

Written Testimony in Support of HB1530

To: Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Anne R. Kaiser and Members of the Maryland House Appropriations Committee

From: Nixmary Castillo, Baltimore City Schools Student

Hello, my name is Nixmary Castillo and I am an 11th grade student at Western High School in Baltimore City. I am the president of the Hispanic club here at Western High School and a Salvadorian. I am the youngest of 2 girls and am very close to my sister and my parents. Both of my parents are Salvadorians and like seeing updates of how El Salvador is flourishing. I am submitting a written testimony to support HB1530, which would remove the requirements that undocumented students must submit three years of their parents' tax returns to qualify for in-state tuition and federal loans.

I support HB1530 because many immigrants came to the United States for a better life and to work to provide for the family they had to leave behind. People who have a good life and status in their home country would not come to a strange land to work when they are not even wanted there, they come to the strange land because if they don't, they won't be able to have food in the table or have a roof to put over their kids who do not have the fault of being born in a land that is still being formed from the ground up. Who would want to come and work in a place where they are seen as a burden and something to get rid of? Who would want to take the risk of dying in the process of coming to the US, risking not seeing their loved ones again? The answer is no one who doesn't have a dream or a goal that is so strong that they are willing to die for it. Immigrants have aspirations the same as Americans do; the difference is that Americans don't need to become immigrants to follow their aspirations. Undocumented students shouldn't have these obstacles because they came here to have a good future which is being limited by the requirements to which they need to adhere to. Many of these students will try and do the best they can because they understand the sacrifice that had to be made for them to have the opportunity they have now.

Once again, I am asking you all to please consider passing HB1530 so that we can give undocumented students a fair chance at higher education. Being a young adult that doesn't have to worry about these requirements has made me need to put myself in their shoes and see the silent battles they are fighting.

Respectfully,

Nixmary Castillo