



Statement in Opposition to HF 1323

March 24, 2026

The North Star Alliance (NSA) comprises over thirty community and faith based organizations and is committed to legislation that welcomes and protects all Minnesotans, regardless of immigration status. We oppose HF 1323, which would prohibit state funded financial aid to undocumented students who have completed their K-12 education in the state of Minnesota. Consequently, this bill would overturn the Minnesota Dream Act which provides state financial aid for undocumented children that met residency requirements. Many undocumented students have lived here in Minnesota for years and wish to pursue careers that contribute to their communities. Without financial aid, college becomes out of reach for many capable students.

The Minnesota Dream Act benefits people who are our neighbors and have been working alongside us, going to school with our children, and paying taxes for decades. It provides economic benefits for all of us thanks to their contributions. Research shows that banning access to state tuition subsidies or enrollment reduces college education among undocumented students.¹ In contrast, policies that expand access to higher education can significantly increase participation. For example, an analysis of the Minnesota Dream Act found that the policy boosted college enrollment among undocumented students by up to 30 percentage points starting in 2017, using a synthetic control method to compare Minnesota with similar states.²

Encouraging first and second generation students to pursue higher education, regardless of their status, helps prepare them to meet critical workforce and skills needs for the local economy.³ For example, the percentage of health aides in Minnesota who are first-generation immigrants is approximately 24.1% (First-generation immigrants were born abroad and immigrated to the U.S).⁴ Expanding access to higher education also benefits Minnesota's economy. College graduates typically earn higher wages, pay more in taxes, and contribute to their communities through spending and participating in the workforce.

¹ Neeraj Kaushal, Julia Shu-Huah Wang, Xiaoning Huang, *State Dream Acts and Education, Health and Mental Health of Mexican Young Adults in the U.S*, Economics & Human Biology, Volume 31, 2018, Pages 138-149, ISSN 1570-677X, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ehb.2018.08.013>.

² Jorge Encinas, *Essays on Immigration and Postsecondary Education* (2024) (Doctoral dissertation) (Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences), <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=immigration&id=ED657437>.

³ Higher Education Immigration Portal, <https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/state/minnesota/>

⁴ *Id.*



HF 1323 would eliminate pathways for students to seek higher education to pursue their dreams instead of toiling the rest of their lives doing some of the most dangerous jobs that they and their parents have been forced into to make ends meet.⁵ Graduates from our state institutions go on to start businesses and provide community leadership.

Data and research from around the country underscore those benefits:⁶

- **Economic Benefits to the State:** Research indicates that offering in-state tuition to undocumented students often increases overall school revenues rather than increasing costs. Educated students, regardless of status, are more likely to secure higher-paying jobs, which boosts local economies and tax revenues.
- **Workforce Development and Tax Contributions:** Many undocumented students, especially DACA recipients, are already part of the U.S. workforce and contribute billions in taxes. Access to higher education allows them to fill critical shortages in fields like health care and technology.
- **Fairness and Educational Equity:** Many of these students grew up in the U.S., attended local schools, and are indistinguishable from their peers except for their immigration status. Denying them in-state tuition (making them pay international rates) often makes higher education financially impossible.
- **Improved Long-Term Outcomes:** Tuition equity policies have been shown to reduce high school dropout rates among this population, as they can see a viable path to a college degree. Furthermore,, in-state tuition increases the number of students who can enroll in more classes per semester, decreasing the time it takes to earn a degree.
- **Social Inclusion:** Providing equal tuition rates is considered a socially responsible, equitable policy that encourages civic engagement and recognizes the academic efforts of long-term residents

⁵ Hannah Dreier, Alone and Exploited, Migrant Children Work Brutal Jobs Across the U.S., New York Times (Feb. 28, 2023), <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/25/us/unaccompanied-migrant-child-workers-exploitation.html>.

⁶ Tanya Broder & Ignacia Rodriguez Kmec, Higher Education for Immigrant Students, National Immigration Law Center (Sept. 8, 2025), <https://www.nilc.org/resources/toolkit-higher-education-for-immigrant-students/>; Tanya Broder, Basic Facts About In-State Tuition for Undocumented Immigrant Students, National Immigration Law Center (Sept. 8, 2025), <https://www.nilc.org/resources/basic-facts-instate/>; Micaela McConnell & Steven Hubbard, The Fight Over In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students, American Immigration Council (Sept. 19, 2025), <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/fight-over-in-state-tuition-undocumented-students/>.



For these reasons, HF 1323 will make it more difficult for Minnesota students to access higher education and fully contribute to their communities and our state's economy. Please oppose this legislation.

North Star Alliance Leadership Team

- Comunidades Organizando el Poder y la Acción Latina (COPAL)
- Episcopal Church of Minnesota
- Communities Advancing Prosperity for Immigrant (CAPI USA)
- Jewish Community Action (JCA)
- Asylum Coalition for Transition - Twin Cities (ACT-TC)
- Fe y Justicia
- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU-MN)
- Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance (MUUSJA)
- Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL)
- Interfaith Coalition on Immigration (ICOM)