

Students are Investments

Instate tuition is a recruiting tool to attract local students to stay and attend college in their home state and a means to protect and grow the financial investment made in their students. Some Kansas universities offer instate tuition to snare BORDER STATE students, even though out-of-state families have most likely contributed very little to the Kansas economy. Smart universities understand that a robust student body brings revenues and a diverse talent pool of graduates to their communities. They grasp the economics of how college graduates become alumni; alumni become benefactors; and graduates become job fillers as well as creators.

Colleges have the discretion to make exceptions to the rules and give instate tuition to out-of-state recruits. They also extend instate tuition to spouses of active duty services members. Citizens can generally qualify for instate tuition in any state within a year of setting up residency in their new state, working, and not attending college more than six hours per semester the first year.

States offer instate tuition to all of their low income CITIZENS even when their families may drain state funds from top to bottom. Governor Brownback strongly preaches that the investment in the education of low income students is the stepping stone out of the traps of poverty and entitlements. The Statue of Liberty and the American Dream gives everyone on our shores the hope that if you work hard, you can achieve your God given potential. Giving someone a hand-up and teaching a man to fish makes our communities stronger. Admonishing people to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and then tying their hands behind their backs, makes for bad outcomes and poor policy. Even if Kansas graduates did not have DACA authorization, courts have examined instate tuition laws and without exception determined there is no violation for states to offer instate tuition to their graduates as long as the same is offered to citizens who meet the same residency requirements. DHS has also reviewed instate tuition requirements and concluded there is no violation of 8 U.S.C. § 1623 and determined that DACA recipients can legally be given instate tuition.

DACA Is Good for Business, Communities and Families

DACA and their families are consumers and contributors to our economy. They purchase fuel, food, housing, vehicles and other goods and services that is money in the bank for local business owners and boosts our tax revenues. Hear this clearly, DACA and immigrants without social security numbers DO NOT QUALIFY for food stamps or welfare. Immigrants are required by law to submit income tax returns, and those who do not have a social security number register and are issued federal government ITIN numbers to file and pay taxes. Limiting the number of taxpayers places a greater burdens on the remaining population.

DACA are a part of the fabric of our communities. They are teachers in inner city schools, nurses, doctors, dentists and healthcare providers desperately needed in small communities and in Western Kansas. DACA are fellow parishioners, leaders, presidents of sororities, the Science Engineering and Technology (STEM) talent that Senator Moran's STEM ACT and Governor Brownback's engineering scholarships feverishly attempts to recruit. DACA are volunteers that teach English classes, Sunday School teachers, youth group and worship leaders that make our communities stronger.

The Department of Homeland Security has declared "DACA applicants who are granted deferred action are authorized to remain in the U.S. and are lawfully present." DACA students have social security numbers, legal work permits, file income taxes, and integrate and contribute to our state. They have legal driver's licenses, they buy vehicles, and insurance. They fill unfilled jobs, and they create jobs, and they are a GAIN not a strain to our state.

DACA students have passed a high level biometrics screening. They have proven beyond a reasonable doubt their dedication to education by submitting stacks of documents and including but not limited to immunization records, transcripts, awards, JROTC service records, and diplomas, for each year they have been students in the United States. DACA students have met the rigorous requirements and paid hundreds of dollars of fees, and often thousands of dollars of legal fees before being granted **DACA. DACA is 100% SELF-FUNDED** by the fees collected. **Many jobs for U.S. citizens are created by the need of examining and processing DACA fees and paperwork, as well as processing renewals along with another set of fees. DACA is a job creator for U.S. Citizens. Trying to defund DACA and playing chicken with our National Security is risky business, and attempting to defund a self-funded programs seems nonsensical.** I would hope legislators would recognize that it is heartless to exploit DACA students by making them political fodder in response to their anger and frustration at Washington.

