



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 15, 2025

Universities Get Rich Off Illegal Migrants; 408,000 Currently Enrolled

If you want to know why academia is foursquare behind illegal migration, yes, follow the ideology.

But you can also, perhaps, even more easily follow the money.

In fact, there are currently a staggering 408,000 illegal aliens enrolled in American higher-ed institutions, according to The College Fix. And lest you think academia is doing this out of the goodness of its woke little heart, think again. Colleges and universities cash in, collecting taxpayer money for enrolling the foreigners.

Just as outrageously, 25 states offer these aliens in-state tuition benefits while denying them to out-of-state citizens. This practice is illegal, too, based on a 1996 law signed by then-president Bill Clinton. But that law has never been enforced. (This is something else the Trump administration can get busy on.)

Worse still, 20 of those states [offer illegals](#) government financial aid. Meanwhile, American students — whose parents have funded the system for years with their tax dollars — often must pay full freight.

The Problem? The Courts ... Again

So how did we get to this point? As The College Fix's Jared Gould [explained recently](#) after speaking to a number of lawyers about the matter:

One pivotal moment in this story came in 1982 with the Supreme Court's [Plyler v. Doe](#) decision. The Court struck down a Texas law that denied state funds for educating the children of illegal immigrants. In what can only be called judicial activism (read the [dissenting opinion](#)), the Court stretched the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause to argue that denying education to illegal immigrants would unfairly disadvantage them and burden society.

As one Texas lawyer told me, *Plyler* "created an incentive for illegals to cross the border and then claim sanctuary to parasitize our education system, similar to [birthright citizenship](#) incentivizing them to bring pregnant women across the border to give birth on U.S. soil." (Read "[The Question of Birthright Citizenship](#)" by Peter H. Schuck and Rogers M. Smith.)

(Note: *Plyler* has thus far only been applied to K-12 education. It influences universities, however, because, first, it gives illegals another incentive to remain in the U.S. Second, it ensures they can be



AP Images

Illegal immigrants and other students protest in support of in-state tuition for "migrants."



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schooled to the point where the next step is the university system. Third, it normalizes illegals' presence in American education. Fourth, it gives academia moral cover to enable illegals' attendance.)

Yet *Plyler* isn't the main problem, Gould points out — it's an *exacerbation* of the problem. The deeper issue is that for decades Democrats have been facilitating illegal migration, importing future voters and buttressing blue-state populations for apportionment purposes. Meanwhile, Republicans have largely turned a blind eye to the problem, partially driven by corporate interests desirous of cheap labor.

Universities' Universal Desire

Universities love this status quo, of course. *Plyler* gives them, again, moral cover while they brazenly defy the law, confident it won't be enforced. They'll even use "legal counsel to [find loopholes](#) that help shield illegal students from deportation," writes Gould. He then continues:

State policies — often written out of necessity because the federal government won't act — only make things worse by creating an unfair system. In Texas, for example, the [DREAM Act](#) allows illegal students to pay in-state tuition — benefits denied to out-of-state Americans. In 2023, New York Governor Kathy Hochul and Mayor Eric Adams turned public universities into migrant shelters, displacing students and raising safety concerns. At SUNY Buffalo, there were reports of sexual assaults tied to the influx of migrants. And who can forget Governor Tim Walz expanding Minnesota's DREAM Act to offer [free tuition to illegal students](#) at state universities?

In other words, academia gets to tacitly claim superior virtue because they "really care, just so much." But they're actually cashing in. Meanwhile, taxpayers foot the bill at the end of a metaphorical gun while often struggling to pay for their own kids' education.

Financial Treason?

As mentioned earlier, 25 states offer illegals in-state tuition, and 20 also provide them financial aid. Texas and California, while firmly divided by party, are both thus guilty. Each offers interloper-in-state tuition while making out-of-state citizens pay more. In fact, The Daily Signal [informed](#) last week:

The only states that actively block not only in-state tuition but also enrollment of illegal aliens are Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. Seven other states block access to state financial aid and/or in-state tuition breaks, including Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin, Tennessee, North Carolina, and New Hampshire.

If you're a citizen bitten by this double standard, don't expect to have your day in court, either. As the Signal also tells us, even though the practice violates [8 U.S.C. § 1623](#) (the aforementioned Clinton-era law), in

the few cases in which outraged parents have tried to sue states because their U.S. citizen kids were being charged higher tuition rates than illegal aliens, the courts have almost uniformly held that they don't have standing to pursue litigation because there is no private right of action to enforce the statute.

And what of academia's facilitation of illegal migration generally? "What's lost in all the noise is the



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simple truth,” Gould asserts: “[U.S. Code § 1324](#) clearly prohibits aiding and abetting illegal immigration.”

This now brings us to a point. We’ve heard much about the billions in waste and fraud in U.S. government spending uncovered by Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency. USAID, the U.S. Agency for International Development, has recently been [a prominent and maddening example](#). Then, as *The New American* [reported](#) Friday, “Refugee Office Spent \$22.6B on Cash Giveaways & to Help ‘Refugees’ Buy Cars, Homes.” This raises a question:

If all the aforementioned trespasses don’t qualify in *spirit* as financial treason, what ever could?



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