



Signing Ceremony for SB 6523 – the DREAM Act

February 26, 2014

Remarks as prepared

Thank you all for coming this afternoon.

We all feel such joy today seeing that after years of work by people in this room, we are able to take a big step toward fairness and equality.

We all have our way to express joy – and the Wenatchee High School Mariachi Band certainly provided one great way to do that.

For me, I want to quote my mom’s favorite song, “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

Somewhere over the rainbow, Skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream, Really do come true.

Today we’re allowing dreams to come true. There’s really nothing better a state could do.

The young people who are here today are the ones that made this happen. Since first talking with students about this issue I’ve thought, “How can you say no to these young people?”





In fact, earlier today I was able to meet with Moses Chegge and Dulce Siguenza, and hearing their stories makes me very grateful that this year we said yes to these students.

But this has been a long push. We all owe a big debt of gratitude to Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, who did more than anyone to focus attention on the issue of equal access to higher education for Washington's children of immigrants.

I want to thank Representative Zach Hudgins, the prime sponsor in the House, who first introduced the Dream Act in 2007.

Zach, thanks for your perseverance.

Working alongside Representative Hudgins for much of this time was Representative Bruce Chandler. He stood up for this idea early on, and worked hard to make this a bipartisan solution for ALL of Washington's children.

Senator Barbara Bailey was the prime sponsor of the bill I'm signing today. Senator, thank you for the leadership you showed in the majority coalition, along with the longtime and strong support in the Democratic caucus.





I and most of us here call this bill as the DREAM Act, because that's what we've all been pushing for years. And because people need to know: The Dream Act has passed.

Some call it the Real Hope Act.

But whatever you call it, what's important is what it will do for thousands of bright, talented, and hard-working students across Washington.

This bill makes resident students of the state of Washington who are aspiring citizens eligible for the State Need Grant.

There are other provisions that apply concerning deferred action for childhood arrival status.

An appropriation of \$5 million for the State Need Grant is included.

I will now sign Senate Bill 6523 into law.

