

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION RESOLUTION (2011- 02)

Resolution in Support of the Illinois DREAM Act (SB 2185—Sen. Cullerton, Rep. Acevado)

By David Wise, Student Senator for the College of Education and Human Services

WHEREAS, the Student Government Association (SGA) is vested with the authority to represent all of the students of the University of Illinois at Springfield in issues affecting them; and

WHEREAS, based on the Fall 2010 headcount of 5,174 registered students at the University of Illinois at Springfield, only 180 of these students are Hispanic or Latino consequently reducing the benefit and impact of intellectual diversity at our institute of higher learning; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) facilitates an easier transition from secondary education into collegiate education for young people who were brought to the United States as minors; and

WHEREAS, the state of Illinois has the sixth largest immigrant population in the nation, Illinois' population is now 13.5% foreign-born, compared to 12.3% in 2000; and

WHEREAS, while the state's population grew by 3% (365,750 people) since 2000, the immigrant population grew by 12% (183,469 people); and

WHEREAS, only 5-10 percent of undocumented high school graduates further their education at the collegiate level (65,000 Illinois students fail to attend college because of lack of documentation), the Illinois DREAM Act would create a strong incentive for undocumented students to remain in school until graduation; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois DREAM students have been raised and educated in the state, taxpayers have already invested in the elementary and secondary education of these children; and

WHEREAS, the DREAM Act will require that school counselors and officers receive regular training regarding educational opportunities for immigrant youths, having accurate information would give DREAM youths the hope they need to continue their educations and help reduce the rates of high school dropouts; and

WHEREAS, many qualified DREAM students do not have the financial resources to pursue college (an estimated 65% of DREAM youths come from households that earn below 200% of the poverty line) the Illinois DREAM Act would establish a privately-funded Illinois DREAM Fund,

administered by a volunteer state commission, to make scholarships available to undocumented students at no cost to taxpayers along with also opening up college savings programs and prepaid tuition programs to all Illinois residents, so that the families of DREAM students will be better able to pay for tuition; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois DREAM Act would enable them to get driver's certificates that would have the added benefit of getting these youths tested and insured, reducing the number of uninsured drivers and reducing insurance rates for other drivers; and

WHEREAS, the other two University of Illinois institutions (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and University of Illinois at Chicago) have passed similar resolutions supporting the DREAM Act; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Student Government Association of the University of Illinois at Springfield understands that our state needs to focus on economic concerns by investing in the educational aspirations of all Illinois students (regardless of immigration status); and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Student Government Association of the University of Illinois at Springfield strongly encourages the Illinois General Assembly to promptly pass the Illinois Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act SB 2185.

President Van Vossen

Secretary Kirschbaum