



Dannel P. Malloy

GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

February 13, 2018

Sen. Beth Bye
Rep. Gregory Haddad
Sen. Art Linares
Rep. Pam Staneski

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 1800
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Testimony from Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman in support of H.B. 5031,
An Act Equalizing Access to Student-Generated Financial Aid.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on such a vital issue.

We are a nation of immigrants and, here in Connecticut, we celebrate the immense value immigrant families bring to our communities and the contributions they make to our economy.

Education and career preparation is one of the most effective tools we have to combat poverty. And, access to affordable higher education is a path to financial independence for millions across our country. To deny undocumented students access to affordable higher education goes against the very core of who we are. That is why we have long been advocates for doing whatever we can to help hardworking students – regardless of immigration status – succeed. We know our state stands to benefit by welcoming them, along with their talents, to our communities and to our schools.

As Governor and Lieutenant Governor, we have supported historic legislation to ensure that undocumented students in Connecticut are able to access in-state tuition at institutions of higher education –so that no young person is denied the opportunity to reach their full potential and promise. We have also championed other efforts to make college more affordable for undocumented students by supporting scholarships for both in-state and out-of-state Dreamers.

Many of the students we are talking about are just as American as our own children. By definition, their parents brought them to our country when they were under the age of 16, but often they came as infants. They don't speak another language or know another nation. Connecticut is home to them, often indistinguishable from the way individuals born here consider our state home. They have been raised and educated in our school systems. They contribute to Connecticut's economy. The circumstances by which they arrived in the United States should not be the determining factor in their access to affordable higher education.

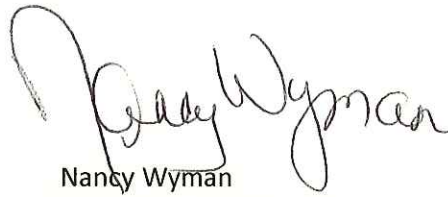
This year, these efforts are more important than ever. We have seen unprecedented attacks against immigrants, documented or not. Connecticut is better than this. We are better than this. We have a moral obligation to do whatever we can to ensure that young people have access to full and productive lives-and that starts with ensuring access to education.

We are proud to stand in support of providing undocumented students access to financial aid so they can access affordable higher education and we look forward to continuing the dialogue with you throughout the legislative session.

Sincerely,



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor



Nancy Wyman
Lieutenant Governor