

NACAC

National Association for College Admission Counseling

...guiding the way to higher education

October 31, 2005

The Honorable Salvatore F. DiMasi
Speaker of the House
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

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Joyce Smith
Executive Director

Dear Speaker DiMasi:

I write today on behalf of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), a professional organization representing more than 9,000 college counseling and admission professionals nationwide, and our New England affiliate organization, the New England Association for College Admission Counseling (NEACAC).

NACAC members are education professionals dedicated to helping students make the transition to higher education. Improving college access for all students is a top priority for our members and our organization. That's why I'm writing to ask for your support for S.764 and H.1230, "In State Tuition Eligibility for Immigrant Students in Massachusetts."

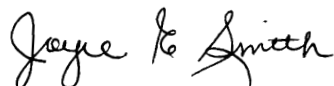
The legislation would allow qualified undocumented and status-pending students to be eligible for in-state tuition at Massachusetts public institutions of higher education. Qualified students must have attended three years of high school in Massachusetts and graduated from a high school in state, as well as demonstrate they are pursuing legal status.

Every year thousands of undocumented students nationwide and hundreds in the state of Massachusetts graduate from high school, ready and willing to pursue higher education, but are unable because of financial barriers. NACAC members concur with the Supreme Court (*Plyer v. Doe*, 1982) in that undocumented children are not responsible for their immigrant status, and therefore should not be denied an education. Moreover our members believe that the consequences of not allowing hundreds of young people to continue their education outweighs other considerations.

Nine other states have passed similar legislation and have enjoyed the educational, economic, and cultural benefits of a more educated and diverse workforce. Similar legislation has also enjoyed bipartisan support at the national level. The DREAM Act, which is also supported by NACAC members, would make legislation like S.764 and H.1230 the law of the land.

Please support this important legislation, and do everything in your power to make sure the will of the legislature is not ignored on this issue. Please contact our director of public policy, David Hawkins at dhawkins@nacac.com for more information on undocumented students or other issues related to college preparation and admission.

Sincerely,



Joyce E. Smith
Executive Director

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