

February 23rd, 2015

House Education Committee
Chairman Ron Highland
10th & Jackson
Topeka, Kansas 66612

RE: House Bill 2139

Chairman Highland and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Lalo Munoz. I am native Kansan, a graduate of our public school system and most importantly a product of a higher education. I am here as a private citizen opposed to House Bill 2139.

I oppose the repeal of Instate Tuition because I believe it is in our state's best interest to invest in our best and brightest whoever they may be, and to keep them right here in Kansas. Too many of our young people either do not continue with education after high school or leave our state entirely. We need to encourage more students to continue their education and to encourage them to do it while staying in Kansas. Instate Tuition, does both.

These young students who came here to share their stories are not the first who have achieved success as a result of Instate Tuition and hopefully they won't be the last. They were given nothing but an opportunity. Their success was a result of their hard work and determination and our state is better off for it.

But it isn't just these students who are better off as a result of Instate Tuition. It is our communities as well. Every student a university or college brings to their community has an added economic impact. Because these students don't qualify for financial aid, these students spend their personal income on room and board, living expenses such as groceries, leisure activities among other items. Our colleges and universities are better off as a result and our communities across Kansas are as well.

It isn't just supporters of Instate Tuition for undocumented students that understand the positive economic impact this has on communities. Others do too. Washburn University announced that it would begin to offer of instate tuition to all Missouri freshman next year. Currently they offer instate tuition to Missouri students from 8 counties. And Washburn University isn't the only school to offer this deal, Fort Hays State University, Emporia State University, Pittsburg State University all offer instate tuition as a means to lure students to their campus but also residents to their local communities.

These students here in this room, represent some of the best and the brightest our state has to offer. They are part of the solution to the problems we face in our state today, not part of the problem.

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