

# The Dream Act: Assessing its Effects on Immigration & Higher Education Institutions

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## **Introduction**

Immigration reform is one of the most controversial topics facing this nation. “Officially about 1 million legal immigrants come to the United States each year. Unofficially, perhaps as many as 4 million legal and illegal immigrants annually cross the nation’s borders. Estimates of the number of illegal immigrants living in the United States range up to 15 million” (Dye 199). With 5,000 miles of borders (2,000 with Mexico), the United States has been unable to maintain secure borders nor monitor even a close number of the people entering this country (Dye 204). Ronald Reagan explained a portion of the problem when he stated, “The simple truth is that we’ve lost control of our own borders, and no nation can do that and survive” (Katel and Marshall 348).

This debate of immigration reform is about finding the most effective way to retain a legal means of entry, reorganizing the interests of millions of undocumented aliens living in the U.S., and to also

ensure integrity of the U.S. borders. Several ideas have been proposed intending to accomplish these goals. Acknowledging it as a necessary area of focus, in 1986 the U.S. Congress announced immigration reform as one of its main goals in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, also known as the Simpson-Mazzoli Act. This Act set fines for employers who knowingly hired illegal aliens. However, employers were then able to accept many forms of documentation that could easily be forged by the applicants, subjecting employers to potentially discriminate against legal foreign-born residents. The Act did not succeed in its attempts, and did not slow down the flow of immigration into the United States (Dye 203). Another idea that has been proposed to assist with immigration reform is to build a 700 mile fence along the border of the United States and Mexico, directed at sectors of frequent crossing. However, this idea has proven to be controversial as it would still leave the majority of the border open, making many wonder how effective this would really be (Dye 205). In 2007, Congress also considered a 789-page bill cosponsored by Senators Edward M. Kennedy and John McCain that included various immigration provisions, such as strengthening border enforcement, granting legal status to millions of undocumented immigrants currently living here, acquiring English proficiency, etc. This bill also went unapproved. Despite efforts of time and money, there is yet to be a successful solution that holistically is able to combat immigration reform. “From 1993 to 2004, the federal government quintupled border enforcement spending to \$3.8 billion and tripled the Border Patrol to more than 11,000 officers” (Katel and Marshall 339). Regardless, the system is far from perfect.

A specific aspect of immigration reform includes addressing the topic of education. “The U.S Supreme Court has mandated that state and local governments may not exclude either legal or illegal immigrants from a public education” (Dye 205). However, once these illegal aliens graduate from high school, there is not a lot that is set in stone in regards to the federal law. California is one state that has been active and radical in setting its own regulations for these aliens. On Tuesday, October 5, 2010 the California Supreme Court reviewed a lawsuit that would potentially “end in-state tuition for an

estimated 25,000 illegal immigrants who attend the state's public universities and colleges" (Dolan). The issue here is that in 2001, a state law was implemented in which lower tuition is given to students, including illegal immigrants, who attend and graduate from a California high school. From this example, we see that California as a state has dealt with immigration reform in the realm of higher education much differently from the country as a whole. Here, illegal aliens are able to legally obtain a college education, which is not the case for most other states.

### **What is the DREAM Act?**

One piece of legislation entitled The DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act was presented to the United States Senate in 2003 by Senator Richard R. Durbin (D-Illinois) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) as a proposed way of dealing with one aspect of the immigration issue. Although it initially passed through the Senate Judiciary Committee, there was never a full senate vote during this session of the Congress. Reintroduced in 2005, it was rejected by the senate's Republican majority. The Act recently went before the United States Senate on September 21, 2010, going unsupported, shy of 4 votes in order to be approved by the Senate (Espinoza). It then went before the Senate shortly after on December 18, 2010 this time short of 13 votes. "While the DREAM Act has garnered bipartisan support through the years, it has often been lost in more contentious debates over comprehensive immigration reform, resulting in a lack of political will to pass the legislation" (Kiessling 2).

The DREAM Act would allow undocumented aliens who live in the United States the opportunity to gain citizenship by completing a college degree within six years or by serving two years of military service. Requirements of those who would be eligible include: Arriving to the United States before age 16; having proof of residence in the U.S. for five consecutive years; being between the ages of 12 and 35 at the time of bill enactment; having graduated from an American high school or obtained a GED; and being of "good moral character" (Espinoza). "The law would also repeal section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996, which penalizes states that allow in-

state tuition regardless of immigration status: (Kiessling 2). There are already a number of states though that have passed their own laws that allow those who attended and graduated from a high school to pay in-state tuition rates regardless of their immigration status. Although the DREAM Act does not require states to grant in-state tuition to these undocumented citizens, if they meet all requirements for conditional permanent residency, they do become eligible for federal student loan and work-study programs.

