

**Testimony On Behalf Of The
Connecticut Regional Office of the
Anti-Defamation League**

**IN SUPPORT OF
Governor's Bill 6390
AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS
TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

March 15, 2011

The Anti-Defamation League was founded in 1913 with a mandate to fight the defamation of the Jewish people and secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today the ADL is one of the country's leading civil rights organizations. As part of our long tradition of fighting bias, prejudice, bigotry and hate, we have always been an advocate for fair and humane immigration policies.

It is for these reasons that I am here today to express our strong support for Governor's Bill 6390, which would provide in-state tuition status to certain immigrants residing in the state of Connecticut.

A critical element of ADL's mission of seeking justice and fair treatment for *all* people compels us to combat inequity in whatever form it takes and against whomever it may be directed. Others here today will describe in greater detail how the current inability of certain immigrants to receive in-state tuition status negatively affects the economic and emotional state of hard-working young people pursuing their dream of higher education and self-improvement, and the impact of the current situation on the state and society.

ADL strongly believes that immigration policy must take into consideration and strive to protect civil and human rights. We are concerned about the future of the students brought here as children and educated here who face barriers to higher education and the accompanying opportunity to be an integrated, contributing part of their community. We believe that all such students should receive equal access to available human services, including the opportunity for an affordable postsecondary education, without discrimination based on immigration status.

In our experience, injustice against *any* individual or group of people not only hurts the individuals it targets, but negatively impacts the environment in which it arises and the community as a whole. Providing access to in-state tuition status to immigrants living in Connecticut sends a clear message to the community that disparate treatment based on immigration status is impermissible, and will deliver a powerful deterrent signal to those who may contemplate acting on their prejudices and violating the civil and human rights of any individuals residing here.

Much of America's greatness has derived from its ability to successfully integrate diverse groups of people into a vibrant, pluralistic democracy. Ten states have passed laws permitting certain

undocumented students to pay the same in-state tuition as their classmates at public postsecondary institutions. We urge you to join them by supporting Governor's Bill 6390.