

Date of Hearing: April 28, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 1366 (Lopez) – As Introduced February 27, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Public postsecondary education: Dream Resource Centers

**SUMMARY:** Requires the California Community Colleges (CCC) and the California State University (CSU), and requests the University of California (UC), to create Dream Resource Centers on each campus. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Finds and declares the following intent of the Legislature:
  - a) It is the intent of the Legislature to increase enrollment and graduation rates among students meeting the requirements of Assembly Bill 540 of the 2001–02 Regular Session (Firebaugh, Ch. 814) by requiring the creation of Dream Resource Centers at public institutions of higher education;
  - b) It is estimated that each year approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools, and while California has been a leader in enacting innovative and bold laws to provide opportunities for undocumented youth to attain higher education, only 20 percent of these students attend college. Many undocumented youth and their families are unaware of recent policy changes, such as the enactment of Assembly Bill 540 of the 2001–02 Regular Session, the California Dream Act of 2011, and the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), that make college graduation more attainable. Currently, the majority of college campuses do not have a centralized location that provides specialized support services and resources for students meeting the requirements of Assembly Bill 540 of the 2001–02 Regular Session;
  - c) The creation of Dream Resource Centers would save staff time and resources by streamlining all available financial aid and academic opportunities for students meeting the requirements of Assembly Bill 540 of the 2001–02 Regular Session. These Dream Resource Centers would seek to empower and create a safe and welcoming environment for those students. These centers would increase enrollment, transfer, and graduation rates among this population; and,
  - d) A number of college campuses have acknowledged the needs and challenges of these students and have created Dream Resources Centers. These include: the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of California, Davis; the California State University, Los Angeles; the California State University, Fullerton; and the California State University, Northridge. These centers provide, among other things, informational workshops, legal clinics, information on programs available to undocumented immigrants, and peer mentoring and support services to increase awareness of existing programs and available resources, enhance professional development, and increase employment opportunities.
- 2) Requires the CCC and the CSU, and requests the UC, to create Dream Resource Centers on each campus to assist students meeting requirements, as set forth the Education Code (EC)

Section 68130.5 by streamlining access to all available financial aid and academic opportunities for those students.

- 3) Establishes if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, the state will need to reimburse applicable entities.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Qualifies for lower resident fee/tuition payments at the CCC, CSU, and UC, a student who attended high school in California for three (or equivalency) or more years, graduated (or equivalency) from a California high school, enrolled at an accredited institution of higher education in California not earlier than the fall semester or quarter of 2001–02, and files an affidavit with the institution of higher education stating that the student has filed an application to legalize his or her immigration status or will file an application as soon as he or she is eligible. These students are often referred to as "AB 540 students." (EC Section 68130.5)
- 2) Establishes the California DREAM Act to provide state, including the Cal Grant Program and the CCC Board of Governors Fee Waiver, and institutional financial aid to students who qualify the aforementioned exemption from non-resident tuition, students must apply by March 2 prior to the academic year; Dream Act recipients receive Cal Grant Entitlement awards, but are not eligible for Competitive Cal Grant awards unless funding remains available after eligible California students have received awards. According to CSAC, in 2014-15, 38,473 students completed a Dream Act Application, 8,195 awards were offered, and 4,206 awards paid (EC Section 69508.5).
- 3) Establishes the California DREAM Loan Program intended to provide low-interest loans to Dream Act students who are accessing the Cal Grant program and attending UC and CSU. These students are not eligible for federal student loans, making it difficult for some to cover the total costs of college. The law requires the state and UC and CSU to split the costs of launching the program. The state would need to provide about \$4.7 million General Fund to begin the program. In 2014, the Governor signed SB 1210 (Lara), Chapter 754, but does not provide funding in the 2015-16 budget for the program (EC Sections 70030-70039).

**FEDERAL LAW:** On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security, under the direction of President Obama, announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policy, providing certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines authority to request consideration of deferred action for a period of two years, subject to renewal. They are also eligible for work authorization. Deferred action is a use of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period of time. Deferred action does not provide lawful status.

Individuals may request consideration of DACA if they meet the following requirements:

- a) Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
- b) Came to the United States before their 16th birthday;
- c) Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;

- d) Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making the request for consideration of deferred action;
- e) Had no lawful status on June 15, 2012, meaning never had a lawful immigration status on or before June 15, 2012, or any lawful immigration status or parole obtained prior to June 15, 2012, that had expired as of June 15, 2012;
- f) Currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and,
- g) Have not been convicted of a felony, a significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** *Purpose of this measure.* According to the author, "There is no law that ensures that California public colleges and universities give adequate support to the undocumented student populations at their respective campuses to obtain their educational goals." The author contends, "This bill will address the problem by creating a centralized and trusted space that undocumented students will be able to utilize to access all resources and opportunities without discrimination due to their legal status."

*Background.* According to information provided by the author, it is estimated that each year approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools in the United States. Since the passage of AB 540 (Firebaugh) Chapter 814, Statutes of 2001, California Dream Act, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and other pieces of legislation, college affordability has become more attainable for undocumented students in the state.

The University of California at Los Angeles created the first resource center to serve undocumented students. Since that time, several other campuses of the UC and CSU have created resource centers.

*Committee considerations.* As presently drafted, this measure will require all CSU and CCC campuses to create Dream Resource Centers. It is unclear as to whether or not all campuses have a need for a Dream Resource Center. *The Committee may wish to consider asking the author to amend this measure to authorize the CCC Board of Governors and the CSU Trustees to establish Dream Resource Centers.*

Additionally, once Dream Centers are established, it is presently unclear how each campus will ensure that the center is not just a place for students to hang out, but fully staffed with the appropriate people able to facilitate the varying needs of the students in which this measure seeks to serve. *The Committee may wish to consider asking the author to amend this measure to add more specificity as to the nature of how the Dream Centers will function once established.*

Lastly, this measure appears to have close similarities to SB 247 (Lara) (see "Related legislation" Section of this analysis).

*Related legislation.* Senate Bill 247 (Lara), which is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee, would, among others, authorize the governing board of a school district or county office of education that maintain grades 9-12, the governing board of a CCC district, and the CSU Trustees, and encourage the UC Regents to establish on-campus Dream Centers for the purposes of providing educational support services applicable to undocumented students.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

Berkeley City College  
California Dream Network  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
California League of United Latin American Citizens  
California Student Aid Commission  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles  
DREAMS – UC at Irvine Chapter  
Dreams to be Heard – CSU, Northridge Chapter  
Educators for Fair Consideration  
Espiritu de Nuestro Futuro – CSU, Dominguez Hills Chapter  
Fullerton Dream Team  
Improving Dreams, Equity, Access, & Success – San Francisco State University Chapter  
Improving Dreams, Equity, Access, & Success – Southwestern Community College Chapter  
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter  
Scholars Promoting Education, Awareness and Knowledge – UC at Davis Chapter  
Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network  
Voices Organizing Immigrant Communities for Educational Success – Glendale Community College Chapter

### **Opposition**

None on file.

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