“There are now 726,000 young people living in the U.S. who are eligible for legal status under the DREAM Act, currently pending before congress” (Sampling). As of now, the DREAM Act has 40 Senate cosponsors and 128 House cosponsors, with many well respected politicians and human rights activists taking a stance on the passing of the bill. Colin Powell states, “Fifty percent of our minority kids are not finishing high school. We’ve got to invest in high education. We should use the DREAM Act as one way to do it” (Citizenorange). The Defense Department has also released a statement in support of the DREAM Act, stating it is ready to help maintain a “mission- ready, all-volunteer force” (Citizenorange).

### **Supporters/Detractors of the DREAM Act**

Immigration reform, with a host of remedies is constantly being debated. Every reform proposal comes with supporters and detractors, and the DREAM Act is no different. Central to this Act is the use of education as a pathway to citizenship. My purpose is to analyze the provisions of the Act in order to determine how it might help or hinder immigration reform and higher education.

Critics of the bill argue that it will provide large scale citizenship by granting amnesty to anyone who entered the U.S. before age 16. They fear that college admission standards will become more competitive, specifically for U.S. citizens who hold a green card (Espinoza). Those in favor of the Act claim that this country graduates thousands upon thousands of undocumented individuals from the public school system who have nowhere to go to college because of residency requirements. The consequence is viewed as a waste of work force potential in the U.S. They also pose the argument that

we are unfairly restricting opportunities for individuals who are in many cases unaware that they are illegal aliens. “Many of these young people ‘learn of their illegal status only years later, when they are old enough to apply for a driver’s license or to attend college’” (Sampling). It has also become a more broad argument regarding the educational theory that the country must decide to go in, and proponents of the DREAM Act believe that, “In a world where education is an essential tool to constructing a sturdy foundation for achieving success, the DREAM Act returns the decision to the states whether to open the doors to the tool shed by extending in-state tuition to these students so that they may then enter and choose the materials that they will need to design and create the life of their dreams” (Malalli 16).

Many critics believe that having anything to do with the DREAM Act is terrible for U.S. Policy making and that only negative results can come from it. They first note that California tax payers pay more than \$50 million annually in order to subsidize the college education of illegal immigrants in California who have been permitted to pay in-state rates (Kobach 3). Critics believe that if this became the situation for the entire nation, the citizens of the U.S. would have to soak up even more outrageous amounts of money in order to assist in the education and pathway to citizenship for these illegal immigrants. Kobach also believe this legislation to be a slap in the face to both law abiding immigrants who have gone through the process of attaining citizenship legally, and also for any law abiding American. He gives the example, “A student from Missouri who attends Kansas State University has always played by the rules and obeyed the laws is charged three times the tuition charged to an alien whose very presence in the country is a violation of the law” (Kobach 3).

### **Questions to be Answered**

In this paper, I take a holistic view of the potential consequences of the DREAM Act by looking at how it affects immigration in the United States, and our system of higher education. Furthermore, I want to understand how the Act might impact state laws, affecting public university accommodations. For example, how will state universities define these students-- as in state or out of state residents?

“The key arguments for and against undocumented students’ presence in institutions of higher education fall into three broad categories: economics, cultural assimilation and crime deterrence. Versions of all three are frequently used by opponents and by many supporters of in-state tuition policies” (Rincon). Also, as the enrollment of minority groups increases, there will be a greater need for financial aid, as well as college transition support needs. With that said, aims at solving the achievement gap and increasing the affordability of college “will remain among the most important policy initiatives for the health of U.S. higher education” (Roach). If passed, the DREAM Act would increase the number of minority students entering higher education institutions at an ever higher rate, putting more pressure on these institutions to adapt. Determining how these colleges and universities would adapt and change will be an important aspect of my research.

I will also write about the possible personal consequences of this Act. For example, would an individual be willing to self-identify as an undocumented citizen? Will self-identity cause problems for families? Or will individuals be willing to identify themselves for the benefit of gaining both an education and citizenship?

