

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 515

Approved November 10, 2011

WHEREAS, Education is a basic human right, entitled to every child, regardless of place of birth or immigration status; and

WHEREAS, To compete in the rapidly changing global marketplace, Rhode Island needs more highly skilled and highly educated workers; and

WHEREAS, Having a college education is key to finding a good paying, middle-class job in today's economy; and

WHEREAS, The average American college graduate earns about 30% more annually than someone without a college education; and

WHEREAS, Tuition at the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island is about two and a half times more expensive for out-of-state students than for those receiving in-state tuition; and

WHEREAS, Even with in-state tuition, Rhode Island's college students have the eighth highest average student debt in the country; and

WHEREAS, According to the Department of Homeland Security, there are more than 1.2 million undocumented immigrants under the age of 18 living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, As minors, these undocumented children had no say in how they immigrated to this country and no control over their immigration status; and

WHEREAS, Undocumented children grow up immersed in American culture and the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, Up until recently, all undocumented students, even those who were raised in Rhode Island and attended local public schools, were required to pay out-of-state tuition at State-run institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, The significantly higher cost of tuition served as a barrier preventing many qualified Rhode Island residents from receiving a college education and pursuing the "American Dream"; and

WHEREAS, In September, the Board of Governors for Higher Education decided to extend in-state tuition to undocumented Rhode Island residents who attended a local public school for at least three years graduated or obtained a GED from a Rhode Island high school, and who agree to pursue full citizenship as soon as they are eligible; and

WHEREAS, With the Board of Governors' decision, Rhode Island joined 12 other states, including California, Connecticut, and Texas, that apply in-state tuition regardless of immigration status; and

WHEREAS, The new in-state tuition policy will help make Rhode Island a more competitive, more just, and more egalitarian place to live, work, and learn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence hereby expresses its support for the decision by the Board of Governors for Higher Education's decision to extend in-state tuition to undocumented students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council does hereby thank and congratulate the Board of Governors for Higher Education for making this just and historic decision.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to Board of Governors of Higher Education, to Governor Lincoln Chafee, and to the members of the Providence delegation in the General Assembly.

IN CITY COUNCIL

NOV 03 2011

READ AND PASSED

W. J. Smith
PRES.

Ann M. Stee
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

Agd. Taveras
Mayor

Date: 11/12/11