

RESOLUTION TO STOP THE DETENTION AND DEPORTATION OF STEVE LI

Whereas, each year, American high schools grant diplomas to about 65,000 immigrant students who were brought to this country at a young age. Many of these youth have attended U.S. schools for most of their lives, but their immigration status bars them from opportunities that make a college education affordable, including in-state tuition rates, loans and grants, most private scholarships, and the ability to work legally; and

Whereas, immigrant students lacking legal U.S. residency have had no other means of legalizing their status and therefore, should now be given the chance to “get in line,” while pursuing post-secondary education, obtain legal status, and become citizens of the country they call home, the United States of America; and

Whereas, the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was first introduced in the Senate 2001 and has been reintroduced repeatedly since then; and

Whereas, since its passage in 2001, California's AB540 has made higher education more accessible to thousands of students; and

Whereas, the "California DREAM Act" (recently SB 1301, Cedillo) would provide AB540 students like Shing Ma "Steve" Li access to financial aid to make education more accessible but has been vetoed by the Governor; and

Whereas, the federal passage of the DREAM Act would make legally self-evident what is true in "de facto": these undocumented students belong in our post-secondary institutions and are an American investment that we must not squander; and

Whereas, the California Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers have for years consistently affirmed their support of the passage of the DREAM Act and for the rights and educational opportunities for DREAM Act-eligible students; and

Whereas, City College of San Francisco student Shing Ma “Steve” Li entered the United States with his family when he was about 12 years old; and

Whereas, Shing Ma “Steve” Li graduated from George Washington High School where he was an editor and reporter for the school newspaper and on the track and cross country team and earned good grades; and

Whereas, Shing Ma “Steve” Li is currently a City College of San Francisco student who aspires to be a healthcare worker serving communities in the Bay Area and has been working toward that educational and career goal with determination and success; and

Whereas, Shing Ma “Steve” Li was detained by U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement on Sept. 15, 2010 and is currently being held in Arizona awaiting deportation to Peru where he has no family or friends; and

Whereas, Shing Ma “Steve” Li is eligible under California's AB540 and would be eligible for the DREAM Act;

Whereas, the community at City College of San Francisco, including his classmates and professors, the Asian Law Caucus, Chinese for Affirmative Action, and the Asian Pacific American community have written thousands of postcards to Congressional representatives asking that they speak out against the deportation of Shing Ma “Steve” Li; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the American Federation of Teachers, Local 2121, write to its Congressional representatives and other legislators, including the Obama administration, requesting them to stop the deportation of Shing Ma “Steve” Li and pass the DREAM Act and other protective measures and support for students like Li; and

Be it further resolved that AFT 2121 actively support and publicize efforts to defend AB540 in California as well as efforts to secure financial assistance and aid for AB540 students and to pass the federal DREAM Act; and

Be it further resolved that AFT 2121 help publicize the situation of Shing Ma “Steve” Li so that more faculty, community members, and labor activists can take action to defend him and stop his deportation; and

Be it finally resolved that AFT 2121 carry this resolution to its affiliates, including the California Federation of Teachers and the Labor Council, to take similar steps and carry the resolution to additional affiliates to defend Shing Ma “Steve” Li and bring him home to San Francisco.

Unanimously adopted by the AFT 2121 Executive Board, 11/9/10