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Kansas Catholic Conference Supports House Amendment to Retain In-State Tuition for Undocumented Migrants

The Kansas Catholic Bishops and their public policy voice, the Kansas Catholic Conference, respectfully but emphatically ask that Kansas House members support an anticipated amendment allowing certain undocumented migrants to continue accessing in-state tuition rates at state regent schools, SB 254

A quick review of this issue is in order. The policy in place since 2004 provides for the option of an in-state tuition rate for students in Kansas who are here without legal documentation.

But importantly, there are specific conditions to qualify:

- Students must have attended an accredited Kansas high school for AT LEAST THREE YEARS.
- Students must have graduated from a Kansas high school or earned a GED in Kansas and be accepted into a Kansas state postsecondary institution.
- **And perhaps most important of all, they must file an affidavit confirming their intent to legalize their status.**
- These same Kansas students, including a great many DACA (“Dreamer”) recipients, are not eligible for federal scholarship aid like Pell Grants.

Virtually every elected official in Washington, D.C., from President Trump to leaders and members of both parties in the Senate and House, have pledged their support to address these “Dreamers,” the vast majority of whom were brought into this country through no fault or action of their own. Public opinion polls show that the American people want this issue resolved as well. Of all the immigration issues, it’s the “low hanging fruit” that can help bring clarity to our dysfunctional immigration system.

These young Kansans do not wish to be political pawns in a fight they had nothing to do with. They want the American dream. Denying this provision to them would be a practical and symbolic step backwards in the contentious immigration debate.

Please support the anticipated amendment, like one that failed in the Senate **by one vote**, when brought to the floor during debate on SB 254. Thank you.