



## **ABIC ACTION, DREAMERS, BUSINESS LEADERS CONDEMN SUIT ATTACKING U OF NORTH TEXAS OVER IN-STATE TUITION RATES**

By Jay W. Belle Isle  
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AUSTIN – The American Business Immigration Coalition Action (ABIC Action), Dreamers, and business leaders issued the following statement in response to the oral arguments at the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in the lawsuit against the University of North Texas (UNT) for providing fair in-state tuition rates to Texans who came to the U.S. as children.

If the lawsuit is successful, UNT would be forced to provide in-state tuition rates for out-of-state students who have never attended a Texas high school. According to a study by the Intercultural Research Development Association, this situation would cost UNT \$8.9 million in lost revenue and could force the university to raise college tuition rates for all of its students.

“As a representative of the Texas business community, I am deeply concerned that a negative ruling by the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals against UNT would make the higher education system more expensive for all Texans,” said **Justin Yancy**, President of the **Texas Business Leadership Council**. “At a time when employers already face a skilled workforce shortage, a negative ruling by the Court would only exacerbate an already challenging situation.”

“Texas Dreamers pay \$454 million in local and state taxes and economically support our state with \$3.3 billion in spending power. Attacking the policy that allows these Texans to become educated and contribute to our workforce does not make economic sense,” said Dennis Nixon, CEO of IBC Bank.

“As a Dreamer myself, access to in-state tuition allowed me to pay for a UNT education that gave me the knowledge and skills to start my small business, which employs 8 people. We must not let the lawsuit against UNT stop future Texas high school graduates from affording an education that will allow them to realize their own dreams and career aspirations,” said Alberto Garcia, a UNT alumnus and Owner of Uniformity.

“Texas Dreamers and businesses cannot keep operating court case to court case,” said Juan Carlos Cerda, a DACA

recipient and Deputy Campaign Director for ABIC Action. “We urge U.S. Senators John Cornyn and Ted Cruz to pass a congressional solution that will ensure that Dreamers can obtain a path to legal residency so that these young Texans can pay in-state tuition, get an education, and keep our state globally competitive.”

### **Background**

All students who have lived in the state of Texas for three years before graduating from a Texas high school or receiving a GED are eligible to pay the in-state tuition rate at any of the state’s public colleges and universities. These students include over 111,000 K-12 and 31,000 college Dreamers, who came to the U.S. as children.

Access to affordable in-state tuition helps Texas industries that are impacted by labor shortages. In healthcare, there has been an 18% decrease in registered nurses employed in Texas nursing facilities in 2022 compared to 2019. In the energy sector, nearly two-thirds of oil and gas companies say they have a shortage of workers. And in public education, nearly 12% of teachers left the profession in the 2021-22 school year, up from about 10% in recent years.

In addition to helping address labor shortages, in-state tuition access for all Texas high school graduates has presented numerous economic benefits to Texas as well. Dreamers who have paid in-state tuition have earned \$19.7 billion and generated \$17 billion in additional economic activity in Texas since 2001.

### **About**

ABIC Action is the political arm of the American Business Immigration Coalition (ABIC), a bipartisan coalition of over 1,200+ CEOs, business owners, and trade associations across 17 mostly red and purple states. ABIC Action promotes common sense immigration reform that advances economic competitiveness, provides companies with both the high-skilled and low-skilled talent they need, and allows the integration of immigrants into our economy as consumers, workers, entrepreneurs, and citizens.