Jan Toloch

M.A. Dissertation Evaluation

2015

Title of Dissertation: *American DREAM Act: Final Solution?*

Jan Toloch has written his M.A. dissertation on the subject of the so-called

DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act and its

implications for children of illegal immigrants in the United States. This is a

highly controversial issue that deserves to be studied by scholars and students of

American Studies alike. The work is divided into an Introduction (Chapter 1),

four main chapters (Chapters 2-5), and a Conclusion (Chapter 6). Jan's ability to

express himself in English is very good (with a few mistakes) and the content of

the dissertation is also of high quality. In the ensuing paragraphs, I will discuss

the individual parts of the treatise.

In the Introduction (Chapter 1), Jan spells out the content of the

dissertation and he evaluates some of the sources utilized. Jan states on page 13

that "the thesis demonstrates that legalizing formerly undocumented children

may be mutually beneficial for both the immigrants and the U.S. economy and

provides justice if the pathway to citizenship involves a process of successful

integration." I think that the Introduction is fine.

In Chapter 2, Jan describes the failure of Congress to pass the DREAM Act.

He then discusses the so-called DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)

ordered by President Obama. The provisions and legal basis of both the DREAM

Act and DACA are compared both in content and from a legal perspective. Jan

even analyzes how individual states have enacted their own version of the

DREAM Act. The chapter concludes with a recapitulation of arguments offered by

both proponents and opponents of the DREAM Act. I am very satisfied with this chapter.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the impact on immigrants. Testimonies of parents and children alike are cited. This adds a human dimension to the matter. The DREAM Act's potential to further the integration of illegal immigrants is also analyzed, particularly when it comes to higher education and military service. Jan concludes that integration is the key to socioeconomic advancement of illegal immigrants and that this must be kept in mind when formulating policy. This chapter is fine indeed.

Chapter 4 scrutinizes the impact on American society. Jan rightly begins with a discussion of public perception. Subsequently, he writes about the economic benefits for American society should the DREAM Act be implemented. He discusses both the federal and state levels. Employment, entitlement programs, education, and the cost of deportations are all mentioned. Jan does analyze the impact of DACA in light of the available statistics. Security consciousness is also touched upon. I like the organization and content of this chapter.

In Chapter 5, Jan undertakes a case study of the so-called New York DREAM Act passed by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo. He describes political perspectives of the road to passage of the law in the state of New York. Also, the economic side is addressed and it is made clear that the additional tax burden on New Yorkers is minimal. The perspective of beneficiaries of the New York DREAM Act is also taken into account and the impact on beneficiaries has largely been positive. Besides being well written, this chapter adds to the human dimension of immigration and its consequences.

The Conclusion (Chapter 6) is a recapitulation of Jan's argument that a pathway to citizenship with proper measures for integration of immigrants is the best solution to the immigration issue in the United States. Other solutions, such as deportations, are unrealistic and too costly both in terms of financial and human resources. Throughout the work, Jan has been consistent and to the point.

I believe that Jan Toloch deserves to be congratulated on a job well done. This dissertation far exceeds what is required and I recommend an **excellent** mark.

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