



April 4, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20395

Dear Secretary Rubio and Secretary Noem:

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations, we write to seek more information about State Department (State) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policy and planned actions relative to international students and scholars. The nation's colleges and universities greatly rely on the leadership of your agencies in partnership with institutions to foster a system that attracts global talent and advances U.S. economic and diplomatic interests, while safeguarding domestic security.

We seek clarity amidst reports that student visas are being revoked and records are being terminated in the Student Exchange Visitor Information System without additional information being shared with the institutions those students attend. This includes the messages being sent to international students and scholars regarding their student visas being revoked, requesting that they self-deport, with no additional information about how to appeal this decision or verification to ensure that mistakes are not being made in identifying these individuals.

As you know, over 1 million international students annually attend U.S. colleges and universities, yielding an estimated economic impact of \$43.8 billion across the United States, as well as the creation of over 375,000 domestic jobs.¹ They also contribute to institutions' intellectual vibrancy and the global literacy of domestic students. President Trump has previously expressed support for the United States being the destination of choice for the world's most talented students and scholars.

We support the need for the federal government to safeguard national security, including vetting visas and overseeing the process for deciding who should be allowed to enter and remain in the country and under what terms. Recent actions have contributed to uncertainty and impedes the ability of our institutions to best advise international students and scholars. It is important institutions are in a position to reassure international students so they can continue to make exceptional contributions to their campuses, communities, and the nation.

¹ <https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-nafsa/international-students-contribute-record-breaking-level-spending-and-378000-jobs>

We respectfully request a briefing to better understand these actions, including the recent communication to U.S. consulates requiring enhanced social media vetting for all F, M, and J visa applicants, as required by the Jan. 20 Executive Order titled “Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats.” We seek to understand both the administration’s actions and overall approach in this area, as well as how our associations and institutions can best work with State and DHS to address issues of national security.² We look forward to working with you on these important issues.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell, President

On behalf of:

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

² <https://tandslaw.com/state-department-sends-cable-to-consulates-requiring-social-media-review-of-all-f-m-and-j-visa-applicants/>