



Instate Tuition Equity Bill

Impact on Public Institutions of Higher Education

Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education

The mission of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education is to provide an excellent, efficient, **accessible and affordable system** of higher education designed to improve the overall educational attainment of Rhode Islanders and thereby enrich the intellectual, economic, social and cultural life of the state, its residents, and its communities.

How does the Act Affect the Budgets of Rhode Island's Public Universities and Colleges?

Virtually all of the students who have taken advantage of in-state tuition would not have otherwise gone to college. This means the \$93,000 in tuition revenue from the 59 undocumented students currently attending Rhode Island universities would almost certainly not have existed without the RI Board of Governors' policy change.

Rhode Island public institutions of higher education have gained not lost from Instate Tuition Equity. Indeed, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities came out strongly in favor of offering in-state tuition for undocumented students. A Massachusetts study concluded that the state would gain millions of dollars annually if it offered in-state tuition to undocumented students, as the cost of adding the small number of new students is negligible and tuition is all new revenue. An internal report by the New Mexico state legislature determined that their in-state tuition policy was not causing any real expenses or loss to college and university budgets.

Returns on Education

Education has an impact on the likelihood of finding and maintaining employment. Adults without a high school diploma in Rhode Island are almost five times as likely to be unemployed as those who receive a bachelor's degree. In Rhode Island in 2009 the median income of adults without a high school diploma or GED certificate was \$20,547 compared to \$28,785 for people with a high school degree, and \$48,845 for those with a bachelor's degree.⁵

High school graduation is also the minimum requisite for college and most employment. Higher education is fast becoming a necessity for the majority of workers in the growing knowledge economy. According to U.S. Department of Labor projections, about 90% of the fastest-growing jobs in the U.S. will require some post-secondary education or training.

High school dropouts are more likely to have a range of negative social outcomes as compared to graduates, including living in poverty, receiving public assistance, incarceration, having poor health, being divorced, and being single parents of children who drop out of school.⁶

⁵ U. S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 2009. Table B20004.

⁶ Improving High School Graduation Rates in Rhode Island (Issue Brief), RI Kids Count. October 2009