

# FACT SHEET



1716 East Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23223  
804-643-2474 • [www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org](http://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org)

## Support: In-State Tuition for All Virginians

### **Problem:**

**Nearly 47,000 immigrants in Virginia are among Generation Z** (born between 1991-2001), many of whom have aspirations to continue their education upon graduation from high school. Many immigrants in Virginia do not have a permanent pathway to in-state tuition at Virginia's public universities.

### **Policy solution:**

Virginia should remedy this by allowing all Virginians, regardless of their immigration status, to qualify for in-state tuition at colleges and universities, provided they meet the same requirements as all other Virginians (i.e. residency and tax requirements). Twenty states have granted access to in-state tuition to people who are undocumented. In these states, students, employers, and overall society all have realized tremendous benefits.

### **Who benefits:**

### **Businesses:**

In a study conducted by the Virginia Employment Commission and Virginia Commonwealth University, there are an estimated over 27,000 job vacancies requiring an Associate's degree or higher, and over 18,000 of those require a Bachelor's degree. There are high level of job vacancies in health care, technology, transportation, and education. The Migration Policy Institute found that current DACA recipients are already working in those fields, and many more immigrants aspire to do the same. Denying undocumented students the ability to enter the workforce as a college graduate and contribute to Virginia's economy is a wasted opportunity that we cannot afford to pass up.

### **The Economy:**

Many immigrants have completed their entire educational careers in the state of Virginia and it is likely they will remain in Virginia as will their economic contributions. The taxes they pay, the money they spend in the local economy, and the jobs they create, all benefit the Commonwealth. Research shows a college education amounts to an increased \$2.7 million in lifetime earnings, which is double to those with only high school diplomas. Immigrant students are committed to building their lives in Virginia. Investment in students raised and likely to remain in Virginia is an investment in our economic prosperity. The higher educational attainment of our workforce in Virginia, the better off our economy will be, which benefits all Virginians, throughout the Commonwealth.

### **Universities:**

The higher education system in Virginia is revered as one of the best in the nation. Across the United States, students seek to attend Virginia schools because they are some of the best in this country. Increased competition from immigrants will continue to strengthen our higher education system.

### **Make Virginia State #21!**

**Twenty states allow all residents access to in-state tuition:** California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, and Washington. **Virginia should be next!**

*Sources: Migration Policy Institute, National Conference on State Legislatures, National Immigration Law Center, The Commonwealth Institute, Virginia Employment Commission*