



Legislation Text

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Res. No.1349

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the New York Dream Act (A. 6829-C/S. 4179 -C) to provide benefits to any children of a professional immigrant recruited to serve the United States through public service at the local, state, or federal level, regardless of their age at the time of arrival or at the time of application for benefits.

By Council Members Jackson, Williams, Arroyo, Barron, Brewer, Cabrera, Chin, Dickens, Ferreras, Gonzalez, James, Koo, Mendez, Palma, Rose, Vann, Wills, Rodriguez, Eugene, Dromm and Mark-Viverito

Whereas, Immigrants come to the United States for a variety of reasons, whether for study, to be reunited with family, or for professional opportunities; and

Whereas, Approximately ten years ago, the United States started recruiting international professionals to fill shortages in various industries; and

Whereas, Thousands of these international professionals were recruited to work in New York City as teachers, professors, and healthcare workers; and

Whereas, International professionals were made various promises, including, but not limited to, a promise that they would have the ability to sponsor their children for U.S. citizenship in order to provide them with a pathway to permanent residency in the United States; and

Whereas, Many of the children of these international professionals, who were born abroad and brought to the United States by their parents at a young age, identify solely with American culture and society; and

Whereas, Once these children turn 21, the types of immigration relief available to them are limited; and

Whereas, The process for many international professionals to legalize their status has taken longer than

anticipated, causing these children to age out of eligibility for permanent residency before their parents were in a position to sponsor them; and

Whereas, For these children, lack of legal immigration status makes them ineligible for financial assistance when pursuing a higher education; and

Whereas, Children of international professionals would greatly benefit from the current New York Dream Act legislation; although it will not provide them with a pathway to citizenship, it will alleviate some of the hardships, such as the high cost of tuition, that they face when entering college as undocumented immigrants; and

Whereas, Under the current New York Dream Act legislation, in order to receive such benefits, an individual would have to meet a series of qualifications, including but not limited to, having entered the United States before turning 18, being under 35 years of age when applying for benefits, and having attended a New York high school for two or more years; and

Whereas, The New York State Legislature should amend the New York Dream Act legislation, to permit the children of international professionals to be eligible for tuition relief regardless of their age either at the time of entry into the United States, or at the time of application for benefits, or the duration of their attendance in a local high school; and

Whereas, This is important because the current set of qualifications would exclude many of the children of international professionals from benefitting from the New York Dream Act, hindering their access to higher education; and

Whereas, For example, some of these children accompanied their parents to the United States towards the end of their high school educations and only needed one additional year in school in order to receive their

high school diplomas; and

Whereas, The current two-year high school attendance requirement does not consider the special circumstances faced by this population and will limit the opportunities of this population to advance economically and socially; and

Whereas, If amended, the benefits provided by the New York Dream Act would improve the quality of life for many of these children of international professionals who might not otherwise qualify; and

Whereas, Creating access to higher education for these children of international professionals is imperative in the absence of comprehensive immigration reform; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the New York Dream Act (A. 6829-C/S. 4179-C) to provide benefits to any children of a professional immigrant recruited to serve the United States through public service at the local, state, or federal level, regardless of their age at the time of arrival or at the time of application for benefits.

JSM
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