



STATE OF
CONNECTICUT
ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS
COMMISSION



<http://www.cga.ct.gov/asianamerican/>

Testimony of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission before the Committee on
Higher Education and Employment Advancement
March 15, 2011

Re: HB 6390, AAC Access to Postsecondary Education

Good morning madam Co-Chairs Bye, Willis and members of the Higher Education Committee. On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission, thank you for providing the opportunity to speak in support of Governor's Bill 6390, "AAC Access to Post Secondary Education."

As you know the bill would provide in-state tuition to students that have graduated from a high school in the state and have been accepted at a public university in the State. Further, students are required to file an affidavit with their university stating that they are seeking legal status or will in the future if they become eligible.

Starting off, these requirements for immigrant students are much stricter than the residency requirements for out-of-state students to gain in-state tuition. This bill is nonetheless a step in the right direction. The Governor and leaders in the Legislature have recognized the need for this bill for reasons of fairness and equity- students who have grown up in Connecticut shouldn't be denied access to higher education in the State because of their immigration status.

Ten states have already enacted similar legislation to allow immigrant students to become eligible for in-state tuition if they meet certain requirements. California, Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin, for example, have essentially the same legislation as the Governor's proposed bill.

The APAAC realizes that in these budgetary times providing instate tuition to undocumented students may reduce realized revenues for public universities in the State. But according to recent estimates the governor's proposal may have a positive impact, in terms of increased enrollment, to our public universities. Increased enrollment means increased revenue which helps all residents of this state.

Further, these students are products of Connecticut's public education system and are likely to stay in Connecticut and contribute to its economy if they are able to secure a decent standard of living.

We hope this Committee will carefully consider the value of providing instate tuition to undocumented students in Connecticut. The APAAC is here to help all legislators in any way that it can to move forward with this issue.

As you know the ***APAAC is the only nonpartisan comprehensive state institution that evaluates laws and policies for their impact on the lives of Asian Pacific Americans (APA's) in Connecticut.*** Our job is to provide information, analysis, and assistance to the General Assembly, state agencies, state leaders and the public on all matters concerning the status of APA's.

Thank you for this opportunity.