



Legislation Summary:

An Act relative to equal opportunity for high school graduates in the commonwealth

Initial bill number: [H644](#) (Bill numbers will change as legislation proceeds.)

Sponsors: Rep. Denise Provost

This bill would allow students who are not citizens or legal permanent residents to pay in-state tuition if they otherwise qualify, and imposes some further conditions on such students. These students would not get special rights, but rather the same rights as other students.

Conditions include a student who has attended a high school in the commonwealth for three or more years and has graduated from a high school in the commonwealth or attained the equivalent thereof from an adult basic education program in the commonwealth. In order to enroll the student must (A) register for the military selective service if eligible; (B) provide the institution of higher education with documentation of registration with the selective service, if applicable; (C) supply the institution of higher education with a valid social security number or a document reflecting issuance of an individual taxpayer identification number in lieu of a social security number; (D) file, in every year of enrollment, a Massachusetts income tax return and (E) file at the time of enrollment an affidavit stating that the person has applied for citizenship or legal permanent residence or will apply for citizenship or legal permanent residence in accordance with federal statute and federal regulations within 120 days of eligibility for such status.

At UMass Amherst, for Massachusetts residents, full time undergraduates pay \$14,971 in annual tuition and fees, while out-of-state students pay \$32,204. At a community college such as MassBay, Massachusetts residents pay \$197 per credit while non-residents pay \$403.

League positions: LWVUS Immigration Position (Impact on Issues):

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the United States

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

LWVUS Equality of Opportunity (Impact on Issues)

By 1966, the League had reached its first position on combatting poverty and discrimination: support of policies and programs to provide equal opportunity for all in education and employment. The position described general criteria and specific kinds of programs to further

these goals. The 1992 Convention added language to the Equality of Opportunity position, stating that it referred to “all persons, regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability.”

LWVUS Education Position (Impact on Issues)

The 1974-76 LWVUS Program included the phrase “equal access to...quality education,” reflecting League recognition that “equality” and “quality” are inseparable.

Higher education (LWVMA Education Position “Where We Stand”): The League recognizes that public higher education should be strengthened and extended if the needs of the Commonwealth’s young people are to be met.