

# STATE OF MICHIGAN LAW DAY 2004 ESSAY CONTEST

## “To Win Equality by Law”

7<sup>th</sup> Grade – 2<sup>ND</sup> Place - By Diamond Marie Chandler

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*Should public schools in Michigan be allowed to refuse admission to the children of illegal immigrants?*

I firmly believe that any illegal immigrant, regardless of what country they come from, should not have any benefits whatsoever from America, including education. These immigrants are breaking our laws, and we're handing them free services?

One Core Democratic Value that can be related to this issue is fairness. These immigrant children are unfairly overcrowding our schools. Fairness means that everyone pays the same taxes and gets the education they pay for. These illegal aliens do not pay many taxes, which is why I do not think that they should get an education.

I know from previous knowledge that taxes are money paid to the government in return for the services they provide. We pay taxes because we want to see our money go somewhere useful or important. We, as American citizens, are required by law to pay these taxes, but the illegal aliens are not. While some illegal aliens pay very little taxes, they use a considerable amount of public services like much-needed health care and public housing.

I know that about half of illegal aliens are visa overstayers- people who have entered the country legally, but became illegal aliens by their failure to leave the country once their visas expired. We need to prevent these illegal immigrants from obtaining employment, because if they can't find work, they might move back to the country from which they came. Taking all of this into consideration, illegal immigrant's children should not be allowed to go to school here. When things are so bad that we can't even educate some American children, why should we educate theirs?

A national act that supports my position is the Immigration and Nationality Act, Section 237(a)(1)(b) that states, “Any alien who is present in the United States in violation of this act or any other law of the United States is subject to deportation.” 1 Therefore, we can see that the laws are very strict. So why are there so many aliens? Most people think of illegal immigration as a victimless crime, but in fact, this crime causes substantial harm to American citizens and legal immigrants, particularly those in the most vulnerable sectors of our population: the poor, minorities, and children. Illegal immigration also contributes to the dramatic population growth overwhelming communities all over America (particularly California and Texas). By turning a blind eye to illegal immigration, Congress and the president have been providing lawbreakers with cheap labor.

In the court case of Plyler v. Doe, 457 U.S. 202(1982), the ruling that American schools must educate children of illegal immigrants does make some sense. We don't want a population of totally under-educated people in our midst, but we don't have to accept a situation in which these undocumented immigrants can openly hold jobs, and where school districts can't inquire into their immigration status.

On a last note, just remember that we can't provide high quality education for our own people if we continue to let endless numbers of poor, unskilled immigrants go undetected and ignored in America. Our taxpayers deserve to know where their money goes, and that it should go somewhere important, not to undocumented alien children's education.