



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LEGISLATURE APPROVES BILL TO ALLOW UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS TO PRACTICE LAW

SACRAMENTO, CA—Leaders of the California Latino Legislative Caucus issued the statement below in support of AB 1024 by Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego). This measure, which is co-authored by the Latino Caucus, permits the State Supreme Court to admit as an attorney any applicant who has fulfilled all requirements for a law license notwithstanding their undocumented status. The bill passed out of the Assembly tonight and heads to Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. for his consideration:

“Today, the Latino Caucus stands proud having spearheaded the passage of this priority bill for those hardworking members of the undocumented community who aspire to be an attorney,” stated Senator Ricardo Lara, Chair of the Latino Caucus. “This bill is critical to ensuring that all residents, irrespective of legal status, can continue to pursue their American Dream.”

AB 1024 is a direct response to a case currently pending at the California State Supreme Court. Recently, the Court heard testimony in the case ***In Re Sergio C. Garcia on Admission*** (S202512), which concerned Mr. Garcia’s petition to obtain a law license in California. Having passed the State Bar examination and fulfilled all other requirements, Mr. Garcia was routinely sworn into the legal profession in 2011. Two weeks later his license was rescinded on the basis that the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act passed by Congress in 1996 prohibits undocumented immigrants from receiving professional licenses with the use of public funds, unless state law explicitly overrides it.

“AB 1024 completes the promise we’ve made to DREAMers who have worked hard, studied hard, passed the Bar exam and now just want the right to make a living for themselves as an attorney,” stated Assembly Member Gonzalez.

AB 1024 explicitly allows the Supreme Court to admit all law license applicants who have fulfilled the admission requirements regardless of immigration status.

The amended bill is now awaiting a signature from Governor Brown.

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The California Latino Legislative Caucus serves as a forum for members of the State Senate and Assembly to identify key issues affecting Latinos and develop avenues to empower the Latino community throughout California. Following in the footsteps of generations of pioneering Latinos who settled and helped build this great state, Latino legislators united in 1973 to maximize their power notwithstanding their limited numbers. Since its creation 40 years ago the Caucus has grown in both numbers and stature. It boasts a rich history of legislative and political success and serves as one of the most influential and strategic organizations in the state.