



Durbin to host Dreamer medical student for President Trump's State of the Union Address

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), the Ranking Member of the Senate Immigration Subcommittee, will host Illinois Dreamer Cesar Montelongo as his guest for President Donald Trump's State of the Union Address. Cesar, who has temporary legal status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

(DACA) program, is the first DACA student enrolled in the MD-PhD program at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.



“Cesar’s dream for the future is to become a practicing physician and a scientist, and to develop new and improved clinical diagnostic tools so that doctors can diagnose and treat diseases faster. Close to 70 Dreamers are enrolled in medical schools around the

country. But without DACA, these Dreamers will not become physicians and they could be deported back to countries where they haven't lived since they were children. Will America be a stronger country if we deport people like Cesar, or if they stay here and contribute to medical advances and treat patients in our communities? The answer is clear," said Durbin. "I am honored to host this extremely gifted medical student as my guest. I hope Cesar's presence reminds President Trump what's at stake in the debate over DACA: the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent young people who want to contribute to our country's future."

In July, Durbin and Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) [introduced](#) the bipartisan Dream Act, which would allow immigrant students who grew up in the United States to earn lawful permanent residence and eventually American citizenship. These young people, known as Dreamers, have lived in America since they were children, built their lives here, and are American in every way except for their immigration status.

Cesar Montelongo

Cesar Montelongo was ten years old when his family came to the United States from Mexico. He grew up in New Mexico, where his academic prowess was quickly apparent. Cesar graduated high school with a Grade Point Average above 4.0, and he was ranked third in his class. Cesar went on to New Mexico State University, where he was a triple major in biology, microbiology, and Spanish; as well as two minors in chemistry and biochemistry. Cesar graduated with distinction in the honors track with a 3.9 GPA. Cesar then earned a Master's degree in biology, with a minor in molecular biology, while also working as a teaching assistant. Today, Cesar is the first DACA student enrolled in the MD-PhD program at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine. He is entering his third year of this highly competitive program, and upon completion he will receive a medical degree and a doctorate degree in science.

In 2017, Durbin told Cesar's [story](#) on the Senate floor.