



FACT Sheet

In-State Tuition for Immigrant Children

Provisions of the Bill: The proposed bill would allow children who attend high school for four years in Connecticut and graduate from a Connecticut high school to pay in-state tuition to attend state public colleges and universities, regardless of their immigration status. The students would be required to file an affidavit with the college stating that they would apply for citizenship as soon as they were eligible.

The Students: The students in question were brought to this country by their parents. Many are honors students with great hopes for higher education. If they were born in the U.S. they are citizens but if not their status is determined by that of their parents. If their parents have no immigration documents the students cannot apply for legal status without triggering a process of rejection of their application that would normally lead to an order to leave the country by a certain date. They are not eligible for state or federal financial aid (this bill would not change that situation) and most cannot afford to pay out-of-state tuition. Most **WILL** eventually become legal. We want them to be productive and highly educated citizens of our state.

Economic and Workforce Issues: According to the Connecticut Business and Industry Association, our state has an urgent need for well-educated workers. The number of high school graduates in the state was expected to peak in 2008 and decline each year until at least 2015. Also, 10% of the high school students with the highest grades on the CAPT tests do not attend college. Some of those missing students are undocumented immigrants kept from college by prohibitive costs. If we want an economy based on highly qualified workers rather than residents who pay lower taxes and may be a drain on social service and even criminal justice budgets, we need to give access to higher education to all of the most talented students. Ten states (California, Texas, Utah, New York, Oklahoma, Washington, Kansas, Illinois, New Mexico, and Nebraska) have already enacted the proposed in-state tuition bill.

Possible Changes in Federal Immigration Policy: The DREAM Act is bipartisan legislation that would provide undocumented young women and men who were brought to the U.S. as young children with a pathway to U.S. citizenship if they attend college or perform military service. Even if it passes we would need a Connecticut law to provide for in-state tuition.

Fiscal Implications: The fiscal notes in Texas and Massachusetts both concluded that there would be no additional cost to the state as a result of this bill. Community colleges have open admission and would receive additional tuition. Universities would see a slight improvement in the caliber of their students but no increase in the total number of students. Based on the numbers in other states after passing the bill It is estimated that fewer than 250 students would exercise the in-state tuition option due to the passage of this bill.

Legality: Court decisions in Kansas and California have rejected challenges to the bill.