To answer these questions, I have relied on the literature of immigration reform and on conversations with Latino families that the DREAM Act would potentially affect. I have ascertained how they feel about this piece of legislation, and how willing they would be to admit they are undocumented in order to reap its benefits. I will also report on some of the institutions and states that have already adopted similar initiatives. For example, several states in the west, including California, have been more radical in implementing programs such as these. I will report on their experiences about how their colleges were affected, describing the significant changes in regards to immigration. This paper will also include information whether or not this Act will alter the culture of higher education institutions.

### **Thesis Statement**

After concluding my research and interviews, I attempted to determine the cost benefit analysis of

what the DREAM Act would potentially do for higher education institutions in this country, as well as the effects it would have on immigration in the U.S. After conducting several interviews and doing extensive research on the predicted outcomes of the DREAM Act, my thesis statement is one that does not explicitly say whether or not the DREAM Act would solely be either positive or negative. It is my conclusion that in the short term, there would be several factors/issues that need immediate funds, time, and attention. Where these resources would come from is unknown. Looking at this piece of legislation on a long term basis, there are significant benefits that would be reaped by having it instated, and it would provide for the country one way of combating the immigration issue in the U.S. If the resources and attention needed become available in the near future to make the DREAM Act possible, it would ultimately be a positive thing for this country and higher education. However, if we are hasty in making this decision without being realistic about whether the country can deal with it at this time, it may create for more problems than solutions to existing issues.

### **“Self Identifying”**

I will now first delve into some of the experiences and stories of those illegal citizens who are either considering “coming out illegal” for the benefits of the DREAM Act, or who have already done so. As mentioned, there are several states who have already implemented laws that make getting a college degree more realistic for undocumented citizens. For example, California passed law AB 540 that permitted undocumented California students to pay in state tuition instead of out-of-state tuition, California being one of 11 states with such a law (Gearon 38). For students like Leslie (she requested her last name not be used), this of course makes paying for college more doable, bringing the price down from around \$33,000/year to roughly \$10,000/year. However, because she is undocumented, she does not qualify for any federal or state aid. Leslie regularly attends rallies and lobbies for the passing of the DREAM Act, knowing that it would not only make paying for college more realistic, but it would also allow for her to fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming a US citizen.

Leslie is an example of an undocumented citizen who arrived to the U.S. at the age of 6 with her

mother, barely remembering the experience. Regardless of the fact that she excelled in her Advanced Placement classes in high school, she was not sure if college could be a reality for her, and she also was not able to partake in things like voting and getting a license. Leslie exemplifies the type of person that supporters of the DREAM Act use when pushing for the passing of the bill. “Supporters argue that the legislation benefits ambitious, academically successful students who will go on to professional careers. Without the DREAM Act, many of those same young people will be stuck, much like their parents, in the underground economy” (Gearon 38). Fabiola, an undocumented activist and recent graduate of UCLA proclaims, “We are the cream of the crop. But because of something we had no choice in, our entire lives are on hold.”

Regardless of the fact that many of these undocumented citizens have been able to attain college educations due to specific state laws, following graduation there are still very few options for these college graduates, as it is unlikely that a business or firm will hire an undocumented citizen even if he or she has the other qualifications for the position. After graduation, “Leslie expects to work full time cleaning houses and waitressing. She says she hopes to earn a private scholarship for grad school, which would buy time for the DREAM Act to pass, after which she could be employed legally...for now, she knows the reality: many undocumented U.C.L.A graduates are short-order cooks, waitresses, baby-sitters, doing jobs for which they do not need a high-school diploma” (Gearon 39).

### **Effects on Higher Education Institutions**

Looking more into how this legislation could potentially affect higher education institutions if passed, “Many senior student affairs administrators consider the challenges of undocumented students as one of their top issues” (Kiessling 29). These leaders share how so often good students often live in the shadows while in college in fear of possibly being deported. They also often pay out-of-state tuition and therefore have to work a significant number of hours more than their peers. Because of this, the typical undocumented citizen is likely to avoid getting actively involved, despite their wishes to do so, and contribute “in meaningful ways to both their institutions and to this country” (Kiessling 29).



“The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) is a founding member of the Act on the DREAM Coalition, comprised largely of higher education associations and spearheaded by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and University (HACU)” (Kiessling 3). NASPA’s core values include diversity, access, and learning. NASPA Executive Director Gwendolyn Jordan Dungy released a statement in support of the DREAM Act, in accordance with the values of the organization. She stated that, “Student affairs educators are committed to increasing both access and student persistence to graduation... Yet, for the 50,000 to 70,000 undocumented students that graduate from the U.S. high schools every year, barriers still remain to their accessing higher education and reaching their full potential as contributing members of society” (Kiessling 3).

