

Associated Students of Portland State University
1825 SW Broadway
Portland Oregon 97207
askaspsu@pdx.edu



MEMORANDUM FOR: Oregon State Leaders

SUBJECT: **Repeal of proposed DHS Policy regarding admission period structure for F, J, and I non immigrant visas**

Dear Respected Oregon Leaders,

The Associated Students of Portland State University (ASPSU) is committed to serving and protecting our international student community against ALL acts of prejudice and discrimination. The recent [policy proposal by the Department of Homeland Security](#) is unjust and implies an obvious effort to enforce discriminatory immigration tactics to deport F, J, and I nonimmigrant visa residents who currently reside within the US. ASPSU will not tolerate any more acts of bigotry towards international students and encourage Oregon leaders to unite and stand with us as we challenge the Department of Homeland Security to repeal this new proposed policy. ASPSU stands for the proposed rule be withdrawn in its entirety, and that admission for the duration of status remain in effect.

Approximately 1,040 international students attend Portland State University representing 4% of the overall student population. This percentage used to be a lot higher, but International student enrollment has declined due to COVID and various policies the Trump administration has proposed impacting international student residency. In the 2018-2019 academic school year, NAFSA reported that International students generated a revenue of [\\$71.5 million for Portland State University and the local economy that created 785 additional jobs](#) for the economy. International students pay three times more than what Oregon-based students pay in addition to other financial obligations. Despite the cost, these students have traveled across the world, some with their families, to advance their higher education and chose PSU to do so. This community helps to make PSU the genuinely diverse campus it is by bringing in rich perspectives, heterogeneity, and culture.

We urge you to stand with us as we continue to advocate and support the international student community not only within the state of Oregon but nationwide. Attached below are statements from elected officials who support this cause and ASPSU will continue to serve and protect our international community because, if we won't, who will?

Motutama Sipelli
President

Victor Chavez-Gonzalez
Vice-President

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ADDITIONAL STATMENTS

Balkhiis Noor

Equal Rights Advocacy Director

The lives of many are at risk and that is due to one simple decision. The audacious proposal made by DHS is creating restrictions against people who are F, J and I classification. I did not use the terminology Alien, because no human is an alien. Furthermore, international students are a valuable aspect, especially at Portland State University. They are a part of what makes PSU diverse and prosperous. With this proposal it disrupts what we stand for and who we are. The proposal cannot be implemented as it is punitive.

Hakan Kutgun

Student Fee Committee (SFC) Member

I'm an international student at PSU and a proud member of the student government for 4 years. I consider myself a living example of how international students can impact their community through the diversity and leadership they provide. This proposed rule jeopardizes everything I worked for to come here in pursuit of my education for no reason or benefit to anyone at all! PSU already reports information about students and scholars to SEVIS on a quarterly basis at least, but also when updates are made to my personal (address) and academic (change of major, or level) record. As an international student, I'm already more highly monitored than any other population of non-immigrants in the U.S. The requirement that a USCIS adjudicator make decisions about MY academic program makes no sense! Who knows you better? My academic and immigration advisors at PSU or some adjudicator in Nebraska or Texas or California?

With the COVID-19 pandemic, DHS already stopped processing so many immigration applications and already had a backlog of years and years of applications for most of the processes already. And yet, new rules are being proposed that would compound the workload and number of existing cases with this. How long would it take DHS to approve a simple program extension, months, years? In addition to the wait, the financial impact would be devastating on international students: \$455 each time I apply for an extension, again if I change my program, or level, and again when I apply for OPT at which point I would need to pay \$455 for the I-539 and associated biometrics to extend my period of stay plus for the I-765 applying for OPT. Right now if I apply for a program extension, I'll have an answer in under a week and it will cost me nothing!

In addition to having immediate impact on current students in the U.S., if implemented, this rule would definitely reduce the number of brilliant minds coming into the U.S. to pursue their education while contributing to research that pushes U.S. forward. Immigrants have been awarded nearly 40% of the Nobel Prizes won by Americans in Chemistry, Medicine and Physics since 2000, most if not all, of which came here as students or scholars. Can you imagine the drain on U.S. research and economy if even a half of were to decide to study elsewhere?

Dear Respected Oregon Leaders, I urge you to do everything in your power with the highest priority to prevent this rule from coming into effect. Implementation of this rule will impact more than just the fate of current and prospective international students and scholars, it will have a huge negative impact on this great nation to sustain its global leadership in sciences and technology, in turn affecting every single citizen.

Mamadou Dié Fall

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Legislative Affairs Director

International students go through a very selective and overwhelming process from back home to actually get their student visa in order to come study in the United States. They not only bring financial, social and cultural benefits to the US population but also do most of their research in the universities that help the country in so many ways.

According to a report done by the National Foundation for American Policy, 81 percent of full-time graduate students in electrical and petroleum engineering programs at U.S. universities are international students, and 79 percent in computer science are.

To not go through the long list of benefits that International students participate in in the development of the US, I will just give that one stat that says a lot, how much we bring intellectually in this country.

Yet, we get to be threatened to be thrown out at the first occasion presented by the current administration.

I stand against this new rule, so ASPSU, PSU and any elected officials should because it is not right, it is arbitrary, punitive and targeting to marginalize a specific group and hurts the country in many types of ways that we cannot even imagine.

