

February 12, 2014

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eric I. Cantor
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-329 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor:

The higher education community has long supported bipartisan efforts to address the serious problems of our current immigration system in order to better serve the needs of our country. As a result, we are pleased to see your recently released Standards for Immigration Reform. Given the widespread support for addressing this critical national issue, we urge the House to move forward on immigration reform this year.

As the standards emphasize, our broken immigration system is harming our economy. It also is undermining our ability to maintain our leadership in economic innovation and entrepreneurship over the long term. We are very encouraged to see that the standards recognize the importance of modernizing our green card system to ensure that international students who obtain advanced degrees in the United States, particularly in high-skilled fields, have the opportunity to remain here to help grow the economy and create jobs for Americans.

In addition, it is important that the standards address the need to provide an opportunity for legal residence and citizenship for the thousands of undocumented students graduating from our high schools each year who were brought to the United States as children, raised in this country, and consider themselves Americans. It will serve our long-term economic growth to provide these talented, hard-working young people with a way out of the shadows and into our workforce. It is also simply the right thing to do for these children, who are in an untenable situation through no fault of their own.

The higher education community stands ready to work with you to help advance the goal of enacting sensible, bipartisan immigration reform this year.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Reilly
Executive Director
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

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American Association of State Colleges and Universities

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David L. Warren

President

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

John Walda

President and Chief Executive Officer

National Association of College and University Business Officers

Justin Draeger

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National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

cc: House Republican Members