

Dear Committee on State and Federal Affairs,

My name is Viviana Rodriguez and I've been living in Mission, Kansas for 13 years. I'm asking you not to repeal in-state tuition. I was an undocumented student before qualifying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). I was 3 years old when I first arrived in Kansas with my mother. I have no memory of ever living in Mexico or of when I first arrived to the United States. To be an American to me isn't defined by a green piece paper, it's defined by the opportunity of pursuing a better future. In-state tuition would help me become closer to achieving my American dream.

When my mother and I moved here, it was so that I could have a better future so that I could fulfill the American dream. Life in Mexico wasn't very good, jobs are hard to find and the wages aren't good enough to raise a family. My mom wants me to graduate and go to college to become someone in life. She doesn't want me working in a low paying job doing something I don't like, the same way she does. She wants me to wake up every day and be excited to go to work. She doesn't want me living paycheck by check; she wants me to be able to enjoy life and be able to give my own children the things they need. My mom has always believed in higher education. My mom has always sacrificed so much for me, her family, her life, and her health. In Mexico going to college is almost impossible due to the fact that benefits like in-state tuition and scholarships are virtually nonexistent.

For me, school has always been my priority. I've always dreamed of going to KU or K-State to major in International Relations and Human Rights. I've always believed in helping out people and fighting for the rights of each individual and I feel that if I prepare myself with higher education then I will be better prepared to help out my community. With in-state tuition college is a lot more affordable for me, but without it college would be just a dream. This is why WE need in-state tuition, so that everyone has a better, more affordable opportunity to go to college and better themselves.

Thank you,

Viviana Rodriguez