

**RESOLUTION of the CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL
IN DEFENSE OF RIGOBERTO PADILLA AND OTHER IMMIGRANT STUDENTS
WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE DREAM ACT**

Introduced by Alderman George Cardenas

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago and the United States were founded by immigrants, who have traveled from around the world to seek a better life; and

WHEREAS, our nation's immigration system should uphold our basic values of family, economic opportunity, and fairness; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. immigration system, which has torn apart families, created long backlogs for legal visas, and produced a undocumented population of twelve million immigrants, including half a million in Illinois, is broken and is in dire need of comprehensive reform; and

WHEREAS, among these undocumented immigrants are hundreds of thousands of young people who were brought to the U.S. while they were children to be with their parents; and

WHEREAS, 65,000 undocumented students graduate from high schools throughout the U.S. each year; and

WHEREAS, many of these youths have excelled in school, worked hard to fund their studies and support their families, and become leaders in their communities; and

WHEREAS, these youths are highly motivated to continue with their education (with many doing so despite being ineligible for federal financial aid) or to serve our nation as members of the U.S. Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, despite their excellent academic records and contributions to the community, these youths are in constant peril of being identified, detained, and deported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; and

WHEREAS, one such youth, Rigoberto Padilla, who came to the U.S. when he was six, completed studies at Noble Street Charter High School and Harold Washington College with exemplary grades, works full-time to pay for school and support his family, volunteers with several community organizations, and is now enrolled at University of Illinois Chicago with hopes of becoming an attorney, now faces removal from the U.S. on December 16, 2009, after being identified after a misdemeanor traffic stop; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' own U.S. Senator Richard Durbin has again filed in Congress the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act (S. 729), a bipartisan proposal that would enable many of these students, including Rigoberto Padilla, to earn legal status, continue with their educations, and pursue careers that would enable them to further contribute to their new home country; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' other U.S. Senator, Roland Burris, is one of 23 current cosponsors of the DREAM Act, and at least four of Chicago's own U.S. Representatives (Rep. Danny K. Davis, Rep. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., Rep. Mike Quigley, and Rep. Jan Schakowsky) are among the 91 cosponsors of the House version of the DREAM Act (H.R. 1751); and

WHEREAS, our city and our country can only benefit if youths like Rigoberto Padilla can become legal, continue with their studies, and further develop as workers and leaders; and

WHEREAS, students like Rigoberto Padilla should be allowed to remain in the U.S. while the DREAM Act is under consideration, lest they lose their opportunity to ultimately gain legal status and pursue their education in the U.S. if they were deported; THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this 9th Day of September, 2009, A.D., do hereby reaffirm our support of the DREAM Act, and call upon the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to halt the removal of Rigoberto Padilla and all other young immigrant students who would be eligible to gain legal status under DREAM or other comprehensive immigration reform proposals while such legislation is under consideration in the U.S. Congress; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to President Barack Obama, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, U.S. Senators Richard Durbin and Roland Burris, and the U.S. Congress.