, Executive Director, ALL In Education
Paul Rockower, Executive Director, Jewish Community Relations Council of Phoenix
Caleb Campbell, Pastor, Desert Springs Bible Church
Rob Elias, President/CEO, Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Rev. Katie Sexton-Wood, Clergy, Arizona Faith Network
Jerry Hirsch, Executive, JAREN cORPoration
Rebecca Gau, Executive Director, Stand for children AZ
Carolina Silva, Executive Director, Scholarships A-Z
Beth Lewis, Director, Save Our Schools Arizona
Erin Hart, Chief of Policy, Education Forward Arizona
Carolina Rodriguez-Greer, State Director, Mi Familia Vota
J. Doug Pruitt, Retired
Sheril Steinberg, Political & Advocacy Director, Mi Familia Vota
Andrew Stewart, IT consultant

Blake Sacha, President, Voter Choice Arizona

Sintra Hoffman, President and CEO, Westmarc

Mike Hutchinson, Executive Vice President, PHX East Valley Partnership

Laura Mitchell, Executive Director, The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation