

# Massachusetts Tuition Equity for Dreamers:

## What You Need to Know:

### > Limited In-State Tuition Eligibility Leaves Massachusetts Behind Other States

Since 2012, state Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients have been [eligible](#) for in-state tuition at all public colleges and universities in Massachusetts. They must meet the same requirements for establishing residency in Massachusetts that are required of a US citizen; and, provide appropriate immigration documentation to verify they are “lawful Immigrants.” However, the [majority](#) of the [11,000+ undocumented students](#) in higher education and the [vast majority](#) of the [3,000 Dreamers](#) graduating high school annually in the commonwealth are excluded from in-state tuition access because they are not able to obtain DACA and/or are not eligible for it.

In contrast, [23 states and DC](#) have enacted legislation extending in-state tuition eligibility to undocumented students, including those with and without DACA. [17 of these states and DC](#) have extended both in-state tuition and in-state financial aid eligibility, including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, among others. Massachusetts has not passed any such legislation, leaving Massachusetts at a competitive disadvantage.

### > The Opportunity to Extend Tuition Equity

The legislature is now considering the 2024 [annual state budget](#), with a provision that would extend in-state tuition and financial aid to undocumented students who meet certain criteria, including those who:

1. Attended high school in the commonwealth for not less than 3 years
2. Graduated from a high school in the commonwealth or earned the equivalent
3. Sign and submit an affidavit stating their intent to apply for citizenship or lawful permanent residence within 120 days of eligibility for such status

### > A Comparison of In-State Tuition vs. Out-of-State Tuition in Massachusetts

Institution	<a href="#">UMass Amherst</a>	<a href="#">UMass Dartmouth</a>	<a href="#">Salem State University</a>	<a href="#">Bunker Hill Comm. College</a>
<b>In-State Tuition</b>	\$17,357	\$14,854	\$11,978.80	\$5,520
<b>Out-of-State Tuition</b>	\$39,293	\$30,992	\$18,961.20	\$10,464

*\*The amounts detailed above are tuition rates for 12 credit hours based on one full school year 2022-2023.*

## > Benefits of Extending In-State Tuition & Financial Aid to Undocumented Students

- **Keeping Local Talent:** Extending in-state tuition, and especially providing access to state financial aid to undocumented students **results** in increased college enrollment for these students. College enrollment rates **have declined** in Massachusetts by over 10% since 2015. The state is losing talented students who have grown up in the commonwealth and seek to attend college like the friends, neighbors, and classmates with whom they grew up.
- **Spurring Economic Growth:** Allowing undocumented students to access in-state tuition is an overall investment in the state's economic prosperity. Receiving a postsecondary credential or even attending some college **increases** one's earning potential, and college graduates, including Dreamers, contribute significantly to the economy. DACA-eligible residents in Massachusetts **contributed** \$41.5M in state and local taxes and \$68.6M in federal taxes.
- **Meeting Workforce Demand:** Massachusetts has a growing demand for skilled workers in various industries. Extending in-state tuition to undocumented students would help meet this demand by equipping them with the necessary education and training to fill those positions. As the Boston Globe recently **editorialized**, "The economic argument for providing in-state tuition has never been stronger ... Massachusetts has a worker shortage ... Adding more college-educated Massachusetts residents to the mix can only help."