

### California's Dream Act

On October 8, 2011 Governor Brown passed a historical bill that granted undocumented college students access to California funded aid. This bill that was recently passed is now known as California's version of the Dream Act and will take effect in the year 2013 according to the article titled, "California Passes Dream Act" by Jarrett Stepman. This issue is controversial not only here in California, but nation wide. Many people argue that with the initiation of this bill money will be taken away from natural born citizens. While others say that undocumented students have a right to better their education if they are putting effort to going to college, but can't because of the lack of financial resources. I personally believe that every student should be able to receive state funded aid as long as they are meeting the requirements to obtain the aid.

In our financial crisis, many of us might think that we should be concerned on getting our financial issues fixed before we even think about giving out more money to undocumented students. Although I partially agree with this statement, try thinking about the positive future outcome that this bill will create. One of them being more college graduates getting jobs and paying taxes therefore giving California a bigger budget. In my opinion, I believe that in order to fix our financial crisis we need to think about the future rather than dwelling in the present because if we can fix the future before it happens we will no longer have this financial issue in our state. By helping undocumented college students we, as a state, will be investing in the future of our economy. You may think that we already have trouble with college graduates not being able to find jobs, therefore thinking how could this better our economy? Well the more college graduates, the more possibilities of new business opening with a result of more job opportunities.

Another reason why some people might not be for this issue is because they don't think undocumented students should have the same rights as a citizen, however, aren't we known as the land of opportunity. According to the article titled ,“Educating Illegal Immigrant” by Gary Goshgaraian and Kathryn Goodfellow, many states are doing all they can so that undocumented students won't be able to afford college. Therefore this would result in many dreams of students being shattered, because they won't be able to pursue a higher education. Stop and think for a minute or two and put yourself in the shoes of an undocumented student. How would you feel about not being able to attend college because of so many restrictions and not enough financial assistance. Many of those undocumented students were brought here at a very young age therefore they didn't have a choice of whether to come to this country or not. Many of them have grown up here and have adapted to our culture, so they are basically like any natural born citizen right? The only difference is they have no papers like we “citizens” do. The state of California is setting a great example to other states showing them that to fix our present we need to give opportunity to those who deserve it and meet specific qualifications presently.

It might be true that because of the California Dream act money that could have been given to citizens attending a 4year university will now be handed to undocumented students. However money won't be taken away from citizens because undocumented students will be given the aid after all citizens who qualify receive the aid first. In my opinion undocumented students should be able to receive California funded aid if and only if they meet the requirements. The requirements for undocumented students according to the California Dream Act website are ,“Secondary school attendance in California for three or more years; at least one year of which shall have been at a California high school. Graduation from a California secondary school or attainment of the equivalent

thereof”(http://www.californiadreamact.org/about/the-bill.html). If undocumented, the filing of an affidavit with the college or university stating that they have applied for a lawful immigration status or will apply as soon as they are eligible to do so They have as much of a right to be helped financially as any of us do, if they have been here for most of their high school education. They are trying to pursue a higher education to obtain a better future, which is what most of us college students are trying to obtain as well. The only difference being they don’t have legal documentation. Kristin Olsen who is a a member of California Assembly supports undocumented students being helped, but not particularly by being given state funded aid. Kristin Olsen who spoke at the forum said, “ Who are we to say they can’t?” she explained that the California Grants are not much money, therefore by giving undocumented students this money it will be taking away money from legal resident that could have gotten the aid. However how would undocumented students be taking money from ‘legal residents’? They put in the effort academically and are in financial need. Undocumented students deserve to be given an opportunity to receive state funded assistance. Our country is known for the American Dream, so let these undocumented students achieve their dreams. Let them achieve what many of them think is the unachievable, because in reality it really isn’t achievable without financial assistance.

According to the article, “California Passes Dream Act” by LA Times, the author says that by initiating AB131 more undocumented students will migrate to California. It also explained briefly Governor Brown’s reasons of passing the Dream Act. He said that by passing this bill he would be helping the future of California. Investing in the future is what he is trying to do in order to get rid of the 20 billion dollar deficit. Although many might not like the fact that there is a possibility of more undocumented students migrating to our state this could help us in more ways that one if you really think about it. Governor Brown’s state of mind is fixing the

future so it won't be like the present, which could or couldn't work. Most likely it will because you know the possible outcome of more educated people reconstructing our states' economy.

In conclusion California's actions upon this issue, which is a controversial nation wide is an example that opportunity should be given to undocumented students who put effort upon obtaining a higher education. By passing the California Dream Act, California has become the first state to offer financial help to undocumented immigrants. Nine other states are in the process of passing a similar bill as well. Most states are following California's steps of granting opportunity to undocumented students. Although many might argue that this will cause many states to have a larger deficit, in the long run these undocumented students will help better our economy and build upon a better unity as a state. Who are we to deny undocumented students an opportunity to better their lives? Everyone deserves to achieve their dream, so let us help these individuals to the road of success by helping them financially.

## Work Cited

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