Kiessling goes on to talk about the significance that public policy plays in influencing educational opportunities for these undocumented citizens. She uses an article entitled “Why These Students” by K. Gin as an example, outlining how so many of these undocumented citizens have the opportunity to serve as powerful role models, and that it is a waste of resources if undocumented citizens do not go to college. She combats the opinions and ideas of the financial drain that undocumented aliens have on the U.S. economy in stating, “It is evident that the DREAM Act can actually help these young people become assets to society. As they move into the workforce, they will contribute their tax dollars in support of elementary and secondary education other available public services” (Kiessling 3).

Some college and universities have attempted to alleviate the burden of paying for college for these undocumented citizens by offering them special scholarships. One such college is Santa Ana College, a community college in Orange County, California that is proposing a \$2,500 institutional scholarship available to undocumented citizens. Those that oppose the DREAM Act for the most part also oppose the idea of such scholarships. Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) told Santa Ana College’s president, “that awarding of the monies would ‘continue public financing for Santa Ana College in jeopardy” and that “If they’re going to thumb their nose at the American people who are paying the bill and thumb their nose at the law, there could be moves against them” (Sampling 4).

For supporters of the DREAM Act, there is a belief that Americans should sympathize with these young illegal aliens, and understand that in so many of these cases, the aliens had no choice in their decision to come to the U.S. A film, *Don't Stop Me Now*, notes, "They were raised in the United States and consider themselves Americans" (Kiessling 1). The article goes on to discuss how undocumented citizens in the U.S. is beginning "to reflect the changing demographics of our colleges and universities and of the larger society. In fact, it is estimated that at least 65,000 undocumented students graduate from U.S. high schools each year 'with literally nowhere to go'" (Kiessling 1).

### **Related Legislation**

There have several pieces of legislation in the public school system, leading up to a bill such as the DREAM Act on the level of higher education. For example, in *Plyler v. Doe*, undocumented students in Texas were granted the right to primary and secondary education without documentation. Related to as similar feared consequence of the DREAM Act, it is explained in the bill that, "These children can neither affect their parents' conduct nor their own undocumented status" (Kiessling 2). The reasoning for this is explained: "Public education has a pivotal role in maintaining the fabric of our society and in sustaining our political and cultural heritage; the deprivation of education takes an inestimable toll on the social, economic, and intellectual, and psychological well-being of the individual, and poses an obstacle to achievement" (Kiessling 2). Proponents of the DREAM Act question how depriving well deserving students of higher education is really any different than not permitting young students to attain a primary or secondary education.

Following this piece of legislation, the next step towards anything like the DREAM Act was the 1986 *Letica A. v. UC Regents and CSU Board of Trustees*. With this, the University of California and California State University stopped requiring proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent residency for tuition purposes. However, just five years later, in *Bradford v. UC Regents*, undocumented citizens again lost the right to in-state tuition and financial aid.

It is said by the Migration Policy Institute that if the DREAM Act were to pass, some 825,000

immigrants are likely to become legal residents. Steven Camarota, research director at the Center for Immigration Studies argues what supporters of the Act believe in stating that, “the legislation would create another avenue for immigration fraud and added incentive for immigrants to come to the United States” (Gearon 38). He also noted that this rewards illegal behavior and takes college spots and financial aid from legal residents.

Supporters of the DREAM Act use a lot of these specific state laws in order to argue that the federal law is being undermined by so many states demonstrating the need to provide a more accessible education to its population, whether or not those citizens are illegal or not. “The federal attempt to guard against undocumented immigrants receiving benefits that other citizens were not receiving, is undercut by exceptions that states have made to the usual residency requirements that are said to benefit such citizens” (Malalli 15).

### **Tuition Rates, Enrollment, and Taxes**

Also a significant reason that the DREAM Act is opposed has to do with the effects it will have on American born citizens and students. Opponents believe that undoubtedly, “U.S. students will be adversely affected by the legislation” (Fair). In the article, “The DREAM Act Amnesty Bill Resurfaces in Congress,” it is stated that from 2008-2009, the average cost of tuition went up 6.5%, while California’s rates increased by 30 percent, also reducing enrollment. Because of this, 11,000 California high school seniors were put on a waiting list due to lack of space (Fair). Opponents of the DREAM Act argue that U.S. students are now going to be forced to compete with those who do not even pay taxes, nor have citizenship here. Proponents of the DREAM Act believe that this is simply a myth though, stating that “undocumented citizens should have zero impact on admission rates of native born students” (The DREAM Act). The explanation for this is that the majority of the students who will take advantage of the DREAM Act will go to community college, where there is open enrollment; the number of those who begin in a 4 year institution will be insignificant. They also believe that a long term effect of the DREAM Act on higher education institutions will be that the school’s revenue will

increase over time, thus allowing for even more students to attend college.

