Georgia Senate Committee to Consider In-State Tuition Bill for DACA Recipients Today

Advancing Justice - Atlanta supports higher education for all

Atlanta, GA, January 29, 2015 — Senate Bill 44, a bill intended to equalize tuition policies for citizens, eligible noncitizens, and beneficiaries of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) will be considered by the Georgia Senate Higher Education Committee today, January 28, 2015 at 3:00 PM in Room 310 of the Coverdell Legislative Office Building, 18 Capitol Square. SW, Atlanta GA 30303 across the street from the Georgia Capitol.

“The time for action is now,” said Raymond Partolan, Advancing Justice - Atlanta’s Part-Time Outreach Coordinator and DACA recipient. “We need our friends and allies to pressure their elected officials to speak out in support of education equality for all. SB 44 would open so many doors for so many people.”

SB 44 was introduced by Senator Nan Orrock (D-36) on January 15, 2015. The bill had its first reading on January 26, 2015 and was referred to the Higher Education Committee by Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle.

This bill would apply to immigrants who have been accepted into President Obama’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which grants temporary deportation deferrals and work authorization for undocumented young people. These young people are seeking an opportunity to pay in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities in the State of Georgia.

"Lowering financial barriers and promoting higher education for all isn't just a human rights issue, but a proven component of positive economic growth," said Helen Kim Ho, Advancing Justice - Atlanta’s Executive Director. "Equal access to higher education is a basic human right. Higher education also leads to higher income, which in turn leads to higher tax revenue. When states with large undocumented populations like California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Washington are already reaping the social and economic benefits that come with providing in-state tuition for more of its students, it’s imperative for our state to get right on this issue," said Ho.

Currently, the University System of Georgia bars Deferred Action recipients from paying in-state tuition rates, which are considerably less than out-of-state rates. On June 9, 2014, Fulton County Superior Court Judge John Goger dismissed a lawsuit that sought to overturn that provision. The 39 plaintiffs now await the appellate decision of the Georgia Court of Appeals. SB 44 would accomplish, by legislation, what this lawsuit would have accomplished, had it been successful at the trial court level.

About Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta (formerly Asian American Legal Advocacy Center or AALAC) is the first non-profit law center dedicated to Asian immigrants and refugees (“Asian Americans”) in the Southeast.

Our goal is to engage, educate and empower under-represented Asian Americans to greater civic participation.

We are one of five independent organizations that make up the national Asian Americans Advancing Justice.
Together with our affiliates in Chicago, DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco, we bring more than 100 years of collective experience in addressing the civil rights issues faced by Asian Americans and other vulnerable and underserved communities. Visit www.advancingjustice-atlanta.org.