

Kevin McCormick

SB 147

Dear Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Kevin McCormick, I am from Colchester, CT. As a student at Eastern Connecticut State University, 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.

Throughout the course of my education, I have had the privilege of working with and befriending students from across Connecticut who have had a variety of experiences throughout their life. Recently, I have become aware that some of my fellow students have been denied need-based financial aid due to their immigration status. Their parents brought them to this great country, and this great state, so that they could have a brighter future. But these same students, who were exceptional students at high schools throughout Connecticut, are now struggling to finance their higher education.

It is important to keep in mind that these students are not looking for handouts. These are Connecticut residents simply asking to have access to the same institutional aid that their tuition money contributes to. Currently, many undocumented students have to work long hours during the school year in order to pay for their classes. Additionally, the federal student loans that I have access to are not available to my undocumented peers, so they frequently have to rely on high-interest private loans in order to finance their education.

As a tuition payer, I firmly believe that the pool of money that all of us students contribute to should be accessible to all students that need assistance, regardless of immigration status. In the face of the appalling rhetoric currently being directed at undocumented immigrants from certain presidential candidates, I believe that removing this administrative barrier on institutional aid is the least our state can do to stand in solidarity with the undocumented members of our community.

I strongly support SB 147 and I sincerely hope the committee will stand on the right side of history and vote in favor of equalizing institutional aid at our state's great public colleges and universities.

Thank you very much for your time.

Best Regards,

Kevin D. McCormick