

Welcome To Succeed Campaign

Defending International Students and Scholars



The United States must welcome international talent to succeed in the world. International students, scholars, and their families are assets to academic and scientific innovation, public diplomacy, economic vitality, and national security. Unfortunately, data show that policies such as the Travel Ban and harmful rhetoric from policy leaders have encouraged some international students to choose study destinations other than the United States. To stop the loss of the world's most talented students and scholars, NAFSA is leading a campaign to urge our nation's leaders advance policies that would welcome the world's best and brightest to our schools.

What's at Stake?

The United States is in a global competition for talent and is at risk of losing its position as the most attractive country for international students and scholars. The most recent U.S. Department of State Open Doors Report published by the Institute of International Education reported a 6.6% decline in new international student enrollments, while other nations are experiencing increases. Canada, China, Australia, and other countries have adopted more welcoming immigration policies in recent years to attract and retain more international students and scholars.

Generations of foreign policy leaders agree that international students and scholars are one of the world's greatest foreign policy assets. International students create jobs, drive research, enrich our classrooms, strengthen national security, and are America's best ambassadors and allies. The contributions of international students and scholars are critical to the United States through the nearly \$41 billion they contribute annually to our economy and more than 458,000 jobs created. That's three jobs created for every seven international students who choose to study here. Significantly, the presence of international students and scholars enhance U.S. students' education and understanding of critical subjects, their preparation to live and work in an interconnected world, and their ability to tackle global challenges.

Goal of NAFSA's Campaign: Improve and strengthen key policymakers' opinions and understanding of international students and scholars so that they defend them in times of crisis and advance more welcoming immigration policies.

Join the Campaign

1. Sign up for actions alerts to stay updated on the campaign at www.connectingourworld.org.
2. Use advocacy toolkits to get your member of Congress on record in support of international students and scholars: www.connectingourworld.org/toolkits.
3. Share your stories about accomplished international students and scholars at www.connectingourworld.org/share.
4. Use NAFSA resources to educate policymakers: www.nafsa.org/internationalstudents.
5. Write op-eds and tweet with #WelcomeToSucceed about the benefits that international students bring to your state and district (find the economic value at www.nafsa.org/economicvalue).
6. Attend NAFSA's Advocacy Day. Register at www.nafsa.org/advocacyday.

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Policy Recommendations

NAFSA urges members of Congress to support international students and scholars by taking the suggested actions below to improve immigration and visa policy. (Find our full issue brief on these policy recommendations at www.nafsa.org/welcometosucceed).

1. Attract and Recruit the Best and Brightest to the United States by
 - a. Establishing a coordinated U.S. recruitment strategy for international students and scholars;
 - b. Expanding dual intent to include foreign student (F) visa applicants;
 - c. Preserving experiential learning opportunities for foreign students and authorize employment for their families; and
 - d. Improving visa application processing.

2. Support and Retain Talent in the United States by
 - a. Maintaining duration of status for foreign students and exchange visitors (F, M, J status);
 - b. Adjusting post-graduation immigration law to permit a smoother entry to work for skilled graduates; and
 - c. Providing flexibility for foreign students to participate in innovative and evolving educational programs.

3. Direct Federal Agencies to Effectively and Efficiently Implement the Law by
 - a. Ending the practice of regulating by guidance or policy memo;
 - b. Improving USCIS processing;
 - c. Directing the ICE Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) to eliminate the unnecessary bureaucratic, long-delayed adjudication of requests from higher education institutions to offer new programs; and
 - d. Exercising Congressional oversight.

More Information

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