Wiwin Hartini

Executive Staff Director

Uncertainties have been affecting everyone since the pandemic started including international students. We faced a surprise just a while ago regarding the requirement to take at least one credit course to stay in the US that was fortunately changed. This new proposal by the DHS of limiting the period of stay for international students creates an additional uncertainty and pressure in the lives of students who came to the *land of opportunity* to make our dreams come true.

I urge you to help us, international students, be able to study in the US without unnecessary pressure and concerns. While other countries are opening their doors to international students, the US is giving an impression that it is no longer the most welcoming and supporting country in regards to providing education to international students. Your support means a lot to us.

Name Teri Walters

Position Publicity and Design Director

Comment

Hayden Farris

Judicial Review Board Member

This policy makes no practical sense in economic, resource-based, and humane senses. As the United States lags in K-12 education, we need bright minds from across the world to help grow this country stronger and to improve international relations. International relations are the key to success as technology makes this big Earth a smaller space every day. The United States needs international students more than they need us, and this policy is only going to harm everyone involved.

Further, why should there be restrictions on international students when they have a miniscule threat to the United States time and time again. As a matter of fact, if this is truly about security, US citizens would be the ones

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being limited as we face a greater risk of domestic terrorism and violence within our borders than terrorism and violence from international students. This policy not only harms everyone involved, but also is created under the falsehood of security.

The United States cannot lead in humanity when we do not accept the gifts of international students without false accusations of security issues. The United States cannot lead in technology and evolution when we do not utilize the resources from around this world. The United States cannot hold a leading economy when we force our economy to be held within our borders.

This policy does not make us better.

Emily Chow

Board of Trustee

International Students provide a wealth of knowledge, culture, *and* economic stimulus to the United States. According to the nonprofit, Institute of International Education, there are more than 1 million international students enrolled in U.S. higher-education institutions and per the U.S. Department of Commerce, contributed more than \$46 billion to the U.S. economy in 2019 and supported 458,290 jobs during the 2018-2019 academic year.

This policy unfairly targets international students who provide immense value beyond their economic stimuli. They enrich our communities, provide valuable insight, as well as further our research and studies after already going through a rigorous application and background check process. Additionally, this policy moves a student's academic process and decisions to a DHS worker vs. their higher education advisor who understands the complexities of their program and the institution's programs. Per Inside Higher Ed, this policy, "if enacted, would set up roadblocks for hundreds of thousands of legitimate students and threaten the United States' historical position as the top attractor of international talent."

Hannah Montgomery

Senator

Comment:

International students play a major role in creating a sense of community at Portland State University. Their purpose here goes beyond just schooling, they have friends, jobs, and commitments to programs such as ASPSU. This policy is nothing but a way to continue an agenda from the current administration in order to seem as if they are following through with their promises of working on immigration. This policy does not help the economy and it certainly does not help the social climate. Diversity at Portland State is key to further progress our learning and social behaviors.

If this was a question of safety, I can insure that there is plenty of domestic terrorism that needs to be addressed before the administration decides to kick out our international students who are attempting to better themselves and the community by obtaining an education. I will say it again, this is nothing but a ploy to ensure that the current administration is showing they are upholding their promises to fight immigration. International students deserve a spot here in the United States that is safe from racism and exclusivity. They have a right to get an education, to enjoy their lives as college students. To not just be labeled as international students but people! This policy is completely ludicrous and as a member of ASPSU I am completely against everything this new policy stands for.

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Joshua Childs

University Affairs Director

Dear Oregon Representatives,

I stand by that the policies proposed will do nothing but harm to the wellbeing of the international students they will affect, the US economy, Higher education as a whole and the relationship between the US and the rest of the world. On Its surface the policy changes seem to serve a legitimate purpose, but when given the relevant information concerning these issues it is clear that there is little reason for this extreme policy change, and it serves little interest in achieving its goals.

In brief these policy changes will harm the international student community by subjecting them to further charges, risks of denial for extensions, limited times to leave, or for vocational internships. The United States economy will lose revenue from these strict restrictions on the international student communities. This will impact the entire Higher Education system in the US, the Local economies, and the individual colleges. This will drive the cost of tuition up further limiting the resident students to cover the cost, and/or loose quality, and/or narrow classes, and/or loose educators and those with the ability to replace them. It will also persecute those who have been deemed to be from a country 'supporting terrorism', while other checks and balances exist to stop the threat of terrorism in the US, the DHS seem to consider that another way might be to further limit those students they feel are from an 'at risk' county, this simply further supports prejudice with no added benefit, as the biometrics are taken upon entry, the checks are thoroughly prior to entry and if someone is considered to be a threat they are monitored by the FBI and NSA. These changes support nothing more than further prejudice, and extortion, as such these will cause nothing more than; added stress and fear for those who continue here as international students, financial strain upon the higher education institutions that educate those who will then guide this country into the future, and further strain upon the local communities in the United States, and in the countries of the current and prospective International students.

I implore you to fight this proposal in every way possible, that this is not a partisan issue, it is simply an issue of ethical and constitutional values, it is about the waste of further Federal funding, and the needless persecution and limitation given to those who already experience that upon entry to this country, as that is part of the process to study here.