

Dream Act

This past month part two of the California Dream Act was signed in California by Governor Jerry Brown which allows illegal immigrants to receive state-funded scholarships and financial aid. This law permits “undocumented students who have graduated from a California high school and have affirmed that they are in process of applying to legalize their immigration status qualify for in-state tuition rates but do not qualify to receive any kind of financial aid” (Rasberry par. 2). This law will become effective January 1, 2013. This law has caused a lot of controversy because many people say “granting public or private financial aid to illegal immigrants will force citizens and students who are here legally to compete with them for limited resources” (Sullivan 1). Should state funded financial aid be available to undocumented immigrants? It’s only fair that if illegal immigrants are given the opportunity to attend public elementary and secondary school education, why should they be denied postsecondary education. If illegal immigrants want to further their education then they should provide their own financial support and not receive financial aid because that will increase tuition. If the economy was better I would agree with this new law, but since it’s not illegal immigrants shouldn’t receive financial aid.

There have been previous laws that have either permitted illegal immigrants from furthering their education or preventing them. For example, the AB 540 law, which allows illegal immigrants to pay in-state tuition at universities or colleges if they graduate from high school or submitted an application to legalize his or her immigration status? Some states like Arizona,

Colorado, and Georgia have banned in-state tuition for illegal immigrants, but other states like South Carolina do not allow illegal immigrants to enroll in state colleges. However, in several states like Texas, New York, Utah, Illinois, Washington, Nebraska, New Mexico, Maryland, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, and Kansas allows immigrants to pay in-state tuition if they graduate from a high school that they have attended. Some people think illegal immigrants that have at least attended high school for three years and graduated shouldn't be denied a postsecondary education. It's not like they made the decision to immigrate to the United States, but their parents' decision. So why are these illegal immigrants being punished? Why are they being denied the right to further their education? I understand that they are illegal immigrants, and that they shouldn't be here, but why should their immigration status prevent them from getting a postsecondary education. I have known people that have been denied college scholarship due to their immigration status and that's not right. These people should be able to go to college because it's not their fault that their parents brought them to the United States. These people brought their children to the United States so they could have a better future and what better way than in the land of opportunity. Is the United States still the land of opportunity? It is still the land of opportunity, but with this economy it's crucial for illegal immigrants to receive state funded financial aid.

With all the budget cuts in education in California the last thing it needs it to provide financial aid to illegal immigrants because it would mean that now citizens and legal residents would have to compete for limited resources. That's not right because it will lead to more budget cuts and tuition will increase. Rasberry went on to say that the "estimated cost of providing Cal Grants to all those students – about \$14.5 million – represents roughly 1 percent of the program's total funding of \$1.4 billion" (Rasberry par.4). This will not affect the rich or the poor, but the

middle class students will be seen affected since they are the ones that receive the least financial aid. Although, California's public universities and community colleges support the bill, Sullivan made the important point that "it affects less than 1 percent of their student population" (Sullivan 2). There may only be a few that will be affected with this law, but why do these students have to be affected by it?

It's not the right time to help illegal immigrants especially with this economy. It's nice that there are laws that want to help illegal immigrants further their education but why should legal residents and citizens be affected by it. I am a middle class student that barely receives any financial aid to pay for college because there's barely any fund. So why are they going to waste so much money on illegal immigrants when they should be investing it on citizens and legal residents of the United States. Until they have enough money to provide enough financial aid for legal residents and citizens they should provide financial aid for illegal immigrants. I would be in favor of this Dream Act if I wouldn't be affected by this situation, but since I am I'm against it. However, if they do decide to further their education they should pay the tuition like everyone else, and without financial aid.

Work Cited

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