



OREGON DREAMACTIVIST



**To:** Senate Higher Education Committee  
**From:** Mary M. Clare, Ph.D., Professor  
**Date:** March 19th, 2013  
**Re:** Testimony in Support of Tuition Equity

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Chair Hass and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mary Clare. My ancestors of record came to this continent as early as the 1600's. They came from Europe – from Britain, Scotland and Germany. They sought opportunity in a place far from their homeland. They were immigrants, newcomers. I am writing today in support of our future as communities in this state of Oregon and in this country of the United States. Today, right now, there are brilliant and brave young adults ready to build their knowledge, skills and dispositions in ways that make our future real. Thousands of them are children of parents who have also immigrated to this country seeking opportunity.

This week, in a graduate class a student responded to an assignment. She is in her mid-20's and grew up in Hawaii. Her mother is Japanese and Hawaiian, her father is European-American. The assignment involved reviewing a recent study related to poverty. The article she found was published late in 2012 in the scholarly journal, *Psychological Science* (vol. 23(7), pp. 734–739). Its authors (Fuller-Rowell, Evans & Ong) measured stress-related health issues among youth who live in poverty. They followed 252 youth over six years from age 9 to age 17 and found that perceived discrimination negatively affects health among these young people, with effects increasing over time. A great deal of learning occurs between these ages and continues beyond them.

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The current laws prohibiting children of immigrants to have access to in-state tuition when they become young adults stands as unambiguous discrimination. This policy primarily affects young adults who have lived with limited economic resources. It has immediate implications for these youth and, at the same time, for all of the rest of us as we all lose when their talents are squandered in legislated invisibility.

In a recent letter to the community of the University of California-Riverside, Dr. Jane Conoley, the acting chancellor wrote,

“ Whatever your political leanings, I feel confident that you believe as I do that we’re ALL better off when more and more of us have access to an excellent education. The price of educational excellence is far lower than the price of a failure to educate. Just look around the globe for examples of successes and collapses in education. The results in security, economy, civic engagement, and personal freedoms are dramatically different depending on the proportion of educated people in a country. This must be California’s highest priority.”

Oregon, too, deserves the opportunity to benefit from the leadership and talent of the young adults who today wish to step into their responsibility and capability as civic leaders. Oregon law ensuring these youth have access to in-state tuition rates will be one way of supporting these leaders, thereby supporting the future wellbeing of our state.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony, and I urge you to move this bill forward.