

Whereas, Undocumented youths account for 1.8 million of the estimated 12 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States; and

Whereas, With approximately 625,000 undocumented immigrants, New York is home to the third largest such population in the nation; and

Whereas, On March 22, 2011, New York State Senator Bill Perkins and State Assemblyman Guillermo Linares introduced the New York Dream Act (S. 4179/A. 6829), a bill that would provide benefits to certain undocumented immigrants; and

Whereas, The federal DREAM Act was introduced on March 18, 2010, and was intended to provide permanent residency to certain undocumented students who arrived in the United States as undocumented youths, resided in the United States for at least five years, and who were in good moral standing; and

Whereas, The federal DREAM Act would have benefited more than 65,000 undocumented students who graduate from high school in the United States on a yearly basis; and

Whereas, Unfortunately, the federal DREAM Act failed in the United States Congress in December, 2010; three months later New York State legislators introduced the New York Dream Act; and

Whereas, Unlike the federal Dream Act, the New York State Dream Act will not offer legal residency, but will provide an opportunity for undocumented immigrants to obtain state, city, town, and/or village funded financial aid; and

Whereas, These benefits available under the New York Dream Act will greatly improve the quality of life of many undocumented students who, as children, were brought to this country by their parents, have no right to obtain legal permanent resident status and are at risk of being deported; and

Whereas, In order to receive the benefits of the New York State Dream Act, an individual would have to establish that he or she (i) graduated from high school with a high school diploma or its equivalent, (ii) entered the United States undocumented before the age of eighteen, (iii) is under the age of 35, (iv) has never been convicted of a violent felony in the United States or its territories, and (v) resided in New York State for at

least two years prior to the effective dates of the statutes; and

Whereas, Undocumented youth are entitled to public education through the 12th grade and are eligible to enroll in most colleges and universities and pay in-state tuition, but they are ineligible for most forms of financial aid because of their immigration status; and

Whereas, As undocumented students are ineligible for financial assistance, it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to attend college because of the high cost of higher education and the fact that they cannot work legally anywhere in the United States, including in New York City; and

Whereas, Undocumented immigrants make significantly less than documented workers, but if given the opportunity to attend college, they can earn over one million dollars more in their lifetimes as college graduates than as non-college graduates; and

Whereas, New York State is one of the twelve states that currently allow undocumented students to qualify for in-state tuition; and

Whereas, If the New York Dream Act passes, New York will become one of three states that allow undocumented students to apply for financial assistance; and

Whereas, If enacted, the New York Dream Act could benefit the estimated 345,000 undocumented immigrant youths currently enrolled in the public school system; and

Whereas, Enacting the New York Dream Act will help the many undocumented students who have been in this country for several years, who have demonstrated a commitment to education, and who seek to work legally to benefit this great State; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, the New York Dream Act, which would grant certain benefits to eligible undocumented immigrants.

JSM
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