

# **Durbin meets with Dreamer medical student, his guest for President Trump's State of the Union Address**

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WASHINGTON - U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Ranking Member of the Senate Immigration Subcommittee, today met with Illinois Dreamer Cesar Montelongo, who will be 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.



“I’ve had the pleasure of meeting Cesar and have shared his story on the Senate floor, and I am honored to host this extremely gifted medical student as my guest this evening. 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,” said Durbin. “Cesar is one of close to 70 Dreamers 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 underserved communities? The answer is clear.”

“I am very grateful to Senator Durbin for this amazing opportunity. My hope is that our efforts and the hard work of our leaders in Congress will allow us to succeed. More than anything I want to keep contributing to this great nation that I call home,” said Cesar.

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 with 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 in science.

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