

SB0637_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SB#/0637 – FAVORABLE

Higher Education - Undocumented Students - Out-of-State Tuition Exemption Eligibility

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0637, Higher Education - Undocumented Students - Out-of-State Tuition Exemption Eligibility

I urge your support to ensure that Maryland sets a national example making undocumented students who want to learn in Maryland and contribute to the economic vitality of the state be granted the opportunity to do so. In many cases these students were brought into the country undocumented by parents fleeing intolerable conditions in their home country. They fled to America to have increased opportunities to care for their children. They came to protect the lives of their children. This bill serves to recognize the sacrifice made to have these students integrated into our communities. If the undocumented parent has become a contributing member of their location, paying taxes and working to support their family, we should recognize that effort by assisting their children to learn and grow similarly as productive members of our population.

I approach the aims of this bill from my Jewish religious belief's framework. Leviticus 19:33-34 commands us "When strangers reside with you in your land, you shall not wrong them. **The strangers who reside with you shall be to you as your citizens**".

This view of how we should and must treat each other with compassion and justice as equal children of a loving G-d should be the principle for a favorable report on this bill.

It is also a fact that we do have undocumented residents living, working, paying taxes, and contributing to the life of our communities. The children may have come as infants and have known no life but their time in Maryland. We need to do everything we can to make everyone living in Maryland a full participant in working to better themselves to better their community.

This bill has a goal to ensure everyone who lives in a community is treated in an ethical and moral manner regardless of their status.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0637.