

Dear Legislative Committee:

I am writing as a constituent to ask you to please oppose SB 254/HB 2373, which would repeal in-state tuition for ALL undocumented students and would hurt the probability of education institutions and non-profit organizations to serve vulnerable populations.

Through my previous roles in both higher education and in scholarship work, I have had the pleasure of working with a handful of undocumented students. Of over the 400 students I directly worked with over the past six years, only 8 of them were undocumented or on DACA. All waiting on a pending case, working, paying taxes, and only knowing the Kansas public school education system. This state raised them and they call it home.

Currently, HB 2175 allows us to provide an opportunity for undocumented students to pay in-state tuition through an affidavit process. Public colleges and universities in our state benefit from students enrolling, persisting, and obtaining their technical, undergraduate, and graduate degrees through tuition dollars. College is already expensive and deterring students from attending will financially impact our state in the long run.

In order for a student to currently qualify for an affidavit to allow their in-state tuition, a student must:

- Confirm they have been residing in the state of Kansas, along with proof of residency.
- Confirm that they or their parents are in current legal proceedings to obtain legal status and are in a pending status.
  - *Note: Having an education makes obtaining a visa and getting approval for DACA much easier.*
- Must have attended at minimum 3 years at an accredited Kansas High School and obtained a Kansas High School diploma.
  - *Note: Recent migrants are already not eligible, because of the 3-year requirement that they will not meet. Repealing this decision will affect students who were brought as small children and were raised in this country and in our schools.*
- Students sign off on it being a felony if any information is incorrect or falsified under K.S.A. 21-3711.

I lived in a very privileged citizen bubble in high school and thought only aunts and uncles, or those who were older, could be undocumented. It wasn't until I got to college, that I found out some of the most kind and hard-working friends I had ever been around, did not have the same opportunities as me. It was traumatizing to learn of the challenges and sacrifices being made for us to even be in the same classroom. Back in 2019, when this was also a topic on the line, we worked together to support our friends and bring their stories to light. They struggled to pay for in-state tuition, but they never complained and worked hard. They all have since then graduated,

started their adult jobs and participate in our skilled, essential, workforce. All who are currently nurses, teachers, social workers, and engineers. My lifelong friends I made while at Wichita State University give back, contribute to our community, and are grateful for the opportunity to have gone to school. Without in-state tuition, that would not have been possible.

Because of my friends, I went into higher education and wanted to help all students restore the faith that no matter where they come from, it is possible if they work hard and don't give up. These students have more grit, determination, and courage to succeed, despite all obstacles placed in front of them. They are already not eligible for most of the experiences their peers are growing up. Such as obtaining a driver's license, applying for an internship, or working on their schools campus. They work to pay their expensive tuition in full and out of pocket because they are already ineligible for federal aid. This includes grants and any loans they could potentially qualify for through the government. A majority of scholarships require citizenship due to funding restrictions. Undocumented students are not taking anything away from US-born citizens. They are already not eligible.

My students have still found ways to volunteer in our communities, shadow their future employers, and gain applied learning experiences that provide them the continued HOPE that by the time they graduate college, there will be a resolution to their status they had no control over as a child. Their motivation is to be able to be successful, contribute to our state and economy, and create a legacy for their families. To be a product of the American Dream. Do not let young adults suffer. **Please allow them to CONTINUE TO PAY IN FULL the domestic rate of in-state tuition and contribute to our great state.**

I urge you to prevent the repeal of in-state tuition for undocumented students by opposing SB254/HB2373.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nayeli Cano

11022 W Ryan St.  
Wichita, KS 67205  
[nxcano@gmail.com](mailto:nxcano@gmail.com)  
(316) 259-8030