

Resolution in Support of the Federal DREAM Act and Institutionalized Aid

Whereas, the Undergraduate Students Association Council works to fairly represent student interests, needs, and welfare.¹

Whereas, the UCLA Principles of Community upholds that diversity is critical to maintaining excellence in all endeavors.

Whereas, the recent 32% fee increase caused heightened difficulty for all UCLA students; budget cuts overall resulting in a less affordable education.

Whereas, the fee increase within the UC system causes undocumented students to be among the most vulnerable to extreme academic and financial pressure.

Whereas, each year, more than 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high school in the United States.²

Whereas, in the state of California alone, over 28,000 of these undocumented students reside.

Whereas, undocumented students, regardless of their hard work, dedication, and years in the United States, are still ineligible for any form of university-related scholarships, federal loans, grants, or work study.³

Whereas, the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, or the Federal DREAM Act, is a bipartisan bill that seeks to recognize the hard work of undocumented students and provide equitable access to education.

Whereas, the Federal DREAM Act currently has 40 co-sponsors in the Senate and 154 in the House of Representatives.

¹ USAC Constitution; Preamble

² Los Angeles Times Article "Aid for All Students," Chancellor Robert Birgeneau, July 7, 2007

³ CollegeBoard.com, "Advising Undocumented Students – Higher Education Obstacles and Possibilities," Accessed July 10, 2010

Whereas, numerous student groups like IDEAS at UCLA and the Bruin Democrats continuously support the DREAM Act through lobbying, organizing demonstrations and leading educational campaigns across the country.

Whereas, the DREAM Act provides undocumented individuals of good, moral character who have lived in the United States for at least 5 years and attend a 2- or 4-year university a path to conditional permanent residency after completing their college degree within a six (6) year period.⁴

Whereas, this bill aids in alleviating the financial hardship of a college education by providing undocumented students access to financial aid in the form of loans and work-study.

Whereas, the DREAM Act is at a critical state in the federal legislative system and all measures to support the undocumented population at UCLA should be sought out.

Whereas, undocumented students have staged numerous actions ranging from sit-ins to hunger strikes in support of the DREAM Act.

Whereas, the DREAM Act has been in the Senate Judiciary committee and California Senator Diane Feinstein has the political power to bring it to a vote.

Whereas, the University Of California Board Of Regents is concurrently reviewing a policy that, upon approval, will allow all students access to institutionalized financial aid.

Whereas, all UC students pay fees – at least 20% of which goes towards financial aid.⁵

Whereas, currently, without institutionalized aid, some students because of legalization status have no access to the funding pool in which they contribute.

Whereas, the UC Office of the President's Commission on the Future, after reviewing the significant needs of undocumented students, the impact of the fee increase on their retention rates, made recommendations to pass institutionalized aid system-wide.⁶

⁴ www.dreamact.info, Accessed July 10, 2010

⁵ UCLA Registrar, Student Fee Breakdown 2009-2010

⁶ UC Commission on the Future, First Round Recommendations, p. 64-66

Whereas, both the DREAM Act and institutionalized aid are not advocating for reform to the California or United States' immigration policies; rather, these initiatives work to recognize that education is a right and should be affordable to all.

Whereas, receiving institutionalized aid is only a temporary solution, and thus USAC must offer simultaneous support for its passage as well as the national implementation of the DREAM Act to ensure equal access to education for all students.

Be it resolved, this August 3rd 2010, that the Undergraduate Students Association supports student efforts and endorses the passage of the Federal DREAM Act.

Be it resolved, that USAC urges Senator Feinstein to bring the DREAM Act up to a vote in the Senate Judiciary committee.

Be it further resolved, that USAC urges the University Of California Board Of Regents to approve institutionalized financial aid to all students – regardless of race, creed, economic background, legalization status, and country of origin.

Be it finally resolved, that USAC urges UCLA students, faculty and administration to support these national and statewide initiatives that support the undocumented student population at UCLA.