

IN-STATE FOR DREAMERS ACT OF 2015

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The Investing in States to Achieve Tuition Equity (IN-STATE) for Dreamers Act of 2015 provides incentives for states to offer in-state tuition and state financial aid for Dreamer students.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

The *IN-STATE for Dreamers Act* establishes the American Dream Grant program, which encourages states to increase access to higher education for low-income students. This program would provide \$750 million over ten years to states that offer in-state tuition rates and state financial aid to Dreamer students without discriminating based on their immigration status.

American Dream Grants would supplement existing need-based state financial aid funding to increase the affordability of higher education for all students. This legislation is not a state mandate and is fully paid for.

QUICK FACTS

- **20** states currently offer in-state tuition for undocumented students: CA, CO, CT, FL, HI, IL, KS, MD, MI, MN, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OK, OR, RI, TX, UT and WA.
- **1.8 million** individuals nationwide potentially qualify as Dreamers.
- **65,000** Dreamers graduate from American high schools each year.
- **\$9,139** is the average in-state tuition at public, four-year colleges nationwide.
- **\$22,958** is the average out-of-state tuition at public, four-year colleges nationwide.
- **\$13** is the return on every \$1 of federal investment in need-based financial aid through state matches.

BACKGROUND

Higher education remains the best path to the American Dream—but sadly, the rising cost of college is locking far too many students and families out of the opportunity to succeed. Low-income and first generation students increasingly face significant obstacles to a college degree, including ever-climbing tuition, lack of adequate financial aid, and the crushing burden of student debt.

For undocumented students these challenges and inequities are even more severe. In order to sustain our nation's educated workforce, all students should be able to pursue a quality higher education without unmanageable levels of debt. Students who came to the United States before they were 16 years old and have earned a high school diploma, GED, have served in the uniformed services, or have been granted relief under DACA—known as Dreamers—deserve access to the American Dream. These students should not be discriminated against because of their immigration status, especially when they are pursuing a postsecondary degree or credential.

The federal government has historically partnered with states to expand access to higher education for low-income students through need-based grant aid. For example, the Leveraging Educational Assistance Program (LEAP) provided funding to states that established need-based student financial aid programs, leveraging state funding of \$13 for every \$1 invested by the federal government. Similarly, the *IN-STATE for Dreamers Act* would leverage a federal commitment of funds for institutions that support the aspirations to qualifying undocumented students seeking opportunity in higher education.

SUPPORTERS

American Civil Liberties Union, American Federation of Teachers, American Association of Community Colleges, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Association of Community College Trustees, Colorado State University, Council on Opportunity in Education, The Education Trust, First Focus Campaign for Children, Jobs for the Future, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, National Association of College Admission Counseling, National Education Association, National Immigration Law Center, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, OneAmerica, Tacoma Community House, United States Student Association, United We Dream, University of Hawaii System, University of Washington, Washington State Commission of Hispanic Affairs, Washington State University, Young Invincibles