



Written Testimony of
AFT Connecticut

H.B. 6390 - An Act Concerning Access to Post-Secondary Education

Higher Education & Employment Advancement Committee

March 15, 2011

AFT Connecticut is a state federation of more than 80 local unions representing a diverse membership of 28,000 public and private sector workers. Included AFT Connecticut's membership are the non-faculty professional employees of the University of Connecticut and the University of Connecticut Health Center, as well as the faculty members of the Regional Community-Technical Colleges.

AFT Connecticut supports HB 6390. By allowing undocumented students to attend public higher education institutions at in-state tuition rates, our state will be investing in the futures of all of our residents, not just those who were lucky enough to be born here.

Minor children, who immigrated to the United States by their parents, did not choose to live here or break the law in order to live here. They broke the law by virtue of a decision their parents or guardians made. It is unfair to punish them, diminish their potential and have our society suffer for mistakes they inherited.

Many undocumented students have grown up entirely in our state and have no memory of their former homelands. As far as they are concerned, Connecticut is home and they are Americans in every sense but a legal one. At a time when Connecticut loses more of its young professionals than it retains, it makes sense to invest in students who are likely to remain here and contribute to our society and economy.

The existence of in-state tuition rates indicates a state preference to educate students who already live within Connecticut borders. It is not an indication to only educate those who were born in Connecticut. We urge the committee to act favorably on HB 6390.

Thank you.