



7 February 2018

RE: Support for SB 1563

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee,

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the professional association for social workers in the USA. There are almost 5,000 social workers in Oregon who are on the front lines of providing care to Oregon's vulnerable populations. As mental health professionals, we understand the value of education as people seek to improve their lives.

NASW Oregon was pleased when Tuition Equity passed in 2013, allowing Oregon's Dreamers to access higher education affordably. The 2013 law granted in-state tuition for recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, an Obama-era policy that is currently under threat by the Trump Administration. Before Tuition Equity, undocumented students were denied access to higher education or forced to pay out-of-state tuition, which was cost-prohibitive for many.

Now, with the future of the DACA program uncertain, Oregon must act to ensure continuity of a program that has improved the lives of Oregonians. SB 1563 modifies existing law by decoupling it from the DACA program, allowing Oregon to maintain the status quo regardless of the federal government's actions (or inaction).

NASW strives to ensure access to higher education for the children of immigrants. We believe human service and education needs of all people should be met, regardless of a person's legal status. This means providing affordable public higher education for immigrants of all populations. Please vote yes on SB 1563.

Sincerely,

Delmar de la Torre Stone, LMSW
Executive Director
NASW Oregon Chapter
503-452-8420
dstone.naswor@socialworkers.org