



Dear Representative:

I write to encourage your support for SB2196, known as the Student ACCESS bill, which would give four-year public universities in Illinois the legal authority to provide institutional financial aid to undocumented students.

I am proud that the University of Illinois has been a leader in advancing this important legislation.

The bill's roots trace back to a meeting President Emeritus Bob Easter had with a group of undocumented students studying on our Chicago campus. They told him about the unique challenges they face because they are denied access to institutional financial aid available to all of their fellow students. His on-the-spot response? "Well, let's make a law." And we did, helping draft legislation rooted in the spirit of opportunity for all that is at the core of our land-grant mission.

The University of Illinois was founded to open the doors of higher education to every student – not just the privileged, the connected and the well-to-do. In the nearly 150 years since, that founding principle has been an engine for progress and prosperity. It has transformed lives one-by-one, forever altering the trajectory of not just the young people who study on our campuses, but of the generations in their family who follow. Collectively, they have lifted our state and our nation – both economically and socially – through the workplace skills they nurture and the civic-minded spirit they bring to their communities.

Our state has long been a champion for undocumented students, among the first to enact legislation providing in-state tuition rates. Your support for this bill will add to our legacy, joining just five other states that provide access to institutional financial aid. It is a bill that fits hand-in-glove with the vision of our founders – ensuring that all deserving students have equal access to pursue their dreams and share those talents to serve the public good.

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedicated service to the people of Illinois.

Sincerely,

Tim Killeen

President