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**Statement from Most Reverend Nelson J. Perez, Bishop of Cleveland, on the administration's decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program**

In my experience as a bishop, I have had the opportunity to meet with young people who have benefitted from the DACA program (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). I know that there are many of these children here in our diocesan community. Many of their families have received support and assistance from our parishes and from Catholic Charities. They live and worship in our parishes; some have attended our schools, played on our sports teams and become friends of our children. They, as young people, are bright, energetic and eager to pursue their education and training and reach their full potential as contributing members of our communities. They did not enter our nation on their own volition but rather came to the United States as children with their parents.

The president's decision now places responsibility for responding to the hopes and dreams of these DACA youth on the Congress. He has indicated that Congress should work on developing a permanent legislative solution to their current uncertain status.

In my homily message at the Installation Mass I urged everyone to open their hearts to the needs of people today, to see the opportunities in front of us and to accompany those in difficult situations. I ask that we join together in urging Congress to act and immediately resume work toward a legislative solution. I add my voice to the Bishops of the United States Catholic Conference in pledging support to work on finding an expeditious means of protection of DACA youth.

And to the DACA Youth in our community, as people of faith, we stand with you, we love you and we continue to offer our support and assistance.