

Obama edict on deportation a relief to undocumented students

By Stephen Magagnini, Sacramento Bee

For years, Roberto Guzman was afraid to drive to class at Sacramento City College for fear he would be pulled over and deported to Mexico.

Now Guzman – whose parents brought him to California from Zacatecas state when he was 2 – is among thousands of undocumented immigrants breathing easier.

The Obama administration announced last week that it would deport only those “who pose a threat to public safety and national security.”

That means Guzman, 19, and millions of other undocumented immigrants in the United States will no longer be targeted for deportation. About 300,000 undocumented immigrants facing possible deportation will be reconsidered on a case-by-case basis.

How long this review will take – and who exactly will be allowed to stay – is unknown. Those subject to “prosecutorial discretion” – meaning they are no longer a law enforcement priority – include a significant number of the nation’s 12 million undocumented immigrants, including: Veterans and those serving in the military; minors and the elderly; pregnant or nursing women; victims of domestic violence, trafficking or other serious crimes; those suffering from serious mental or physical disabilities and illnesses; and those in the United States since childhood.

“I was really ecstatic,” said Guzman, who leads Sac City’s

Dream Team Club – about 20 undocumented students fighting for legalization. “A lot of people I know didn’t like driving because they put themselves at risk of being caught. Now I can drive freely to the store and relieve some of this fear.”

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