

MISSOURI IN-STATE TUITION TALKING POINTS

SB 296

Opening up the doors to higher education to all students, regardless of their immigration status.

1. These are good, Missouri-raised students that have deep roots in our community.
 - Nearly all are long-time Missouri residents who have attended elementary, middle, and high school in Missouri and who consider Missouri their only home.
 - They speak English and consider themselves American.
 - Nearly all are from Missouri tax-paying families that have long resided in Missouri.
 - They have excelled in school and many are at the top of their class. They have undergone the same academic requirements as their native-born classmates.
 - Educators say, “I just want my whole class to have the opportunity to go to college” and students say, “I want to go to college to become a cardiologist, lawyer, professor, or some type of professional.”
2. Missouri's economic prosperity depends on these kids; it is unwise to deny postsecondary education to these high-achieving young students in our community.
 - College graduates have higher earnings than high school graduates – this has implications not only for the well being of the communities where those graduates reside, but also for the increased tax contributions and social insurance payments that they can make to the state and nation.
 - According to a 1998 Rand Corporation report, if we could increase the college completion rate of today's Latino 18-year olds by as little as three percentage points, we would increase projected social insurance payments by \$600 million.
 - Denying or limiting access to higher education for these students would have negative impacts on our state
 - It would exacerbate the high dropout rate that currently exists among Latino students, and Missouri risks losing students who are among its best and brightest.
 - It would deprive us of future teachers, doctors, engineers, military, and leaders.
 - Remember these students are unlikely to leave the state after achieving a college diploma, which will not add to the brain drain that our state experience when some of our best and brightest leave the state of Missouri for other opportunities in other states.
3. Our society does not punish kids for the actions of their parents.
 - These children were brought to the U.S. at a very young age by their parents, and therefore, took no part in their parents' decision to move to the United States.
 - The traditional paths of obtaining legal permanent residence – family and employment sponsorship – are closed to these students.
 - These kids have played by the rules and have done nothing wrong.
 - The fiscal contributions of these immigrants would pay back our education investment within 3-4 years of their working, by conservative estimates.
 - Alan Greenspan and other economists warn that, over the next several decades, the US faces a dramatic labor crunch as our baby boomers retire and our birth rate declines. These immigrant students are a ready and willing part of that solution, if we only allow them to further their educations.
 - The Supreme Court ruled in *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) that legal residency in the U.S. is not a requirement for enrollment in a K-12 public school. Students, regardless of immigration status, are allowed to go to school through high school. Undocumented students who want to go to college have successfully made it through our K-12 system. We have already invested in their primary and secondary education.
4. States that allow undocumented college-bound students reduced tuition rates if they meet certain requirements.
 - Texas, California, Utah, New York, Washington, Illinois, Oklahoma, Delaware, and Kansas.

If you have questions or would like more information about state or federal legislation affecting immigrant students and their access to postsecondary opportunities, please contact Ezekiel Amador III, Coordinator Missourians for In-state Tuition (zekeamador@aol.com) 816-616-7619 or Ana Pizarro Catholic Community Services Hispanic Center, 314-773-6100.