

Date of Hearing: April 25, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 1622 (Low) – As Introduced February 17, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Student support services: Dream Resource Liaisons.

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

- 1) Makes various Legislative findings and declarations, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - 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 designation of Dream Resource Liaisons and encouraging the creation of Dream Resource Centers at public institutions of higher education;
  - b) Since the passage of Assembly Bill 540 of the 2001–02 Regular Session, the California Dream Act of 2011, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and other pieces of legislation, college affordability has become more attainable for AB 540 Students, including undocumented students. This bill seeks to address this issue faced by AB 540 Students, including undocumented students, by creating a centralized space that those students will be able to utilize in order to access necessary resources and opportunities to ensure they succeed, regardless of their immigration status;
  - c) The creation of Dream Resource Centers would save staff time and resources by streamlining all available financial aid and academic opportunities for AB 540 Students. 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;
  - d) There is a grave concern by all three segments of public postsecondary education regarding potential actions the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States might be considering, including ending the DACA program; and,
  - e) The 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States has threatened to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, and it is imperative, now more than ever, to provide these essential resources to our students on all college campuses.
- 2) Requires the CCC and the CSU, and requests the UC, commencing with the 2018-19 academic year, to ensure that it has a staff person designated as a Dream Resources Liaison who is knowledgeable in available financial aid, services, and academic opportunities for all students meeting the requirements pursuant to Education Code (EC) Section 68130.5, including undocumented students.

- 3) Encourages each campus of the CCC, CSU, and UC, to place the Dream Resources Liaison in the campus' extended opportunity programs and services office or the educational opportunity programs office, respectively, or the financial aid office.
- 4) Encourages the CCC, CSU, and UC to establish Dream Resource Centers on each of their respective campuses.
- 5) Specifies that the Dream Resources Centers may offer support services including, but not necessarily limited to: a) state and institutional financial aid assistance; b) academic counseling; c) peer support services; d) psychological counseling; e) referral services; and, f) legal services.
- 6) Specifies that this measure shall not be construed as mandating the construction of new or separate space for Dream Resource Centers.
- 7) Specifies that Dream Resource Centers may be housed within existing student service or academic centers; and, the space in which a Dream Resource Liaison is located may be deemed a Dream Resource Center.
- 8) Authorizes the governing boards of the segments to accept private funds to establish and operate the centers.
- 9) Requires the governing board of a school district or county office of education that maintains any grades from 9 – 12 inclusive, to designate a Dream Resource Liaison as described in (2), at each of their respective campuses that includes said grades.

**EXISTING LAW:***Federal law.*

On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security, under the direction of President Obama, announced the DACA policy, authorizing certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines 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 all of the following requirements:

- Were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
- Came to the United States before their 16th birthday;
- Have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
- Were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012, and at the time of making the request for consideration of deferred action;

- 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;
- Currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a General Educational Development certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and,
- 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.

*State 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 financial aid, including the Cal Grant Program and the CCC Board of Governors Fee Waiver, and institutional financial aid to students who qualify for the aforementioned exemption from non-resident tuition (as listed in number one above), 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 (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, 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 (EC Sections 70030-70039).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** *Need for the measure.* According to information provided by the author, every year, approximately 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools nationwide. The author contends that many of the undocumented students will become college students, but face many barriers. The author argues that there is no statute that requires California's universities, colleges, or high schools, to provide adequate support for undocumented students. The author states, "In today's political climate, undocumented students are facing even greater challenges than before. As a state, it is important to provide undocumented students with the support they need at our public colleges and universities."

This bill seeks to provide resources for undocumented students at the CCC, CSU, UC, and high schools by ensuring each entity has a specified Dream Resource Liaison and Center.

*Current practices by postsecondary education segments.*

1) *UC*. The UC has consistently supported efforts to provide resources and create a supportive community for undocumented students. Every UC campus has a specified physical space whereby undocumented students can seek assistance in balancing their academics with day-to-day challenges they may face. A range of support services are offered – from academic and personal counseling to financial aid and legal advising. Each campus also has a student group, club or organization where undocumented students can become involved in an engaging and encouraging peer network.

2) *CSU*. The CSU is committed to supporting the academic, personal, and professional goals of undocumented students and has established nine Dream Centers since April of 2014. Two more Dream Centers are slated to open in 2017. The Dream Centers of the CSU are designed to provide access to college opportunities for undocumented high school, transfer, undergraduate, and graduate students, and those with mixed-status families. The Dream Centers partner with the community, staff, faculty and administrators, in order to provide undocumented students with adequate resources on and off campus.

3) *CCC*. The CCC Office of the Chancellor is committed to ensuring undocumented students receive the support and recourse they need in order to be successful. Committee staff understands that based on a fall 2016 survey, of the 72 community college districts, 10 districts have already established Dream Centers and 30 districts have targeted strategies in place to eventually lead to the creation of a Dream Center. Many CCC campuses have identified a person on campus to assist undocumented students as they matriculate.

*Previous legislation.* AB 2009 (Lopez) of 2016, which was vetoed by the Governor, was substantially similar in nature to this measure.

AB 1366 (Lopez) of 2015, which died on the Inactive File on the Senate Floor, was similar in nature to this measure.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

Asian Americans for Community Involvement  
California Dream Network (sponsor)  
California Immigrant Policy Center  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights  
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter  
San José City Council, District 9  
University of California

**Opposition**

None on file.

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