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The Honorable Mike Coffman
U.S. House of Representatives
2443 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Luis Gutiérrez
U.S. House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Coffman and Gutiérrez:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our support for H.R. 496, the “Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow our Economy Act” (BRIDGE Act), which would provide employment authorization and temporary relief from deportation for undocumented young immigrants who have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status and DACA-eligible individuals. By providing legal status to such individuals for three years, this legislation would provide important protection and stability until a permanent solution on lawful immigration status for DACA recipients is implemented.

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, 61 U.S. allopathic medical schools reported that they considered applications from students with DACA status for the 2016/2017 academic year. In 2016, 112 students with DACA status applied to U.S. allopathic medical schools, and 34 of those individuals matriculated, bringing total allopathic medical school enrollment of DACA-eligible individuals to approximately 70 students. One study has predicted that the DACA initiative could introduce 5,400 previously ineligible physicians into the U.S. health care system in the coming decades.

The AMA strongly supports medical students and physicians with DACA status, as well as those young people who are considering a career in medicine. These individuals help contribute to a diverse and culturally responsive physician workforce, which in turn helps benefit not only traditionally underserved patients, but all patients as well. DACA recipients should be able to continue to study and work without fear of being deported.

The AMA applauds you for your leadership in introducing the BRIDGE Act, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to advance this legislation in Congress.

Sincerely,

James L. Madara, MD