



New York Dream Act (S.4179/A.6829) Information Sheet

What is the New York Dream Act?

The New York Dream Act would allow undocumented students who meet in-state tuition requirements to access state financial aid for higher education.

Why is it important?

An estimated 146,000 youth in New York who have been educated in New York public schools are currently ineligible to receive financial aid under federal and state law. Of the more than 4,500 undocumented students who graduate from New York high schools every year, only 5-10% pursue a college degree due to tremendous financial obstacles.

Although many have attended New York schools from kindergarten through 12th grades, they are left in limbo after graduating high school, ineligible to receive federal tuition assistance, scholarships, grants or loans. With Congress' failure to pass the federal DREAM Act in 2010, it became clear that New York, as a state with one of the largest immigrant populations in the U.S, must do what Washington D.C. has failed to do and equip these students with the tools that will help them succeed in their higher education pursuits. A decade ago, New York showed leadership by making it possible for all students who graduate from a high school in New York to pay in-state tuition rates at CUNY and SUNY. The New York Dream Act would be the next step by extending state financial aid to all students who meet HESC's requirements for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

California, Texas, and New Mexico have passed state-level Dream Acts allowing undocumented students to access state funded financial aid, and New York should join them in passing legislation that is good for our community, good for our youth, and good for our economy.

Those who benefit from the bill must meet the following requirements:

- Have attended a New York high school for at least two years and graduated, or obtained a GED in New York
- Enroll in a college or university in the state of New York
- Meet Higher Education Services Corporation's requirements for TAP



Myths and Facts about the New York Dream Act (S.4179/A.6829)

Myth 1: *The Bill would provide an incentive for people to come here illegally.*

Fact: The New York Dream Act offers absolutely no reason for people to enter the country illegally. It does not legalize students nor does it provide benefits for immigrants who are not already here. In fact, the New York Dream Act requires students to graduate from a New York high school or obtain a GED in New York to qualify for state financial aid.

Myth 2: *It will be a fiscal burden and increase the strain on state educational systems.*

Fact: The New York Dream Act would make money for taxpayers. State and local taxpayers are already investing in the education of undocumented students in elementary and secondary school. It would be economically illogical to bar students from attending college and developing their careers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, those who obtain a Bachelor's degree earn \$1 million more over his or her lifetime than those with a high school degree, contributing tens of thousands of dollars to New York State's economy. The Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that undocumented immigrants paid \$662.4 million in taxes to New York state in 2010, making it the state with the fourth highest revenue in taxes from undocumented immigrants.

Myth 3: *Documented New Yorkers will lose spots in college due to passage of the New York Dream Act.*

Fact: The small number of students who will be impacted by the New York Dream Act is not significant enough to affect the opportunities of others. The colleges and universities in the 12 states, including New York, which have passed in-state tuition bills that allow undocumented students to pay in-state tuition rates have not experienced a large influx of Dreamers that have taken seats away from U.S. citizen students.

Myth 4: *The New York Dream Act is a form of amnesty and would reward people who come here illegally.*

Fact: The New York Dream Act will not legalize students. The focus of the bill is to expand access to higher education for undocumented students who live in New York and have graduated from a New York high school. These students are here to stay and we should provide them with the tools to succeed fully and contribute to the state's economy. The New York Dream Act does not provide amnesty or change immigration law. These issues must be decided at the federal level.