There is also the argument that by not allowing undocumented immigrants to the benefit of a college education, the state's educational capital is being sacrificed. As is commonly understood, those with a higher degree of education, more than likely will also earn more money over the span of their lives. This income can be transferred over to more tax revenue and economic activity, also preventing a large number of people from depending on social services. This is by far one of the most obvious potential effects that could come from the legislation of the DREAM Act if its supporters are accurate in these predictions. "Essentially, the residents who hold college degrees are considered to be the state's base for economic development and are responsible for the overall quality of life. Thus increasing the number of high school and college graduates can only benefit the quality and economic stability of a state" (National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education). There is also a significant amount of data that shows that when a state's public school system deals with high percentages of high school drop outs, this has a negative on the state economy, sometimes paying upward of \$17.2 billion in a matter of 10 years, Texas being a primary example of this (Lopez 3). The argument that proponents of the DREAM Act make is that if students that happen to be illegal immigrants feel that college is a realistic option for them, they will not be as quick to drop out because they will understand the purpose in staying in school, knowing that it could lead to a career and better life later on in years to come. "The drop- out rate for illegal children is currently estimated to be 50 percent" (Galassi 10).

### **"Coming Out Illegal"**

In attempts to make the DREAM Act a reality, thousands of students from across the nation have joined together in rallies, lobby days, parades, etc. in order to show elected officials that this is what they want. The United States Student Association is one such organization that encourages its member schools to rally for the passing of this bill and to get the students of universities and colleges across the United States to join in for the cause. In fact, the Student Association of Michigan (SAM) has even passed a resolution stating that the public universities of Michigan are in favor of this bill being passed.

One of the main questions yet to be answered is: Are illegal aliens going to be willing to admit to their status when it could potentially negatively impact their family members? As it is obvious from a lot of the specific examples given thus far, it quite clear that most illegal aliens see that the benefits more than outweigh the potential consequences that could come from this legislation. After interviewing various members of the Latino community that would potentially be impacted by this legislation, I for the most received the same type of feedback. Clearly there are some who are unwilling to risk the chance that obtaining an education and access to citizenship would put their families and friends in danger of being deported. However, the vast majority appear to be willing to be out and proud about their circumstances and status.

While attending and participating in a conference organized by the United States Student Association, I had the opportunity to conduct several personal interviews with multiple students who would directly be impacted by the DREAM Act if it were implemented. For the first time, I heard this specific group of people refer to themselves as “Dreamers.” In their interviews, they emphasized the importance of what has previously been referred to as “coming out illegal” and accredit the DREAM Act’s recent success in the House of Representatives to students being willing to share their personal stories about how it would affect their lives. For the purpose of this portion of this paper, I will mainly refer to two people that I interviewed. Both have asked that I do not use their real names. Therefore, I will call them Maria and Jose.

Jose is a student at the University of California Los Angeles and Maria is a student at the University of California South Beach. When I interviewed them, I focused on a few central ideas. It was important for me to find out from them if they think that they and the people in similar situations are going to be willing to come out as illegal, and rally together for this legislation. Jose stated, “I speak for myself and many others when I say, ‘This is about me. This is about I. It takes as little as 30 seconds for me get arrested. This is something that I need to for myself, and my fellow Dreamers are starting to understand this as well’” (Jose). Jose continued explaining that his family is not really very receptive to his decision

to rally for the DREAM Act. “My mom and brother have been able to gain citizenship through marrying Americans, so I don’t think they any longer understand the desperation and anxiety that I experience on a daily basis” (Jose). Regardless of his family's opposition, it is clear that Jose will continue to stand up for himself in the attempt to get the DREAM Act passed.

Maria on the other hand has had a very different experience regarding family support. Her family understands the struggles she faces. Despite her ability to attain an education in California, they understand what this piece of legislation could do for her. “At first, my family members were hesitant when I told them about my passion for the DREAM Act and my plans to rally and support it. But, soon they realized how it would benefit me. As much as possible, I keep myself at a distance from them; we do understand the risk involved with doing this” (Maria).