Yes, we are a nation of laws, and let truth complete the sound byte... our legal system is also firmly rooted in the principles of restitution and reconciliation, youth court, diversions, probations, and restitution to name a few. The justice system was not put in place for "JUST US", nor was grace. Let it be on the record that the definition of the word **AMNESTY** is a free and clear permanent no strings attached pardon, unearned and unmerited grace just like Christians received at the foot of the cross. You don't have to pay, qualify, or renew amnesty. Especially during this holy season of Lent, I prayerfully ask you not to bow to political rhetoric and cheapen the word Amnesty by using it loosely and inappropriately. DACA is a short term solution of hurdles and fees put in place to put a band-aid on a bleeding long term problem that Congress created when they failed to secure the borders, when they set unrealistic per county quotas, when they embraced an antiquated immigration system that works against our economy, and when they enacted short sighted laws in 1996 during the Clinton Administration, including bars and bans that prevents "self deportation" and puts **LEGAL IMMIGRATION IN A CHOKE-HOLD.**

Bullying, terrorizing, and kicking innocent bystanders is NOT the Kansas way. Those brought to Kansas as children, whose parents sweat and backbreaking labor has been both welcomed and needed in Kansas slaughterhouses and fields, are gifts from God to our state. They have risen above all odds to excel academically exemplifying a strong work ethic and self discipline. Their efforts to integrate and become a productive member of our great state should be both applauded and supported. There are 92 verses in the Bible on how to treat immigrants and children. Today you choose to be a blessing or a curse to them. How you choose to treat the least of these, becomes your legacy and your witness.

It is imperative to understand that when you bring hardship to DACA that are family, employees, employers, and caregivers of U.S. citizens, you negatively impact and bring hardship to the citizens as well. DACA are spouses, step children, and parents of citizens, as well as legal permanent residents. Hardship legislation could easily force citizens in mixed status families

who are NOT currently on government assistance to have to apply for entitlements. Hardship legislation would also negatively affect employers and employees of DACA recipients especially in low and high skilled industries.

DACA students, have grown up in your neighborhoods, are friends with your children, have attended your church, played on your favorite athletic team, excelled in the classroom, wore the JROTC uniform, volunteered and have contributed to our communities. It would be my hope that the anti-any-immigrant klan who constantly introduce bills that are unwanted by Kansas economic, educational, law enforcement and faith communities should redirect their efforts to solving problems, not creating them. I personally believe these bills have more to do with keeping the pot of public anger boiling, winning elections, and collecting legal fees than promoting sound public policy. Bills with this tone, have quite a history of being struck down as unconstitutional, at great expense to cities and states who owe legal fees to the crafty crafters of the bills and those of the plaintiffs as well. The concept of dismembering students lives, and attempting to abort them from the life blood of our community should be repulsive to anyone with a heartbeat. The sanctity and value of DACA recipients lives, did not end at their birth.

When bills like this one, blow into Kansas like an EF 3 tornado, I can assure you the U.S. citizens who are the neighbors, clergy, parishioners, healthcare providers, coworkers, students, teachers, family and friends of DACA recipients, will come together and step out across the aisles to advocate for them. Good policy and common sense solutions should always trump political rhetoric.

The call from clergy below, is a call to the heart. The relationship of Christians to the cross is both vertical to God and horizontal reaching to our neighbors who are calling for compassion and mercy. I am a Daughter of the American Revolution, a Native Son and Daughter of Kansas, a business owner, an educator, a taxpayer, a military family, a Bibles, Business, and Badges and Evangelical Immigration Table member. I am a compassionate conservative. I know that but for the grace of God Almighty, go I. Christians fall at the foot of the cross to freely receive mercy and grace. May God prick and open our hearts to allow us to freely give the same love and compassion to our neighbors that we have received. May the words of Topeka legendary Rev. Charles Sheldon, challenge us to ask the question WWJD? and then may we respond In His Steps.

Heed the words of Governor Brownback's and Governor Perry's friend and spiritual advisor Reverend Samuel Rodriguez, President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference: "Christ himself admonished us to permit the little ones, the children, to come to him for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them. Without a doubt, Christ stood committed to the care and protection of the most vulnerable, especially children. To continue to punish these children is nothing less than anti-Christian, anti-American and morally reprehensible.... For at the end of the day this issue is after all about dreams. Not just the dream of innocent children but the American dream. How we treat the innocent, the children and the least amongst us speaks to the moral fiber of our nation ."

Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington, said: "These young persons, who are for all practical purposes Americans like all of us, love this country so much that they risk deportation in order to advocate to become American citizens. Why would we not want to embrace their dedication, energy, talents, and courage--characteristics that have made our nation great? It would be to our detriment to forsake them."

Bishop Minerva Carcano of the Phoenix Episcopal Area of the United Methodist Church said: "These young men and women are not strangers. They have grown up in our communities. They are making our country a better place now and for generations to come. Across faith traditions, children hold a very

special place. Without DREAM, the well-being of children will be stunted and undermined. If our political leaders fail to support this, we fail to be faithful guardians of the children God placed in our care. But we will not fail. We will not fail because God is with us.”

Reverend Derrick Harkins, Senior Pastor of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church in Washington said: “It’s short-sighted and wrong-headed to say that young people who have done nothing wrong and want nothing more than to be hardworking contributors to the country they call home shouldn’t get that opportunity. The best of America’s hope and promise lies in instilling in young people the faith that their studiousness and sacrifice will lead to a better future not only for themselves, but also for the nation. The DREAM Act is a moral priority of national importance that every Member of Congress should support. If we fail in this, we fall short of the American dream.”

Rabbi Lisa Grushcow, Associate Rabbi at Congregation Rodeph Shalom in New York City said: “Judaism teaches us to love the stranger, but in this case the more relevant command is to love our neighbor. The young people who would benefit from the DREAM Act are our neighbors. My own Jewish immigrant ancestors saw America as the goldene medineh, the golden land. They knew that higher education was the key to getting the most America had to offer, and giving back in return. How can we close those doors to this next generation, who are in search of the American dream?”

Sister Simone Cambell, SSS, Executive Director, NETWORK, said: “Passage of the DREAM Act would be one step toward building up our nation by fully integrating young people into our society. These young people only know the US as their home and are committed to making our democracy work. It is the right civic action to take, but it is also the right faith action.”

Dr. Fred Kniss, Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, said: “As a private faith-based university, Eastern Mennonite University stands ready to invest its own institutional financial aid funds in developing the knowledge and skills of our gifted immigrant students, regardless of their documentation status. Without passage of the DREAM Act, American society is unable to reap the benefits of our investment. This is a great economic and social loss for our region and for society as a whole.”

Rabbi Doug Heifetz, Oseh Shalom Congregation, Laurel, Maryland, said: “Jews start every Passover seder by reading the biblical verse: ‘My father was a wandering Aramean’ (Deuteronomy 26:1). The verse reminds us of our own origins as strangers and immigrants, who arrived in this country perhaps unwelcome and afraid. However, the verse speaks only in the past tense. It thus also suggests us that each progressive generation must receive the opportunity to become better integrated and to belong more fully. The DREAM Act will allow young people who grew up here--who violated no laws in doing so--to realize their place as productive citizens, students, soldiers, working people and entrepreneurs who share a stake in America.”

The Rev. Richard Graham, Bishop, Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, said: “Last year I joined Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Lutheran leaders to urge Congress to pass the DREAM Act. Although I was disappointed that the Senate failed to pass the bill, I stand committed to working with congregations in my synod to advance just and humane solutions for these ambitious and talented young people.”

Fr. Jacek Orzechowski, O.F.M., Franciscan Friar of the Holy Name Province, said: “The DREAM Act is a moral test for our nation. How are we going to act towards the talented young men and women among us who want to develop their God’s given talents, pursue their dreams, and contribute to our society? Will we act with fear and malice, or with love and justice? The Bible is clear: when we are deaf to the cries of the poor, when we deny others their human rights, when we build wall rather than bridges, we fail God. One of the letters in the New Testament offers an important advice – not only for the people who lived 2,000 years ago, but also to us. It says: ‘Welcome and care for the stranger in your midst, for in doing so, you may be entertaining angels.’ (Heb. 13:2) As followers of St. Francis of Assisi we wholeheartedly support the DREAM Act, which embodies the values of Christ and St. Francis.”