

February 29, 2016

Dear Members of the Higher Education Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly,

My name is Andrea Quillambaqui from Danbury and I am a student of Danbury High School, and a volunteer at Escape to the Arts AfterSchool Program in Danbury. I stand in support of SB 147: AN ACT ASSISTING STUDENTS WITHOUT LEGAL IMMIGRATION STATUS WITH THE COST OF COLLEGE. This bill would equalize access to institutional financial aid at Connecticut public universities and colleges to all students regardless of immigration status.

I was born in Danbury, CT, where I lived my whole life, but I come from immigrant parents. My parents moved to the US to have a better future and better opportunities.

I hope to attend Quinnipiac University and hopefully major in Biology or Health Professions. I want to go to college because I want to get a better education and become an OB/GYN. Education is important because it can make every single person have a better future.

I know many friends and god brothers and systems who are undocumented. I see the struggles they go through. They are magnificent in school and have dreams of their own, and its very difficult to see that they probably will not be able to go to college. I don't feel its fair that I can dream and have goals, but they can't.

My godsister once was part of a competition to win a scholarships. She actually won. However, due to her lack of citizenship because she wasn't born in the US, she wasn't able to receive the scholarship she worked so hard for. After the teacher told her this, she was desvastated. I personally think it is unfair, she is an amazing sudent, very intelligent, and has so much potential to become a great doctor.

SB 147 and institutional aid will make lives and our futures better for many in my family. It will help people like my godsister and many of my friends. It will allow them to dream and pursue the future that they want.

This bill, SB 147, is very important and legislators should support it because so many students will be able to benefit. They want to continue to study and are amazingly intelligent, and should have the ability to get a higher education. These students could become an engineer, a doctor, or a banker. But we wouldn't ever know if they could become something great if we don't give them a chance at a future.

I support SB 147 and hope the committee will vote favorably on SB 147.

Thank you for your time,
Andrea Quillambaqui
High School Student
Danbury, CT