



NYIC 2016 State Policy & Budget Priorities

Access to Tuition Assistance

Recommendation

Open access to state tuition assistance to all students, regardless of immigration status. This would allow over eight thousand young New York State undocumented immigrants to receive important financial assistance to attend college.

- **Include access to tuition assistance provisions in enacted FY2017 budget.** The Governor and State Legislature should include provisions in the State budget to open access to the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) as standalone provisions not linked to any other priority, and should ensure that \$27 million is included in the budget to cover the expanded TAP costs.
- **Pass the New York State DREAM Act.** The Governor and State Legislature should pass the New York State DREAM Act bills S.2378 and A.2597.

History

- **2011:** New York State Dream Act (NYSDA) is first introduced.
- **2013:** Assembly passes NYSDA for first time, Senate does not bring to the floor for a vote.
- **2014:** Assembly passes NYSDA; Governor Cuomo publicly states he would sign NYDA if it passes the Legislature. In an evening vote, Senate brings NYSDA to the floor for the first time and it fails by 2 votes (30 in favor - 29 opposed).
- **2015:** Assembly passes NYSDA. Governor Cuomo includes tuition assistance provisions in preliminary FY 2016 Executive Budget at \$27m, but is removed in the enacted FY2016 budget.

Services Funded

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

Community Need and Background

Five states – California, Texas, Illinois, New Mexico and Washington – have passed legislation to extend public and private financial assistance to DREAMers to help them pay for college. In New York, thousands of young people graduate from high school each year with little hope of pursuing their dreams of higher education because their undocumented status makes them ineligible for financial aid. While in-state tuition has made college more accessible, it is still often beyond financial reach for too many undocumented students.

New York State should make an investment of \$27 million in the TAP program to cover the costs, and include accompanying legislation to open up the TAP program and to alter restrictions related to immigration status to allow certain State resident undocumented immigrant youth to access this funding.

Opportunity and Talking Points

Opening access to state tuition assistance to all students is not only the right thing to do, it is also good economic policy. In these challenging economic times, passing state DREAM legislation or including it in the state budget is an important means of generating growth for our state's economy.

- The Office of the State Comptroller estimates that New Yorkers who earn an associate's degree pay approximately **\$35,000 in additional State taxes over the course of their lifetime**, compared those with only a high school diploma.
- New Yorkers who earn a bachelor's degree **earn \$25,000 more per year and pay an additional \$5,000 or more per year in State taxes** compared to those without a degree.
- Providing state financial assistance to DREAMers only costs **2% of the overall TAP budget**.
- With the additional tax revenue, the DREAM Act **would pay for itself in only six years**.

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