

Testimony Submitted on Proposed S.B. No. 398

Dear Members of the Connecticut General Assembly:

As the Co-Founder of Know Your IX, an organization dedicated to combatting campus sexual assault through information, I stand in support of granting undocumented students access to financial aid at Connecticut universities and colleges on the same terms and conditions as other Connecticut students. I urge you to pass legislation that will open up access to financial aid to as many students as possible. I support legislation that takes vital steps towards education equality including opening access to institutional and state financial aid to undocumented students, broadening the number of students eligible for in state tuition and creation of an alternative to the FAFSA that allows undocumented students to get fair and equal access to financial aid. I believe in equal access to higher education for all.

All students deserve access to higher education, which is increasingly necessary in today's economy. Opening financial aid to undocumented students is one way to meaningfully address the pressing need for educational equality in Connecticut, which unfortunately is the state with the worst achievement gap in the country. Our legislature has adopted a goal of closing this achievement gap and of fostering progress among low-income and limited English-proficient students. Enabling access to higher education for undocumented students, who are often low-income and people of color, will help Connecticut meet its goal and increase racial and socioeconomic diversity in the state's colleges and universities.

We cannot afford to sit idly by and do nothing about the lack of access to higher education for Connecticut students. Each year, hundreds of talented undocumented students graduate from Connecticut high schools with hopes of college attendance. These students cannot wait any longer; we must do what we can right now to help them achieve their dreams.

Thank you,
Alexandra Brodsky
Co-Founder of Know Your IX