One of the aspects of these interviews that stood out the most to me, is really how relentless the Dreamers seem to be. Jose stated, “We’re still here. We’re still fighting. We will not give up” (Jose). Maria added, “We are a force to be reckoned with, and this movement can never be forced back into the shadows” (Maria).

Jose was especially passionate about talking about the topic of immigration reform. He stated, “This system is not working. It is broken. We must look at the larger problem here. We need to get to the root of the problem. Right now there is simply no timely process. This would change all of that” (Jose). He spoke of his own personal experience, “People always think of illegal aliens and think there is a realistic process that we can go through, but there isn’t. The current system is not willing to let me apply. It is so complicated” (Jose). He also emphasized how this does not only affect one group of people: “Immigration is multi-ethnic. So many communities are affected by the system and its organization. For us, the first step is to come out” (Jose).

Maria and Jose showed me a documentary created by several of their fellow Dreamers. It is entitled “What’s it Going to Take?” Speaking about immigration reform, Alaa Mukahhal states, “This is an emergency. You recognize me as your equals. What’s it going to take? I’ll sweat and cry, bleed and die

for this country. I am willing to do anything to stay. I don't know where I will be next year, month, week. It is going to take all of us" (What's). She continues with explaining that this fight for education and citizenship is, "a struggle with elders. We must branch out. We need to be realistic and we need a different strategy. This country is moving backwards. [Regarding immigration], we haven't had a victory since 1986" (What's). Something interesting that Mukahhal points out in regards to the possibility of this legislation passing, is the opposition that has begun from both the republican and democrat parties. "We are being attacked from the left because of the military clause, and the right because they do not see a need for more reform." She calls this movement "a pursuit of justice" (What's).

### **Suicide in Undocumented Youth**

Although a large majority of my intent is to concentrate on the effects that the DREAM Act would have if passed, there is also already evidence of what could potentially happen if it doesn't, or if some kind of reform is not made. In fact, it has become a recent trend for undocumented aliens to resort to suicide. Mukahhal states, "We all have personal problems. Being undocumented creates another one. Suicide should never be an option for anyone. Coming out is showing that our greatest power comes from accepting ourselves—*not* a piece of legislation...Undocumented youth need to realize their potential and power" (What's). In the same documentary, Virijana, a student from North Carolina states, "When you don't see a future for yourself, what do you do? I graduated and started working...overdosed...was hospitalized and not able to see a way out. We don't have many options...these are our lives we're fighting for" (What's).

In North Carolina, an organization has been formed entitled "El Pueblo." The group consists of college age students who are also illegal immigrants in the U.S and their purpose is to demonstrate what an economic asset they could be to the state of North Carolina if permitted to attain a higher education. They argue that as North Carolina expects for there to be a 20% increase in jobs, the state would be able to depend on those who live in the state of North Carolina, not being forced to look

elsewhere for the educated and qualified individuals for whom they are looking. They also see themselves as an asset, as they are more than likely bilingual, which is a skill that a large majority of these new jobs would require, or be helpful with. “El Pueblo drives home the point that the demographic change is a reality, that the state has already made an investment in the education of these children, and that the passage of the DREAM Act would benefit all people who live in North Carolina” (Lopez 4).

### **Hostility among Detractors**

While there are many young people coming together for this initiative, whether be directly impacted by the legislation or not, there are also large amounts of young people who are outraged with the idea of it, and have even begun to pursue lawsuits against states that have broken the federal law by already pardoning illegal immigrants in granting them in-state tuition. They want to be reimbursed in order to compensate them for the extra tuition that they have paid, above the amount that illegal immigrants are paying at the same schools. I could only predict that if the DREAM Act were to pass, there would a large amount of hostility towards the immigrants who all of a sudden would gain a pardon and a path towards citizenship, when there are American citizens sitting next to them, continuing to pay out of state tuition prices when they were born in the United States.

### **Concluding Remarks**

As I mentioned in my thesis statement, I think it clear that in order for the DREAM Act to be beneficial to higher education and immigration in this country, there is a significant amount of time, money, and resources that would needed immediately. There are state laws/policies that must be addressed; those affected by this piece of legislation must be able to have no fear that this would have negative consequences for family members; potential hostility towards illegal aliens on college campuses must not be ignored; and higher education institutions would require additional funds and resources. If these issues can be addressed and the resources can be found, the DREAM Act may be what this country has been waiting for in regards to making higher education more accessible, while



also addressing U.S. Immigration reform policy.

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